Dilemmas of development: conflicts of interest and their resolutions in modernizing Africa

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Contents

Boxes

Figures

Tables

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1

Introduction

Jon Abbink & André van Dokkum

The struggle for development in Africa - The culture of politics and the rooting of culture

This book unites studies on the contemporary dynamics of Africa. The chapters reflect new developments in the arenas of politics, economics and cultural struggle. These domains look far apart but are not. In their widest definition, culture – as the symbolic universe of shared meanings and of behavioural repertoires used by people – and politics – as the public struggle of interests and of attaining power and influencing others – intermingle and recombine in surprising and sometimes disturbing ways. They always have a definite economic logic as well, informing value commitments and behaviour in the wider sense. Politics and economic life in Africa have, perhaps more visibly than elsewhere, influential cultural aspects and referents, such as religion and ethnicity, that often play a constitutive role. Also, "culture" and its symbolism are used as an instrument in the political, economic and social struggles in today's African societies, marked by a preoccupation with "development", a notion increasingly problematic because not easily definable in a purely material sense and having normative overtones. What is at play are of course new hegemonic struggles of a material but also ideological nature.

The recent literature on Africa is replete with discussions of this subject of cultural innovation, adaptation and instrumental use of "culture" in conflicts of interest, and indeed also in those of previous generations the theme is already found (a nice illustration is J. Clyde Mitchell 1956 on the Kalela dance). This

observation is a reminder that today's developments within African societies know dynamics of their own and are not fully understandable from the shocks of colonialism, decolonization and global inequalities alone. Neither is a dominant focus on politico-economic development issues helpful to understand what occurs at the grassroots levels, or the ways external influences and transnational interactions are locally and culturally appropriated by African actors. If, for instance, some 20 years ago people would have talked about an impending phenomenal rise of religious (often "fundamentalist" and militant) movements of both a Christian and Muslim nature, dominant Africanist and developmentalist opinion would perhaps have dismissed such predictions.

Since people's actions are inherently constrained not only by social and physical environments but also depend on how they interpret these environments, explaining people's behaviour and belief can rarely be deterministic. This is a challenge for social scientists, for they have to accommodate multiple outcomes of theories that are themselves based on singular fieldwork experiences, subject to often multiple interpretations. The problems of "computational intractability" that John Barrow (1998: 221-230) summarizes for physics could well have their counterparts within social science. Specifically reflexivity, people's capability to assess their own social life, poses difficulties in setting up deterministic social scientific theories (van Dokkum 2005).

Nevertheless, it can safely be assumed that a minimally coherent factor to be dealt with here is the commonly acknowledged adverse distribution of well-being and economic opportunities for most of the African populace. This relative empirical coherence enables social scientists to write about people's constraints in life (including social and cultural constraints) and how they cope with these. Social scientists can also, in varying degrees, assess to what extent people are in a position to analyse their own situation, and in this book several examples are provided concerning such self-analysis and the consequences thereof. Since issues of distribution of resources and power often occurs in terms of collective categorizations of people, it is to be expected that such distribution is a contributing factor to the dynamics of *social identity*, and therefore some of the chapters in this book will also delve into this topic. To actually *predict* future developments is intrinsically fraught with difficulties, but social-scientific studies can certainly help in giving directions where to look for solutions of developmental problems.

Indeterminacy is to be distinguished from deconstructionism, of which Clifford & Marcus's (1986) provided the classic early reference within anthropology. The bundle of chapters in that book dealt mainly with issues of reflexivity performed on and by the scientific observers. The "participants' view on their own situation" played a less decisive role in the book. The participants' view

performs a double role in ethnographic research, going beyond the classical emic/etic distinction within anthropology: on the one hand, it provides assessments which may be compared with researchers' views; on the other, it is itself object of research. This makes any social-scientific assessment subject to a degree of ambiguity. However, this ambiguity – and this is a difference with deconstructionist approaches – does not prohibit the production of ethnographically real statements or knowledge claims on social situations. In this book, descriptions are given of social situations in three different orders of delineation: first, local; second, national; and third, international. In all three, however, the struggle of Africans for "development", in its various forms, is obvious. This is where social science analysis can make a contribution, exploring its empirical ramifications and its theoretical status. The venture poses challenges notably for non-African analysts, to who need to as identifiable actors in specific contexts and avoid Eurocentric approaches.

Locality and global connectedness

The chapters in this book reflect on topics in certain African localities taken as units of analysis. Naturally, these localities are connected to others, and the fact that interconnectedness now unequivocally spans all of humanity may be indicated by the term "globalization". Globalization has been viewed as a background for diminished strength of states (see Hyslop 1999: 6-11 for a discussion). Since African states have often been considered weak actors, except in exercising patronage and authoritarianism (Hyslop 1999: 5), it might be hypothesized that globalization and attendant phenomena of transnationalism will change little concerning state strength, or will even enhance institutional weakness. Whatever the outcome, for many analysts an important yardstick along which to measure the African state will be its effectiveness to promote material development and distribute its fruits among a nation's population. The recent vogue of the Millennium Development Goals has only reinforced this trend.

Globalization has not obliterated the usefulness of such measurement. As all of the chapters in the present volume make clear, local and national contexts of social, cultural and economic life have not lost their own idiosyncrasies. Differences in the prevalence and quality of natural resources, possibilities in making use of these resources and the dynamics of power relations between people (on several scales) make it unlikely that globalization will result in or equals uniformity. It therefore makes sense to analyse current developments in Africa from geographically circumscribed focal points, as is done by the present authors in varying degrees.

Assessing struggle in Africa

Generalizing across continents, Africans perhaps have to struggle more than most other global citizens for their economic sustenance and social stability. Though there are signs of improved economic performance in the last couple of years, and some countries have achieved high economic growth rates, limited economic performance capacities and socio-political oppositions will constrain development at least for the near future. Few African countries will reach an average of more than 10% annual GDP growth by 2010 (a value achieved in 2005 only by Chad, Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea, all oil-producing countries – cf. World Bank 2006: 144. In 2007 Angola and Liberia had joined them, cf. IMF 2007: 80). The amount of investment in technology and training in order to sustain and manage this increase in productivity cannot be implemented with such a short time from now. But in the last few years growth in African has picked up, although unevenly spread and not durable enough. While there is of course no logical reason to believe that Africa could not be a continent with middle-income levels if not prosperity by, say, 2050, conditions of governance, human security, imbalanced population growth, skewed investment and legal insecurity will need much attention. The disappointing economic and social achievements since decolonization are not necessarily a predictor for the events which will manifest themselves in the next decades. Just as colonialism does not wholly explain the present state of affairs in Africa, the present situation will not fully determine Africa's future.

What the present chapters have to say about this is perhaps well illustrated against the background of some ideas in a widely-read though controversial book on sub-Saharan Africa, namely Chabal & Daloz's *Africa Works* (1999). Chabal & Daloz state that it is a challenge "to explain how the continent can be both modern and undeveloped" (1999: 144; cf. 125). Specifically with respect to the difficulty to "develop", their book proposes some guidelines for understanding postcolonial Africa and, on the basis of this understanding, derive as one conclusion that politics in Africa is inimical to development (p. 162) because of the "inability or unwillingness to institutionalize more formal and impersonal social relations" (p. 132). Chabal & Daloz controversially relate this to both socio-political and cultural characteristics, where "culture is not just an allusion to given 'values' but refers to a general framework, a matrix, which, however constraining, is liable to change over time" (pp. 131-32). The reader may find it useful to consult Brumann (1999), who elaborates on this idea of cultures quite literally as matrices, where one dimension stands for persons and another for the occurrence of traits associated with persons.

The matrix method has the advantage that the distribution of cultural traits can be represented without being forced but also without being prohibited to indicate

boundaries between cultural units (e.g. countries or ethnic groups). This enables the accommodation within theory of historically shifting cultural identities. A further advantage is the possibility to incorporate contradictory traits within theory as long as no demands for overall consistency within a proposed matrix are made. A disadvantage is that the matrix method cannot fully guarantee the harmonization of information contained *in* a matrix and information drawn *from* that matrix. This situation sets upper limits as to the range of conclusions that can be based on it. However, this does not rule out the possibility of stating at least some positive conclusions. The task here is to compare Chabal & Daloz's general conclusions with the more fine-grained descriptions of traits presented in this book.

If Chabal & Daloz state that Africa is "modern and undeveloped", it must be understood what the terms "modern(ization)" and "development" stand for. Considering that "[t]hough the two have a different intellectual ancestry, […], they have come close to each other in substantive meaning" (Dube 1988: 1), Chabal & Daloz's statement constitutes something of a paradox. What they seem to mean is that technological innovations are consumed on the African continent at the individual level but that no society-wide improvements in organizational (specifically economic) efficiency is achieved (1999: 144-145). This is specified by the following three points:

- the lack of institutionalization of political relationships (p. 132, alluded to above);
- the reluctance to accept a Western socio-economic and political order (p. 132);
- "the subtle use of [possibly incompatible] registers of socio-political behaviour" (p. 132), of which (neo-)patrimonial forms of social relationships (pp. 22, 28, 38-39, 44, 162), suiting both patrons and clients (p. 104) constitute an important ingredient.

These points are summarized by Chabal & Daloz in the phrase "instrumentalization of disorder" (pp. 141-63). Whether they hereby adopt a too Eurocentric point of view of African society – as critics like Bryceson (2000: 423, 425) have contended – is a moot point.

Dimensions of inquiry

As already indicated above, for the purpose of this book it may be useful to distinguish three orders of delineation – in our research matrix, so to speak – along which the authors' chapters can be classified. First, the local relationship of the concerned people with the natural environment together with the associated social conflicts of interest; second, the interactions (contingent or structural) among the people of the researched locality with respect to economic and/or political subordination within their country; and third, the interactions of the

local people with people outside the delineated locality, specifically in the current international global order.

With an eye on the chapters in this book, the application of specifically the concept of (neo-)patrimonialism can be discussed. In the first dimension, the relationship of Africa with the natural environment remains predominantly characterized by a dependence on the extraction and export of raw materials rather than manufacturing (e.g. Ahmed & Louw 2005: 209). Such dependence is then, according to Chabal and Daloz, a resource for African political leaders because it provides opportunities for handling foreign aid and structural adjustment programmes (pp. 110-23 – see Mkandawire & Soludo 1999: 21-48 for an alternative discussion of the same topic).

Part I: The struggle for the extraction and management of natural resources

Hans van den Breemer addresses the interrelationship between nature conservation policies and rural development policies in South-eastern Senegal. Extraction of resources, in the form of agriculture and hunting and gathering practices, conflicts here with demands of nature conservation and using nature for purposes of promoting tourism. To manage these requirements as well as the conflicts arising from them, quite a number of government agencies and NGOs, sometimes with funding from abroad, exist that have to cooperate with each other and the local population. Coordination between all these organizations seems to be difficult, and may provide a corroboration of the phenomenon of "disorder" as discerned by Chabal & Daloz. But this must be qualified by the observation that foreign organizations and donors do not seem to promote cooperation either. The government also seems to have genuine developmental intentions with the (though perhaps insufficiently) elaborated programmes. It is remarkable, however, that the jobs provided by the government institutions, as well as at the hotels, are allocated to people outside the community, specifically from Dakar, so that the local population does not profit from the opportunities which are indeed created. In one of the concerned villages, outsiders from the Mouride centre in Touba were allocated plots of land. Although Van den Breemer does not probe into the background of these allocations of jobs and plots, neo-patrimonialism does seem to play a role here. What is clear, nevertheless, is that the local population obviously does not approve of this. Even though patrimonialism may explain "disorderly" distribution of resources, such a patrimonial political economy is itself subject to critical assessment by the local people involved. Unfortunately for themselves, they see no possibilities for reversing the application and effects of such patrimonialism.

Paul Hebinck & Nelson Mango write about legal pluralism among the Luo in Western Kenya and how this pluralism is used by individuals as embedded

within social relationships. Pluralism here refers to the simultaneous applicability of bodies of legal rules to certain areas of land, specifically farm land. One body of such rules can be referred to as customary land tenure, but the term patrimonialism (here without the prefix "neo") might well be appropriate as well. Access to land is here heavily dependent on inheritance rules within families, in which aspects of descent, gender and primogeniture are decisive. The other body of rules, however, assumes that plots of land are privately registered under individuals' title deeds in formal archives, making transaction of plots possible on the basis of monetary selling and buying. Luo people appear to make use of arguments derived from both bodies of rules. As Hebinck & Mango indicate, the privatization of land allocation has not obliterated the importance of kinship-based customary arrangements of land allocation. In the matrix method we use here, the distribution of two clusters of traits (identifiable directives for action) among the Luo is clearly feasible ethnographically. Within each cluster, homogeneity of rules may be more easily established than when the clusters are considered conjoint. But the matrix method does not, by itself, force the researcher to either separate or conflate the two clusters; this is a matter of interpretation. It is likewise with local participants; it is quite understandable that Luo people operate as if legal rules are one body of options, albeit sometimes contradictory ones, with which they deal in order to reach certain goals. As for patrimonialism, its existence can be confirmed within Luo society, but the ethnographic matrix also contains other traits with individualistic characteristics. Even within the customary cluster, disputes can arise, showing that the effectuation of rules is not as clear-cut as may seem. These considerations considerably qualify the observation that patrimonialism determines life in Luo land.

Katja Werthmann portrays social behaviour in mining communities in Burkina Faso. Seemingly chaotic at a first glance, these communities are sociologically well-ordered, with functional divisions between bosses, diggers, buyers, barkeepers, shoe-shiners etc., also moving across different mining camps. The personnel of these functions can switch, however, especially among bosses and diggers, and there is a strong egalitarian spirit. Separated from the customary life of family and village, social life and spiritual beliefs encountered in these mining camps compare better with other such spots outside Africa than with the surrounding environments within Burkina Faso. For those in the mining camps, life seems little dependent on a neo-patrimonial social order. On the other hand, one may wonder what the macro-economic effects of these mining camps are for Burkina Faso. They do not embody the Weberian "Protestant work ethic" as mentioned by Chabal & Daloz (1999: 160-62). The money squandering highlighted by Werthmann could be said to be, in some limited sense, a form of reinvestment, namely as a redistribution of financial resources into the economic

activities of non-diggers within the mining communities. However, while perhaps raising average income in Burkina Faso, this process does not lead to investment in productive enterprise or capital. Rather than exemplifying neo-patrimonialism, the mining camps form another instance of economic growth through primary sector dependence (cf. Mkandawire & Soludo 1999: 3).

Part 2: Struggle as politics within local and national communities

Bayleyegn Tasew explains certain ideas on social order among the Anyuaa of Western Ethiopia. The anti-authoritarian stance of the Anyuaa is coupled to a strong sense of social and juridical order, as the story of the mythical hero Očudho indicates. The Anyuaa recognize village leaders to regulate their political affairs. These village leaders are, however, strongly subjected to the will of the village people, and this sense Anyuaa villages are instances of the principle that "sovereignty resides in the people". Through the performance of an event called *agem*, a village leader may be peacefully or violently ostracized or even killed when his actions are not according to local residents' expectations. This case is important because it gives a clear example of indigenous non-patrimonial political relations. According to Evans-Pritchard (1947: 95), the Anyuaa at his time also clearly distinguished between the office of village headman and the person occupying the office, showing that politics is not necessarily identical with personal patrimonial relations (cf. Chabal & Daloz 1999: 158). Bayleyegn Tasew ends his essay with an overview of recent developments concerning the situation of the Anyuaa people within Ethiopia. Having formerly been relatively undisturbed by the central Ethiopian imperial government, since the *Dergue* period (1974-1991) the Anyuaa of Ethiopia have become victim of (often violent) intrusions from outside, specifically the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M), making their predicament an international matter. While the central Ethiopian government could be expected to act as a protector, the Anyuaa seem instead to be ignored - or worse - by their own state officials, without the possibility to influence the latter, as their indigenous political mores would have enabled them.

Tijo Salverda reveals the complexities of elite relations on Mauritius and their interplay with ethnicity. Mauritius provides a good test-case for establishing the persistence of clientelistic relationships. Interestingly, it is precisely the Franco-Mauritian descendants of French colonizers who hold most of the important positions in economic life, though not necessarily in political life. Life on Mauritius is ethnically divided: businesses within respective ethnic communities are often run by related persons and social clubs are virtually mono-ethnic. Franco-Mauritian control of economic life, combined with intra-ethnic vertical loyalty between elite members and commoners with this ethnic group, emphasize the

still existing dominant economic position of most of its members, who still keep track of their French family lines of many generations ago. It is significant to note that this situation of ethnicity-based clientelism did not prohibit impressive economic growth in the 1980-1990s. However, this period of growth does not seem to have drastically changed the relative economic positioning of the several Mauritian ethnic groups, perhaps with the exception of a minority of Sino-Mauritians.

Anna B. Kanneworff provides a striking example of "re-traditionalization" (cf. Chabal & Daloz 1999: 45-47), the conscious rejection of Westernization, Christianity and capitalism and the propagation of what is seen as authentic African ritual attitudes, combined with a strategy to realize these visions in society by either violent or political means. Kanneworff deals with the Mungiki in Kenya, a movement that has never been formally recognized due to its often violent actions committed to pursue its goals. The movement is particularly attractive for youths, who are unable to attain socio-economic mobility in their country. In certain areas of life the movement seems to have succeeded: it was capable of monopolizing many mini-bus routes in Nairobi. Attempts by Mungiki leaders to align themselves with the Muslim community by announcing to convert to Islam turned out to be a miscalculation, however. Mungiki's critical stance towards Christianity will probably not be enhancing the movement's popularity among Christian Kenyans either. Even though Mungiki has been capable of drawing much media attention, it has never gained mainstream political power. Even though the state apparently feels compelled to use harsh repressive measures against Mungiki instead of more subtle methods, in the end the movement does not represent a threat to the power position of the state.

Meine Pieter van Dijk investigates the urban bias of economic growth and poverty reduction in Tanzania. Rural areas do not seem to profit from the healthy economic performance of Tanzania as a country. Moreover, the central government relies heavily on revenue collected in Dar es Salaam. Apart from this urban bias, the state misses out on tax revenue due to the fact that much economic activity takes place in the informal sector. The informal sector does play an important role however, Van Dijk argues, because it allows large numbers of people to earn a living, it contributes to overall economic growth and it may be a breeding ground for enhanced formal sector enterprises. For the latter, external inputs are marked as necessary such as infrastructure and skills development, indicating that there certainly is a possibility for formalizing activities now carried out in the informal sector, if only the right policies are developed. This is what indeed seems to be case in Tanzania nowadays. If rationalization of the economic order has been a problem, it is now changing. Concerning struggle, it is noteworthy that the formal and informal sectors compete. The vitality of the

informal sector, however, makes that it is difficult to eradicate, if such eradication would be desirable at all. This is also not necessary: the wish of the Confederation of Tanzanian Industries (CTI) to have informal sector enterprises as members instead of adversaries can be seen as a step towards formalization. It might be hypothesized that the government profits from this as well, as more tax revenue should lead to increased capacity for formalization, and this again to more revenue. As an assessment of one's own economic situation the case is also interesting: Though the future outcome of the policies is technically unpredictable, through the interpretation of possible adversaries as actors with whom one can cooperate, the CTI seems to have opened up possibilities for Tanzania's economic functioning which otherwise would not have existed.

Wendy Willems shows how Zimbabwean cartoonists and comic strip artists express discontent with their current government. This is relevant for the question whether citizens in Africa are willing and/or capable to challenge oppressive political leaders (cf. Chabal & Daloz 1999: 26). Willems addresses the influence of mass media on people's perceptions and provides examples of how comic strips bring with them opportunities for political and social criticism. Assuming that the messages expounded in the strips not only reveal the outlooks of their authors but also of most of their readers, such criticism makes clear that political mismanagement is not generally approved of (a similar point may be made referring to Alpers's [1999] essay on bureaucracy in Mozambique, which indicates a dysfunctional *over*institutionalization of the state apparatus). It may be argued that this would delineate the profitability of patrimonialism to certain sections of the Zimbabwean population only. No doubt Mugabe still enjoys enough support to stay in power, although more in the army and security forces than among the general public. But the discontent with his record is also obvious and this cannot be explained by reasoning that political opponents "challenge their exclusion from the state in the hope that their agitation will earn them co-optation" (Chabal & Daloz 1999: 26).

Naglaa Elhag gives an exposition of the Dinka-Nuer conflict in South Sudan. This conflict complicates the view that violence in Sudan before the Comprehensive Peace Accord of 2005 was only occurring along the North-South axis. Elhag describes how the Dinka-Nuer conflict escalated into severe violence and how eventually peace between the fighting groups was reached. Representations of the local situation by the participants are essential in understanding the conflict as well as its resolutions. Dinka and Nuer are often described as "different people" having "different ways of life". Such a distinction can be turned into a demonizing depiction if, from one standpoint, the "other" group is seen as "the enemy", while cooperation with that other group would be much more viable. Ordinary people feel, it is said, to have been drawn into the conflict by their

leaders. Contemplating the issues of responsibility will perhaps reveal a more complex picture, but it was a sign of hope that apart from the interventions of the New Sudan Council of Churches also local prophets have made efforts to promote peace between Dinka and Nuer. While the tensions created by the civil war are not resolved for good and have contributed to the creation and imagination of new boundaries (as evident in the post-war period), recent views that "Nuer and Dinka are one people" reflect a self-description that could form a basis for resolving their conflicts and solidify peace between them.

Part 3: International issues in Africa

Sabine Luning describes the complex of authorities who have a stake in the gold mining activities in Burkina Faso. Her exposition shows a clear example of how the local and the global can be inextricably interrelated. After the ending of the state monopoly on gold mining, the role of the state transformed from an operator into a custodian of mining areas and operational permits. These permits are distributed among domestic and foreign mining companies. Together with local intermediaries, all these parties make up a complex socio-economic environment linking intercontinental trade relations with local villages. Naturally, Luning's exposition compares well with Werthmann's, the two of them providing a good case of reproducibility in social science. Like Werthmann, Luning also points out the quick access to and loss of wealth through gold, as well as the importance of spiritual beliefs. The people involved in gold mining are shown as hard working ("what else are we to do?"), but wealth gained is not revolved into business investment. This lack of productive investment seems not to be ascribed to the mining people in local areas; though here their access to plots is governed by neo-patrimonial dependence on intermediary "Mahama", it remains the question whether this local dependency is crucial for such absence of re-investment. Rather people, in Luning's experience, seem to need the generated money for immediate consumption. Moreover, a significant conclusion is to recognize the invisibility of the mining companies on the local mining spots. This indicates that local people do not always have a complete picture of their own social matrix beyond their immediate environment. The commercial mining companies are dependent on the local intermediary for actual local access to exploitation areas and labour, and in this sense globalization is certainly not merely a top-down phenomenon. For the gold miners themselves, however, in contrast with the Tanzanian economic actors mentioned above, their lack of information is an impediment to reflect appropriately on, let alone influence, the role they play in the current global economic order.

Marloes van Amerom discloses the difficulties of managing Peace Parks, or more formally Transboundary Protected Areas (TBPAs), specifically the Ai-

Ais/Richtersveld TBPA in the border area of Namibia and South Africa. TBPAs are assumed to facilitate the settling of boundary conflicts because of the induced cooperation of two or more countries necessary for the management of such parks. Van Amerom points out that TBPAs may become an additional part of a border dispute rather than solving it. In matrix terms, TBPAs become items within a social matrix while they are conceived as solutions to yet other items which are judged problematic. This does not mean that the idea of promoting cooperation does not work: operations within the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld TBPA function well and people involved even express sympathy for the official position of another's country concerning the Namibian/South African border issue. However, they feel they are not in a position to influence the course of affairs, leaving this to their respective Ministries of Environment.

Marijke Steegstra demonstrates how local communities in Ghana install and use "development chiefs", or "queen mothers", with the objective to promote development. Such development chiefs can be Ghanaians but they may also be Westerners. Development chiefs are not themselves (political) chiefs but are subject to local chiefs, and in this sense they provide an excellent example of the fruitful co-existence of political chiefdom and (the wish for) development. As a confirmation of Chabal & Daloz's (1999: 38-39) general assertion that elections and their results express geographical solidarity, Steegstra reports that in Mepe town government efforts to boost development have diminished since the NDC party suffered electoral defeats. But the possibility for people to reflect on their own situation does have an enabling capacity here: the installation of development chiefs is actively sought after for the purpose of obtaining electricity and hospital equipment. Though this may confirm the state's failure to bring facilities in certain places of Ghana, it also shows people's rejection of "modernity without development" (cf. Chabal & Daloz 1999: 125). As a matter of curiosity, it may be highlighted that incorrect representation of the phenomenon of the "development chief" by both Western media and Ghanaian diaspora members can impact on the development chiefs themselves, as Steegstra fascinatingly describes for the Dutch development chief Otte.

Elisa Diallo reflects on literary representations of, and from, Africa and in her discussion unfolds a quite wide-ranging perspective on the place of Africa in the world. Drawing on the work of Guinean writer Tierno Monénembo, she indicates how Africa as an object of contemplation is no longer trapped in its past of colonialism and slavery, but now is reaching out to other continents for engagement, cooperation and communication. (This point of communication is also made by, e.g., Rijnierse (1999) who, like Bryceson (2000), argues that Chabal & Daloz (1999) have stressed too much the distinctiveness of Africa vis-à-vis the Western world.) The perspective revealed in Monénembo's novel *Pelourinho*

(1995) is that of a common cause across both sides of the Atlantic Ocean – a theme that perhaps matches Surendra's common identification of Mozambicans and Indians as *índicos*, people of the Indian Ocean, in Mia Couto's *Terra Sonâmbula* (1992: 26). The colonial past is not forgotten, but the memories and reflections of that past do not immobilize freedom of action in the world's present-day configurations.

Conclusion: Indications for Africa's changing dynamics

Perhaps the most resounding argument of Chabal & Daloz (1999) is that African political relations are patrimonial and clientelistic, and that this situation is too profitable for too many people to be readily discarded, leading to non-development. Examples of patrimonialism (neo or old) and clientelism can easily be found also in the present collection of papers, confirming much of Chabal & Daloz's judgment in this respect. However, as Hungwe & Chipo (2000: 277) point out: "That there is some instrumental value in the disorder for some is not surprising. What is more important is to identify who the winners and losers are"; the latter being mostly poorer sections of the population, women and children, as well as certain (ethno-regional) minorities and marginal groups like pastoralists. The chapters in this book make evident that the lower people are in the societal hierarchy, the more they experience the disadvantages of political mismanagement and, more significantly, cannot be supposed to subscribe to the idea that "disorder" is instrumental to them.

As also becomes clear from the chapters, people are mostly well aware of their adverse situation. The degree to which the socio-economically disadvantaged are able to identify origins of their hardships differs across populations. Moreover, the solutions based on such identifications, developed to increase communities' potentials, are highly contingent. Strategies vary widely, such as simply accepting one's fate, mixing local and foreign traits, or use violence. Here the view of society as a matrix shows its main shortcoming clearly: as said, a social matrix does not enforce its own interpretation and agenda for action. This makes it difficult to predict the future course of democratization and equitable distribution of wealth. It does, however, weaken Chabal & Daloz's suggestion of Africa following a "different agenda" (that of modernization without development). The recent acceleration of African economic growth and the continent's further integration into the world economy through elites (both political and criminal), as well as connections made through migration, monetary and social remittances, and popular culture would seem to confirm a more sceptical attitude.

As it stands the nature of the state will continue to be ambiguous; too strong for those challenging its authority to overcome its power, but too weak to steadfastly pursue a sophisticated economic infrastructure or aim at socio-political

equity. This leaves the state, described by Chabal & Daloz (1999: 9) as "simultaneously illusory and substantial", with the disparate capacities for impressive resource acquisition but limited efficiency or will in applying those resources. For instance, the state in Africa is the major partner for current business and development contracts with the People's Republic of China (Alden 2007). Deals are struck between African and Chinese national and sub-national governments, with little possibility for control by the populace, resulting in ambiguous effects on the economic and personal interests of African citizens. The same will be true for other new players, like India, Brazil and several Arab/Muslim countries in the Near and Far East.

Many parts of Africa, with its 850 million inhabitants, know more democracy and provide more opportunity and freedom for civil society organizations than China with its 1.3 billion people (see Obiorah 2007 for a discussion). The distribution of the fruits of economic and socio-cultural development will, however, depend heavily on the capability and space of individuals, civil society organizations and "neo-traditional" institutions to claim such progress for themselves vis-à-vis state apparatuses that are not satisfactorily under democratic control. As the studies contained in this volume show, this is difficult but possible and not necessarily constrained by neo-patrimonialist structures. Finally, they also illustrate that struggles for the definition and competing uses of "culture" are part of the dynamics of material and social change. Indeed, the debate on African politics on the state and local levels has shown a new interest in cultural patterns and representations, both political culture and popular culture, and as the latest work of Chabal & Daloz (2006) shows, the analysis of the impact of "culture", in both its fleeting meanings and its instrumental and expressive roles, is more vital than ever.

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PART I

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE EXTRACTION AND MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

2

Conservation of nature and rural development in South-Eastern Senegal

Hans P.M. van den Breemer

Introduction

During repeated stays in the department of Tambacounda in Senegal, in order to supervise fieldwork by Dutch Masters' students in development sociology,[1] I became interested in the problematic relationship between the directory board of the national park Niokolo Koba and the villages around the park. As a consequence of a fortress conservation policy in the past, all people living in villages in the park had been forcibly removed from it and resettled in or between the already existing villages outside the park. Although these imposed changes have not been undone, the directory board decided afterwards to follow a participatory approach towards the local communities; that means, creating a positive attitude within these communities to nature conservation by contributing to their development.

In this chapter I want to deal with the question of the interrelationship between nature conservation policies and rural development policies: how does this inter-

[1] This paper could not have been written without the enthusiasm and perseverance of the following Masters students: Esther de Graaf and Rebecca Vanmechelen in 2002, and Elke Boyen, Nienke Feenstra and Sander Muilerman in 2003. Data mentioned here have been gathered for a large part from their research reports and from conversations with them in the field. However, the selection, analysis and interpretation of the data in this paper are my responsibility.

relationship work in the area around the national park Niokolo Koba? Do they reinforce each other, as current ideas on sustainable development prescribe?

For practical reasons, research was limited to the rural municipality (*communauté rurale*) of Dialokoto (about 70 km south of Tambacounda). I was happy to find five students willing to carry out the research: Two in 2002 and three in 2003, from June to September in both years.[1] The municipality is well suited for this research because the Senegalese state is markedly represented by at least two significant instances of nature conservation: Firstly, the already mentioned national park (*Parc National de Niokolo Koba*, PNNK) and, secondly, the forest reserve of Diambour (*Forêt Classée de Diambour*, FCD).

The park started, in the 1920s, as a protected hunting reserve for French hunters. After a number of border changes and extensions the park has, since the last extension in 1969, an area of 913,000 ha, i.e, more than a quarter of the size of the Netherlands. It acquired the status of National Park in 1954. All human settlements were removed from the park during the 1970s, and all human inhabitation and exploitation of any resource within the park was officially forbidden. In 1981 it was classified as a biosphere reserve within the *Man and Biosphere Programme* (MAB) of UNESCO. This meant the introduction of a 'participatory' ideology, with the result that in recent times some human exploitation of some resources in the buffer zone (an adjacent area of approximately 1 km wide) was allowed under certain conditions (Feenstra 2005: 58). For a more detailed history of the PNNK, see Takforyan (1994: 53-6), Larrue (2002: 151) and Ndiaye (2003).

To the north of the National Park, separated from it by a long, narrow belt of land, we find the protected forest of Diambour, an area of about 150,000 ha. It was established in the second half of the 1930s in order to prevent the catchment basin of the river Nieriko from deforestation by the local people (Larrue 2002: 151-152). The status of reserve implies that it is forbidden by law to establish human settlements, to cut living trees and shrubs, to hunt, to use fire, and until recently also to cultivate crops. On the other hand, certain human activities have always been allowed, such as grazing cattle and gathering wild fruits, herbs, yam tubers, dead wood, etc. for local consumption. Since the new forest code of 1998 also some cultivation of food crops in places demarcated by the State forest service is allowed. For any form of commercial exploitation, however, an authorization by this national service is needed.

The rural municipality of Dialokoto numbers 44 settlements, with a total population of 7,121 inhabitants in 2004 (Boyen 2004: Annex 6), predominantly Mandinka and Peul (Fula). Most of the 44 settlements are not represented in the rural council (*conseil rural*), which has 28 seats and is based in the village of Dialokoto. The council has members of different political parties, but since the

rural elections of 2002 the PDS of President Wade has the majority (Boyen 2004: 28, 97-98; Vanmechelen 2004: 62). My students lived in five of the villages: (from north-west to south-east) Badi, Wassadou, Dialokoto, Dar Salam and Dienoudiala but some more villages were involved in their research like Nionghani, Touba Badi, Damantan, etc.

Administratively, the municipality of Dialokoto belongs together with the rural municipalities of Neteboulou and Missirah to the district (*arrondissement*) of Missirah, which has a "*sous-préfet*" as its head and which in its turn belongs to the *département* of Tambacounda under a *préfet*. The *sous-préfet* is assisted by a small group of specialists in agriculture, cattle husbandry, forestry, health care, nutrition etc., called the CERP (*Centre d'Expansion Rurale Polyvalente*), which has to serve the three municipalities within the district, the councils as well as private groups.

For the park authorities, the rural municipality of Dialokoto belongs to what they call "the periphery of the national park"; it is stretching out from west to east along the northern border of the national park.

In order to answer the above-mentioned questions I will first explain in brief the ideology underlying the desired integration of conservation and development policies (1). Then follows an overview of organizations active in the research area (2). First we will look at the governmental organizations for nature protection (2.1) and for rural development and income generation (2.2). Next we will look at private projects, first for nature conservation (2.3) and second for rural income generation (2.4). In a comparative analysis and conclusion (3) we will try to formulate some generalizations about the relationship between conservation and development policies in our research area.

Conservation of nature and rural development: Twin concepts

With the definitive breakthrough of the concept of sustainable development in the international discourse on environment and development during the 1980s (IUCN 1980; WCED [Brundtland] 1987; IUCN 1991), awareness has been widely generated that attempts at the conservation of nature and those at rural development have necessarily to be integrated (Adams & Hulme 2001: 13-16). While in former days development experts and nature conservationists often worked apart and sometimes even had antagonistic relationships (Anderson & Grove 1987: 3, 7-10; Adams & Hulme 2001: 12), several economic and environmental crises, for instance in Africa in the 1970s, required their cooperation. Conservationists became aware that, if they wanted to realize their goals in a sustainable way, they would have to take into account the needs and developmental wishes at the local level (IIED 1994; Hulme & Murphree 2001: 1-2; Achterberg 1994: 26-30). And development experts started to recognize that, for

development to be durable, they had to respect the "carrying capacity" of the environment (Harrison 1987: 27-43; World Bank 1992: 1-63; Shepherd 1998: 1-89). So, at an ideological level both parties became locked into interdependency.

As a result, several Integrated Conservation and Development Projects, the so-called ICDPs, have been undertaken in the zones around national parks and nature reserves, often with community-based management (Adams & Hulme 2001: 20). It is believed that the protection of nature and wildlife, in combination with growing tourism, will stimulate rural development by creating paid jobs and other remunerating activities, whereas progressing development and alleviation of poverty will facilitate the protection of nature, among others by removing the motivations for what are regarded as illegal practices. Policies of conservation and those of development should be synergetic in this ideological construction.

However, there is a contradiction within this construction. Although the two parties are interdependent and should cooperate, the tension between conservation goals and development goals remains. So, the complaint is often heard that the ICDPs have too little to offer either for rural development or for nature conservation (Adams & Hulme 2001: 20-21), that means that the supposed synergy does not work. In every practical situation the interrelationship between the policies of nature protection and rural development has to be analysed and negotiated, and therefore a forum for coordination is a must. How is this ideology applied in our research area, as perceived by different stakeholders?

Overview of organizations active in the research area

In 2002/3 there were at least 13 organizations for nature conservation and/or rural development. They may be divided into state and private organizations. Next they may be arranged along a continuum going from those aimed at nature conservation to those aimed at rural development or rural income generation.

State organizations for nature conservation

The DPN (*Direction du Parc National*). Since 1967 the management of the park has been in the hands of a governmental directory board (DPN), whose legal competencies are limited to the park and its buffer zone. From the 1960s until far into the 1980s, the policies with regard to the local people had the reputation of being very repressive, with the culminating point during the 1970s in the forced resettlement of all villages' inhabitants into zones adjacent to the park. However, as poaching and degradation increased (Ndaye 2003: 7), and under the influence of UNESCO's MAB programme, a new policy was installed (Takforyan 1994: 56). In order to prevent poaching and to realize the durable conservation of nature, supported by the local communities, the inconveniences of the forced resettlement had to be relieved by creating economic opportunities, outside and

possibly also inside the park, and by involving local people, to their advantage, in the maintenance of natural species. If local people enjoy economic advantages from the park and the wildlife, they will see it as being in their interest to protect nature and to abandon or prevent poaching. The growth of tourism is regarded as a necessary condition for nature protection and rural development. Moreover, the park was not intended to become a green island in an ocean of degraded environment but it was supposed to function as a store-room from which plants and animals, which are still abundant within the park, could spread or be transferred to zones outside. This demands a sustainable use and management of natural resources in these adjacent zones.

Thus, according to this new philosophy of the DPN, rural development is required to achieve the sustainable conservation of nature. During the period of research (2002/3) there were four tourist facilities, two inside the park (the *Hôtel de Simenti* and the *Camp des Lions*) and two in the buffer zone (the *Campement touristique de Dar Salam* and the *Campement touristique de Wassadou*). The park and these tourist facilities offer some opportunities for local development (Muilerman 2004: 111-115; Boyen 2004: 42-44).

Firstly, they bring with them paid employment: As hotel personnel (about 65 salaried jobs during the top season from November till March); as tourist guides (the park has about 40 of them); and as temporary labourers during the weeks after the rainy season for the repair and maintenance of roads, bridges and observation-posts inside the park (at 1,750 frs. CFA or 2.67 euro per day according to Vanmechelen 2004: 117). Most interesting for local people is the job of tourist guide in the national park. These guides usually are recruited from neighbouring villages and they must be available on demand. During the tourist season they work most days, but in the low season only occasionally. For instance Dar Salam has 12 tourist guides. The mean salary of a guide for the whole tourist season is estimated at an amount of 300,000 frs. CFA (or 461 euro) (Boyen 2004: 44). Badi is described as having eight tourist guides and eight labourers as well as two persons employed in the *Hôtel de Simenti* (de Graaf 2004: 94). The number of guides of Dialokoto is not exactly known (at least four); that of the labourers is about ten. For Wassadou (Feenstra 2005: 86) and Dienoudiala no guides have been registered, only some occasional labourers.

There are other developmental effects of tourism as well. Local people may earn some money by selling locally produced or gathered foodstuff and fruit to the hotels and the park guards, by selling candles of beeswax and souvenirs, and by cultural entertainment (music and dance) for the tourists.

Next, the new participatory policies of the DPN have created new economic opportunities for local communities. These are allowed to fish and to gather several kinds of forest products inside the buffer zone for local consumption, on

condition that they are organized, respect certain quota or practise reforestation. For example, in Dialokoto, an officially recognized local group of entrepreneurial persons (a GIE, *Groupement d'Intérêt Economique*) has been allowed to harvest honey in the buffer zone. Elsewhere GIEs have been permitted to practise irrigated cultivation of bananas (Badi, Wassadou) or to keep guinea-fowls (Medina) or grow bamboo (Dar Salam), with raw materials from the buffer zone. One day per six weeks the people of Dar Salam are collectively allowed to practise fishery inside the park, for local consumption only (Boyen 2004: 38-41). The women's group of that same village is allowed to gather dead wood in the buffer zone in exchange for reforestation activities within and around the village. Dienoudiala has been allowed to exploit the "*campement des lions*" inside the park.

The EFC (Service des Eaux et Forêts et de la Chasse). This is a country-wide organization which sees to the observance of the national forest law. Its main objective is to realize a sustainable use of Senegal's forests through regulation of their exploitation as well as by reforestation. EFC has always had a double task: On the one hand, to provide the Senegalese cities with wood and charcoal by allocating licences and quota to entrepreneurs, and on the other hand, to maintain the productivity of the forests for future generations. One important task derived from this is the prevention and fighting of bush fires in cooperation with local groups (*comités de lutte contre les feux de brousse*); another the management of tree nurseries.

Another main objective is the regulation of the hunt by the allocation of hunting territories and quota to entrepreneurs (Muilerman 2004: 65-66, 115; Boyen 2004: 94; Feenstra 2005: 52-54). In 1989 the regional EFC at Tambacounda created within that region 24 lease holdings (*zones amodiées*) for hunting small game and one large zone for big game hunting (*Zone d'Intervention Cynégétique* or *ZIC*). Our sources do not mention whether all the holdings are actually leased or not. The leaseholders are partly foreigners and partly entrepreneurial, wealthy nationals. They have to pay 300,000 frs. CFA a year for a licence plus a small amount per hectare. They usually have their own camp (*campement de chasse*) in their lease zone and they recruit their clients, by means of modern publicity channels, mostly from French hunting associations. It is in their own interest to manage the game stock in their holding in a sustainable way and to prevent poaching. Big game hunting in the ZIC is organized and controlled by the forest service itself. Hunters, mostly from France, have to buy a general licence (15,000 frs. CFA [23 euro] per week) and next a special permit to shoot a fixed number of the kind of animal they want, for instance for one buffalo or one antelope (at 300 euro each). Local people cannot afford big game

hunting. For small game hunting they have to buy a licence (13,000 frs. CFA [20 euro] for the whole season). They are not allowed to hunt in the lease holdings.

In the rural municipality of Neteboulou there are at least two hunting camps. The leaseholders recruit their personnel mostly from the neighbouring villages, i.e., guides, cooks, cleaners, guards, musicians, etc. The hunting season largely coincides with the tourist season (from November until March).

After the general paradigm change in tropical forestry towards more participatory approaches, the Senegalese parliament finally accepted a new forest law in 1993. This *code forestier* makes co-management by state organisms and private groups legally possible and specifies its conditions. Moreover, local groups may obtain permission for the commercial exploitation of forest products. In 1998 this law was altered again. Legal competencies of the municipal councils were redefined and they were allowed to transfer part of their responsibilities to specialized private partners (entrepreneurs, local groups or NGOs) on condition that there is an approved plan for sustainable use.

With regard to forestry, EFC as the nation-wide guardian of the state forests has to cooperate nowadays with many councils at the different administrative levels and with the village heads, but also with numerous groups of women or young people in the villages and with GIEs, NGOs and private projects for nature conservation as well as with the DPN.

The CR (*conseil rural*). The rural council has several tasks and powers with regard to rural development as well as the maintenance of natural resources within its administrative territory: Firstly, the allotment of use rights on land and on forest, with the exception of the right on commercial forest exploitation, which means that the allotment of this last right remains the task of the EFC; secondly, the carrying out and the coordination of development projects in the different villages of the rural municipality (as roads, bridges, schools, health centres, water wells); thirdly, the coordination of reforestation (wind breaks, woodlots) and the prevention and combat of bush fires (laying out of fire-lanes). Within the context of progressive decentralization more powers have been delegated to the rural council. So, in 1993, the council acquired the right to demand subventions from the national forest fund (*Fonds Forestier National*) for local forest management. It also got the legal power to redistribute the use rights on natural resources (*gestion de terroir*) according to a management plan approved by the EFC. In 1998, it was allowed to transfer certain responsibilities to specialized private partners. In the early 1990s the council had already been given the right to collect annual taxes in the villages of its territory and to keep these revenues as its budget.

In 1999 the rural councils of Dialokoto, Missirah and Bala (department of Bakel) delegated the management of zones with high densities of *rônier* palms

(*Borassus aethiopum*) to the CIVD (*Comité Intervillageois de Développement*) in order to protect the biodiversity of these zones and to develop a sustainable use of the palms (Feenstra 2005: 66-69). Initially, 18 of the 22 villages identified as neighbouring on such a high density zone, took part; in 2003, 12 of them were still participating.

State organizations for rural development and income generation

There are too many governmental organizations and services concerned with some aspects of rural development, to discuss them all here. According to the criterion of furthering income-generating activities among the local people, we may select some organizations. One of these is the SONACOS, the state organization which sells groundnut seeds to farmers who for one reason or another do not have sufficient groundnut seeds themselves. Complaints are rather general that these seeds are delivered too late and in insufficient quantities, and that prices are too high. Rumours are current that this is done on purpose in order to force the farmers to cultivate cotton in favour of another income-generating organization, namely SODEFITEX.

The SODEFITEX (Société pour le Développement des Fibres Textiles). Since 1963 the Senegalese government has been trying to promote the cultivation of cotton. In the early 1970s the government divided the country into several agrarian or ecological zones. For each zone a specialized development organization was established, to which the rural development in that particular zone was entrusted. So, the so-called cotton zone (*zône cotonnière*; Kaolack, Tambacounda, Kolda) became the territory for the newly formed Sodefitex in 1974. Sodefitex has been charged by the Senegalese government with two tasks: Namely 1) the promotion of the production and commercialization of cotton, and 2) rural and agricultural development. The second task implies the advancement of food crop production (horticulture; small scale irrigation agriculture), animal husbandry, literacy and health care and in a later period also social forestry.

Over the course of time Sodefitex has faced several reorganizations. At the local level farmers have been organized in cooperatives, at first in large village cooperatives and later, since about 1999, in smaller groups called GPCs (*Groupements de Producteurs de Coton*) which are covered by the National Federation of GPCs (FNPC). The GPCs may buy requisites (seeds, chemical manure, insecticides, pesticides etc.) and agricultural equipment (ploughs, several types of machines, carts for transport etc.) from Sodefitex on credit, to be repaid in phases. The management of the credits has been delegated by Sodefitex to the GPCs and the FNPC. The formation of the cooperatives and GPCs as well as the necessary professional and literacy training of the farmers involved, surely has been a tremendous stimulus for rural development in its broadest sense.

Nevertheless, the relationship between Sodefitex and the farmers has over the course of time been subject to periodical crises. One of the general reasons is the rising price for requisites and the declining price for the produce, but there are other important reasons which have to do with the vulnerability of cotton cultivation, some past organization principles for the local cooperatives, and the attitude of Sodefitex in the case of bad harvests and farmers' inability to pay back the credits. After an initial enthusiasm for cotton growing and high production figures, farmers started to withdraw from cotton cultivation by decreasing their cultivated cotton area. Many farmers cultivate only some cotton just to have access to Sodefitex' credit system and to agricultural equipment and fertilizer, things which they also use for their food crop production (Muilerman 2004: 95; Boyen 2004: 111). However, farmers who are relatively wealthy or have a large labour force at their disposal, may accept the risk of a debt, and cultivate large areas of cotton.

Private organizations for nature conservation

Projet de Gestion de la Biodiversité des Rôneraies de Wassadou. This project, carried out by the CIVD, belongs to a group of nine small-scale local projects, which all joined into the "Fédération des Conservateurs de Biodiversité à la Périphérie du Parc National de Niokolo Koba" in 2000. All nine micro-projects are related to the National Park. They formed a federation to be able to acquire some support from the UNDP (Muilerman 2004: 69-70).

This project has as objectives the protection and the regeneration of areas with a high concentration of a kind of palm trees, the *rônier*, and the generation of financial income out of its sustainable use. The *rônier* is a multifunctional tree: Its leaves serve for roofing, for mats and fences, for baskets and fish traps; its fibres supply the material for pieces of furniture (arm-chairs and tables) and for sponges; its fruits are processed for human consumption; its roots have medicinal value; the wood of its trunk serves as rafters for roofs, and lastly the tree produces a stimulant, namely palm wine. The traditional way of exploiting the tree often means its death. In most zones around the national park this useful tree has become scarce or has already completely disappeared. However, around Wassadou and Badi it still exists in large numbers. In order to counter the process of decrease, the project members have established a *rônier* nursery and woodlot in Wassadou, and they also planted young trees between the farms (Feenstra 2005: 69). In July 2003 they made a proposal to the rural council to establish a communal *rônier* reserve. They provide information about the use value of this tree, how it is threatened, and how to protect it. Finally, they try to organize the production and sale of furniture and sponges.

The PRCNK (Projet des Rôneraies Communautaires de Niokolo Koba). This project was started by a Belgian NGO. Aims of the project were the protection of

concentrations of the *rônier* palm in the periphery of the national park and the development of new economic opportunities related to this palm (to enhance the economic value of the tree). To these ends the project organized training in the sustainable use of the *rônier* and in making baskets, brooms and furniture and tried to set up a GIE for the artisans (de Graaf 2004: 111; Feenstra 2005: 71-74). Moreover, woodlots of *rôniers* and other trees were planted by local groups. The making of sponges (out of fresh branches) by the women was discouraged on account of the bad effect on the *rônier*. Since the building of an office in Dienoudiala in 2000, the project has been able to set up activities in 23 villages. It established, parallel to the CIVD, its proper network, the CIVG (*Comité Inter-villageois de Gestion*), in which initially 18 villages took part. In 2003 this number had dropped to six (Feenstra 2005: 70). Unfortunately, the project did not succeed in developing a form of cooperation with the EFC because this organization wanted its services paid by the project (Muilerman 2004: 69-70). Therefore, the project decided to work with the DPN of the national park, although the DPN had no jurisdiction outside the park. Within the context of this cooperation, the DPN placed one of its agents as a public relations officer (*animateur*) within the PRCNK, although this man lacked the necessary qualities and was not popular among the local people (Feenstra 2005: 80). After the first phase of three years the project was stopped.

It is worth mentioning is that the local *Projet de Gestion de la Biodiversité des Rôneraies de Wassadou* was already functioning some months before the arrival of the PRCNK. It is amazing that the two projects did not succeed in realizing any form of cooperation. According to staff members of the Belgian project, the local project staff wanted access to the resources and means of the PRCNK, they wanted to be paid on the same basis as the local personnel of the Belgian project and they wanted local people to be paid for their contribution ("money for work"), which was all unacceptable for the PRCNK. For additional reasons see Feenstra (2005: 77-81).

The PROGEDE (Projet de Gestion durable et participative des Energies traditionnelles et de substitution). The PROGEDE is a very large project, financed by the World Bank and the Netherlands (Boyen 2004: 100-105). Given the alarming situation of an increasing need for wood fuel and charcoal in the cities and the rapidly decreasing forest area in Senegal, this project has a twofold aim: Firstly, to develop a system for the supply of energy (fuel wood, charcoal, gas) to the urban consumers and for the promotion of a sustainable use of energy; secondly, to develop a systematic and sustainable exploitation of the remaining forests in Senegal, around Kolda and Tambacounda. To this second end these forests were divided into a large number of blocks, separated from each other by large fire lanes. This allows a more systematic and controllable allocation policy

by the EFC and it confines the damage in case of bush fires. Moreover, in order to reduce the pressure on the remaining forests, the project promotes many diverse activities such as sustainable land use and horticulture, tree culture and planting, fighting bush fires, the choice of new, drought-resistant varieties, stock-feeding for commercial purposes and vaccination campaigns, prevention of cattle theft, poultry farming and the production of eggs, breeding guinea-fowl, apiculture (without the dangerous use of fire) and honey processing, and the creation of income-generating activities such as marketing poultry and eggs, cattle, honey and wax etc. On all these points, and dependent on the local situation, the project in principle works with local groups, or committees for management and development (*Comités Villageois de Gestion et de Développement*). The project also helps to finance the construction of water wells for horticulture as well as permanent water pools for cattle breeding. Some agricultural tools, beehives etc., are given for free, which other projects find disturbing. In Dar Salam the project has fully financed the construction of a water pump and two wells. After a fire had destroyed the whole village in 1996, the project organized training in fire prevention and donated all kinds of fire-fighting appliances freely (Boyen 2004: 105-107).

For its second objective the project has an office (*antenne*) in Tambacounda. In order to consolidate the process of administrative decentralization this office aims at cooperation with rural municipal councils in the vast regions of Tambacounda and Kolda, also with the council of Dialokoto (Muilerman 2004: 73). It tries to strengthen the knowledge and capacities of the councils with regard to the sustainable use and management of natural resources. The project also works at higher administrative levels: It cooperates closely with the regional EFC, with the DPN and the CERP, in order to strengthen the capacities of those state services.

The ASAN (Association Sénégalaise des Amis de la Nature). This Senegalese NGO also has the twofold aim of protecting nature and improving the living conditions of the rural population. It has a French partner organization and is a member of the international "*Amis de la Nature*" and the IUCN. It puts a heavy emphasis on nature education by means of radio broadcasting and schools. In this context it delivers useful services to the EFC and to the DPN by explaining their programmes and measures to the public, and by making people aware of the worth of nature conservation. It also organizes conferences, public debates, courses in ornithology, excursions to the park, film projections and the yearly world days for the environment (in June). Moreover, it has created tree nurseries at schools and at village and regional level.

To improve living conditions it has co-financed school buildings, health centres, water wells and grain mills, and tries to find funds for such small

projects (Boyen 2004: 111-114; Muilerman 2004: 74-75). It is active in several villages around the national park such as Missirah, Dialokoto, Badi, Wassadou and Dar Salam.

Private projects for rural income generation

The CMS (Crédit Mutuel du Sénégal). This non-profit organization, established in France and working throughout francophone West Africa, has a small office in Missirah (Muilerman 2004: 91-92). The CMS designs and organizes saving and credit projects. Individuals, groups or NGOs can become members and receive micro credits. To become a member one has to save and deposit a certain minimum amount of money. Once a member, one gets further information about banking affairs. At first, members can get loans up to the amount saved. Later, after the client has proven to be able to pay back the loan and to pay the interest, he or she can obtain a loan up to the maximum of three times the mean positive balance of the last six months. There are five types of loans for agricultural, consumptive or commercial ends. All loans must in principle be paid back within a year. The CMS has clients in many villages (also in Dienoudiala), and also several projects are contracting out their micro finance system to the CMS. The CMS has filled the vacuum that the SGBS (*Société Générale des Banques au Sénégal*) and other official banks have left.

The PROMER (Projet d'Appui aux Micro Entreprises Rurales). This project, financed with a loan that the government received from the IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development), has as its objective to stimulate non-agrarian initiatives (micro-enterprises) in the villages of the administrative regions Tambacounda, Kolda and Kaolack. Now that the prices for peanuts and cotton have gone down, people can no longer rely on agriculture only, and alternative economic activities have to be encouraged. Thus, PROMER creates professional training facilities, tries to find new markets or to facilitate access to existing ones, gives assistance in the contact with official banks to obtain loans etc. Initially PROMER concentrated its activities on cattle husbandry and commerce, nowadays more on small industrial activities and services. It also provides for adult literacy campaigns, notably for functional adult literacy which means it is at the same time a course in entrepreneurship. According to a key informant (Muilerman 2004: 94), the most important problem is that an accepted regional plan is lacking within which the projects have to function. Efforts to organize a forum for coordination and negotiation (*Cadre de Concertation*) for the different projects have failed. Its success would mean that the international donors give up a part of their autonomy.

The GIEs (Groupements d'Intérêt Economique). After the State, in 1984, had created by law the possibility of establishing formal economic associations of

entrepreneurial individuals, many GIEs came into being. A GIE officially is an organization of between 4 and 20 members, which is formally recognized by the State and on those grounds may demand subventions or credit facilities to realize its economic objectives (commerce, gardening, transport, grain mill, water well, etc.). A GIE must have an official board (president, secretary etc.), official regulations approved by the State, and a bank account with at least 10,000 frs. CFA (15 euro). To fulfil all bureaucratic conditions and taxes an amount of about 50,000 frs. CFA (77 euro) is needed.

All villages have several GIEs. Badi has an unknown number of GIEs (de Graaf 2004: 64-65), one for the sponge-making women and the others for irrigated banana cultivation in the buffer zone. Wassadou has two GIEs for the irrigated cultivation of bananas (Feenstra 2005: 62-5): One large GIE (77 parcels of land and 103 participants) which has made a demand for more land, and a smaller one (25 parcels of which only 21 in use in 2003, after a break-down of the pump in March 2002 which meant the loss of all the banana plants). The plantations were laid out in the buffer zone with the consent of the DPN. In September 2003 all the plantations were devastated by the flooding from the river.

Dialokoto has at least 14 GIEs (Vanmechelen 2004: 58). Only some of them are active within the domain of nature protection and reforestation (control of poaching, bushfire prevention, commercial woodlots). Dienoudiala has five GIEs (Muilerman 2004: 91). Dar Salam has two GIEs (Boyen 2004: 25): Both of them are active in the domain of nature protection as well as that of rural development.

The MFR (Maison Familiale Rurale). This organization has 51 workshops, spread over rural Senegal. One of them is in Dialokoto (Vanmechelen 2004: 59). Its aim is to encourage and support local initiatives, in particular projects of GIEs, within the domain of agriculture, cattle breeding, apiculture and literacy. The MFR is financed by international donors. All members of the cooperating GIEs have to contribute 1,000 frs. CFA (1.53 euro) a year. Among the activities, carried out in 24 of the 44 villages of the municipality of Dialokoto, can be cited: Granting micro-credits (for example to buy a donkey, a plough or a cart), literacy training in Pulaar and Mandinka, establishment and organization of cereal banks and grain mills, training in advanced apiculture (without fire). This form of apiculture by GIEs was allowed in the buffer zone by the DPN.

The APROVAG (Association des Producteurs de la Vallée de la Gambie). This association, established in 1988 as a local follow-up for the international OFADEC (*Office Africain de Développement Economique*), has started a commercial banana plantation along the Gambia river 9 km from the villages of Badi and Nionghani in 2001. The objective was to generate a more regular and stable financial income for farmers from these and other villages, who had once

lived inside the park and have to cope with poverty since their resettlement in a less fertile area (de Graaf 2004: 104-109).

For the establishment of this plantation consent was needed from the DPN, because of its location within the buffer zone of the national park: Trees had to be cut down as well as water withdrawn from the river for irrigation, while pesticides, insecticides and artificial manure had to be applied. Moreover, to produce a top harvest a plantation may remain only for four years in the same spot. An agreement between the DPN and the APROVAG was signed at the end of 2000. The project agreed to help in the fight against poaching, among other things by forbidding its participating farmers to cross the river.

In the village of Badi 24 families received a parcel. Other families had to be put on a waiting list. Therefore, it is remarkable that parcels were assigned also to people from outside the periphery of the PNNK, notably to a group of Mouride children from Touba. They live in a settlement near the plantation, called Touba Badi. Preparations on the spot started in August 2001: 113 parcels of 10 x 20 metres as well as adjacent grounds and paths had to be laid out by the participants, while the APROVAG delivered the necessary banana seedlings, two water pumps, tubes, etc. During the research period, in August 2002 (de Graaf 2004: 106), the second harvest took place. Transport and marketing were carried out by the APROVAG.

People in Badi were very positive about the APROVAG. Unfortunately, because of the extremely heavy rains in September 2003 all the plantations along the river Gambia were flooded what meant the loss of all the banana trees and of all the energy invested, as well as replanting and waiting for the first harvest.

There were more plantations along the river Gambia, managed by GIEs or supervised by NGOs such as the plantation called Laboya 15 km from Dialokoto. At this plantation several young men from villages as far away as Tambacounda had a parcel.

Comparative analysis and conclusion

In answering the question of how to characterize the relationship, within our research area, between nature conservation policies and those for rural development, we have, as is already evident from the above, to make a distinction between the ideological level and reality as perceived by the representatives of different stakeholder groups.

Governmental interventions at ideological level

The “conservation and development” ideology seems to be clearly reflected in the objectives and the approach of the DPN, the EFC, the Rural Council (CR)

and also of the Sodefitex to some extent, thus in all governmental organizations for nature conservation or rural development which have been discussed here.

The directory board (DPN) of the national park Niokolo Koba emphasized the necessity of creating economic opportunities for the local people living in the adjacent zones in order to realize durable conservation and a solid local protection of nature. The words "dialogue" and "negotiation" were recurrent in their conversation with the researchers.

The national forest service (EFC) showed enthusiasm for realizing the objective of sustainable exploitation of the state forests with the new means given by the forest laws of 1993 and 1998. That means co-management of state forests with private groups as well as commercial exploitation of forest products by local groups, and since 1998, the legal transfer of conservation responsibilities of the rural councils to specialized private partners as well as some food crop cultivation in certain parts of the state forests by groups of local people. For the hunt, the EFC already had a system of lease holding, in which it is in the interests of the leaseholder to manage the game stock in a sustainable way and thus to prevent poaching.

The rural council (CR) officially represents the local communities, and has the task of coordinating development projects and increasingly also the protection of natural resources. The council collects the annual taxes for its own budget. Moreover, it has the right since 1993 to demand subventions from the national forest fund for projects of forest management. Since 1998 it has also had the legal power to reorganize the use rights on natural resources (*gestion de terroir*) according to a management plan approved by the EFC.

Then there is the rural development organization of Sodefitex, established in 1974 by demand of the Senegalese government. Besides the promotion and commercialization of cotton, the Sodefitex has been charged with the more general task of rural and agricultural development. While both these tasks imply the rise of financial income for the farmers, the second task includes the advancement of food crop production, animal husbandry, literacy, health care and in a later period also social forestry (woodlots, windbreaks etc.).

Thus, at an ideological level the international message of the integration of nature conservation and rural development seems to be well understood by the governmental organizations discussed above.

The perceived reality of governmental interventions

All these governmental organizations, with the exception of Sodefitex, make clear that they have to cope with an enormous lack of money and means.

The staff of the DPN had dwindled to about 70 members in 2003, and had only two cars at its disposal to cover an area of 913,000 ha (Takforyan 1994: 60-

61; Ndiaye 2003: 14; Feenstra 2005: 56-58). Although the DPN got some help from the army, illegal exploitation, especially commercial poaching, still is a major problem (Boyen 2004: 78; Muilerman 2004: 61; Feenstra 2005: 57). Moreover, the national park is surrounded by nine rural municipalities which form together the so-called periphery of the park and which belong to different higher administrative units (Ndiaye 2003: 4; Boyen 2004: 87-88, annex 6; Feenstra 2005: 57). It is time-consuming to maintain contacts with all these actors at the different levels, let alone to come to effective agreements. In addition to this, the DPN has started an international cooperation with the neighbouring Badiar National Park in Guinea, which may be desirable from several points of view but is yet another competitor for the limited means. Therefore, communication and cooperation with the local communities in the periphery is mostly left to special projects.

The EFC also has to face a serious decrease of means (personnel, money, cars and computers), consequently with complaints about insufficient communication with the many conservation and/or development projects and with the DPN, about unsatisfactory contacts with the villages (de Graaf 2004: 50; Muilerman 2004: 67) and about corrupt behaviour of agents (Feenstra 2005: 88). According to EFC officers, the regional consultation structure (*cadre de concertation*) also does not function well. The complaint is that there are too many different projects, which are richly funded, whereas their staffs behave arrogantly and refuse cooperation.

With regard to the hunt, hunters must be accompanied by an official guide who must see to the observance of the rules. Among local people the hunters have a bad reputation: They do not respect the rules, while their guides and local drivers do not dare to intervene for fear of losing their jobs, and the EFC is understaffed (Boyen 2004: 95). Ndiaye (2003: 11, 14) calls the lease system "in principle correct", but speaks about a lack of respect and control by all the partners concerned. Within this context it is interesting to note that Takforyan (1994: 62) mentions contradictions between the policy of the DPN and those of other governmental organizations. While the DPN regards it as necessary for the maintenance of biodiversity within the park to further it also in the periphery of the park, the remunerative exploitation of wildlife and forests outside the park is in the hands of the EFC. Moreover, the government stimulates the cultivation of cash crops (cotton, bananas) in the periphery, which can hardly be reconciled with the maintenance of biodiversity.

With regard to the rural councils, they also have to cope with a serious lack of means and specialized knowledge to carry out their tasks in a satisfactory way. In several rural municipalities, also in that of Dialokoto, local communities are so dissatisfied with the functioning of the council that they refuse to pay the taxes

which means a decrease of revenue for the council (Feenstra 2005: 84-85). Although project leaders are expected to present their plans to the council, there is a general recognition that these projects function too independently of the rural council.

As far as the Sodefitex is concerned, its relationship with the farmers has been subject to periodical crises. One of the principal reasons is that the cultivation of cotton regularly does not bring the desired rise in financial income, because of rising prices for requisites and declining prices for the produce, combined with poor harvests as a result of bad weather or insects. Thus, many farmers have withdrawn from cotton cultivation by decreasing their cotton area to a minimum in order to keep access to Sodefitex's credit system. Cotton growing is interesting only for the relatively wealthy farmers who can sustain the risk of a bad harvest and debts.

Also with regard to the DPN and the EFC local people show mixed feelings. On the one hand, the negative effects of the national park and the forest reserve on local income generation have been amply explained to the researchers: Resettlement on less fertile soils, ever shifting borders of the buffer zone, enclosure between protected areas and consequently a smaller agricultural area, shorter fallow and longer cultivation periods, soil degradation and smaller harvests; hunting and fishing not options anymore; damage to crops and cattle by wild animals without any form of compensation and with heavy sanctions on shooting them. On the other hand, it is widely recognized that thanks to governmental intervention, flora and fauna within the park still are more diverse and beautiful than elsewhere in Senegal and hence have kept their tourist attractiveness. People have high expectations of tourism. It is much appreciated that the tourist facilities and the hunting camps already bring a number of paid jobs to local people (such as hotel personnel, guides, labourers) as well as other economic opportunities (such as selling foodstuffs and fruits, souvenirs, cultural entertainment). People are also positive about the newly created opportunities in the buffer zone (such as the apiculture, the use of guinea fowls and bamboo and the cultivation of bananas) as well as in the reserve (food crops). Nevertheless, they consider this all to be far from sufficient, the more so on account of all the sacrifices they have had to make in the past and still have to make. In particular, they severely criticize the fact that the higher – and better paid – personnel of the DPN and the EFC (staff, park guards and forest agents) as well as those of the hotels are recruited from elsewhere in Senegal, mostly from Dakar.

Private initiatives at intentional level

Student reports make mention of four non-governmental initiatives in nature protection, namely the biodiversity project of Wassadou, the PRCNK of

Dienoudiala, the PROGEDE, and the ASAN. All these projects have the double aim of protecting nature and improving living conditions (or developing new economic opportunities). The PROGEDE is by far the largest project. As has been said, its second goal is to develop a sustainable exploitation of the remaining forests in Senegal. In order to reduce the pressure on these forests, many diverse development activities are promoted: From horticulture to vaccination campaigns and to the creation of income-generating activities such as marketing poultry and eggs, cattle, honey etc. It also tries to strengthen the knowledge and capacities of the rural councils, the EFC and the CERP with regard to the sustainable use and management of natural resources.

Five initiatives in rural development have been mentioned: The CMS, the PROMER, the GIEs, the MFR and the APROVAG. With the exception of a small number of GIEs, none of these five initiatives seems to have the protection of nature and natural resources as an explicit objective. Thus, while the private projects for nature conservation explicitly consider rural development as essential, those for rural development do not explicitly recognize the protection of nature and natural resources as necessary for rural development. Here the message of an integrated approach has not come through or has been marginalized.

The perceived reality of non-governmental interventions

When it comes to the reality of the private projects for nature conservation, the most remarkable fact undoubtedly is the failure of the Belgian *Projet Rôneraies* (PRCNK). This project was sociologically not well prepared before its start and, once in the field, proved to be not flexible enough to cope with the wishes of already existing organizations, namely the countrywide EFC and the small local biodiversity project of Wassadou (Muilerman 2004: 70-72; Feenstra 2005: 77-81).

This failure probably could have been prevented if there had been a regional forum for coordination and negotiation (*Cadre de Concertation*). Its absence is felt as a serious lack, notably by the EFC, the DPN, the CERP and the PROMER. There was a rather general complaint that the international donors often are unwilling to give up their autonomy (Muilerman 2004: 94; Feenstra 2005: 82; 89).

Another observation has been that local people, despite a high appreciation of the activities of PROGEDE, had accepted its conditions only in name and that in practice they continued to secretly cut *rôniers* and bamboos within the national park (Boyen 2004: 107). Often there is a hidden tendency to realize one's own short-term interests first of all, which has undermined several projects (Feenstra 2005: 81-82).

With regard to the reality of the private projects for rural development, some other problems have been noticed. Although the CMS office in Missirah is said

to function well and several projects (PROMER, MFR) make use of its services, individual local appeal for micro-credit is still limited. Familial logic does not seem to match with that of entrepreneurial management, which is thwarting private initiative (Muilerman 2004: 97).

All private initiatives, with exception of the PRCNK were positively appreciated by many people at the local level. Nevertheless, they did not find it sufficient. In Badi there was a waiting list for the APROVAG. In Wassadou one of the GIEs wanted to enlarge its plantation to satisfy the demand for parcels. Moreover, all banana plantations were devastated by flooding in September 2003 which meant the loss of all local investments and another year to work and to wait for the first harvest. Also there is always the risk that the pump will break down which means severe damage to the plantation, as recently happened to one of the GIEs at Wassadou. Lastly, apes and hippos are fond of bananas and cause a lot of damage, despite the long hours of guarding. Unfortunately, the cultivation of bananas in the buffer zone probably is unsustainable and harmful to the environment.

Conclusions

Integration and synergy of conservation and rural development policies presuppose at least three conditions: Formal expression in the philosophy and objectives of most organizations and projects concerned, sufficient means to realize those objectives, as well as a forum for coordination and negotiation in order to elaborate a synergetic cooperation adapted to the specific situation. On the basis of the foregoing description and analysis we may formulate three conclusions: 1) that the governmental organizations discussed here (DPN, EFC, CR and Sodefitex) and all the private projects for nature conservation do recognize this double aim of nature conservation and rural development, but that the private projects for rural development, with the exception of some GIEs, have not formulated any intentions to nature conservation; 2) that these governmental organizations, with the exception of Sodefitex, have to cope with such a serious lack of means and personnel that they cannot correctly implement their policies, whereas many private projects are relatively rich and dispose of much more means; 3) that the much-needed forum for coordination and negotiation does not function because, according to several important organizations, many private projects are behaving in an independent and arrogant way. Thus, conditions for integration and synergy are clearly unfavourable.

Moreover, although the developmental effects of nature conservation seem to be appreciated by the majority of the rural people, these effects are generally regarded as being far too limited, while the state's efforts to achieve rural development are considered insufficient. In addition to that, the cultivation of

cotton and bananas, regarded as basic for rural development, is difficult to reconcile with the maintenance of biodiversity. In sum, the desired synergy is obviously hardly seen at local level, which means that, so far, it does not work.

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3

Land and embedded rights: An analysis of land conflicts in Luoland, Western Kenya

Paul Hebinck & Nelson Mango[1]

Introduction

People's relationships to land are in Kenya inherently contradictory, conflictive and confusing at the same time. Confusion and conflict is part of everyday life. Local people, state agencies and the elite alike position themselves differently in such conflicts. Whereas in the policy arena much emphasis is given to governance issues (The *Constitution of the Republic of Kenya*, Constitution of Kenya Review Commission 2002), social movements such as the Kenya Land Alliance (KLA) push for the enactment of relevant legislations to address the ambiguities of agrarian policies such as land-grabbing, land quarrels and land related ethnic clashes.[2] KLA's main focus is to curtail the practices of political elites that alienated public land for private purposes. The current land tenure policy debate in Kenya, however, stresses the solution of problems associated with its political system of patronage, rivalry and corruption. It tends to neglect the rather complex everyday life of land rights practices at the local level and the kind of conflicts that emerge from conflicting interpretations of land arrangements.

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[2] *Land Update*. A newsletter of the Kenya Land Alliance, vol. 2, no. 1, January-March 2003, p. 1.

Considering and addressing land conflicts and disputes are not easy and demand a social analysis that unpacks legal repertoires and goes beyond the view that relationships to land are property rights. Conflicts over land are often understood as emerging out of the overlapping of laws uphold by the state and customary land arrangements of, in this case, the Luo of the Siaya area in Western Kenya that mediate people's relationships and attributes regarding land. Both are normative, institutional arrangements that are constructed by actors involved in land issues and these repertoires sometimes overlap and sometimes do not. Customarily land is the inalienable property of the clan given in usufruct to a lineage member and inherited according to lineage membership. Such land tenure arrangements have been reshaped over the years by the introduction of private land ownership, which dates back to the colonial period, and more specifically to the Swynnerton Plan implemented in the 1950s. Rights to access land are since then formally registered, the land being adjudicated and title deeds issued according to modern state land laws. This certainly has opened doors for the sale and the acquisition of land outside the realm of customary arrangements. But if the "owner" wishes to sell his land, the consent of the council of village elders is still required. These elders cannot be ignored as they are the custodians of customary land law. Whereas modern, private land tenure arrangements are codified, customary law is not and as this paper argues, rather presents itself as a repertoire of land rights and embedded social relationships that are open for competing interpretations.

Von Benda-Beckmann (2002: 39) conceptualizes this social phenomenon as the "co-existence of law or legal orders" within a given society. Von Benda-Beckmann (*Ibid*: 69) draws attention to the fact that "people are aware of alternative normative repertoires and/or procedures in which these can be used. But generally the condition of legal pluralism challenges the exclusiveness and self-evidence of any single normative system. … [I]n the context of legal pluralism, different participants and decision-makers may refer to the same law. But they often mobilize different legal repertoires against each other". In other words, co-existence of legal repertoires thus implies different types of interactions or encounters between actors and social practices constituting an arena[3] where normative repertoires are contested and used as "weapons" in the struggle with others over land.

Custom or the reference to what is supposed to be representing custom, plays a key role in the way the conflicts are played out. An interesting observation is the

[3] Von Benda-Beckmann (2002: 35) stipulates that there are many possibilities where legal pluralism can be studied. Depending on one's interest it could be a politico-administrative space, structural places like households, analytically conceived functional domains, semi-autonomous fields or arenas. The notion of "arena" fits the purpose of this paper the best. The notion of arena and processes of contestation is also derived from the work of Long (2001) and Arce & Long (2000).

one by Channock (1991: 97) about custom. "Custom" he maintains, operates as "a weapon in the battle against" others, for instance in the settling of conflicts over land. He points out that in this battle "accentuated and narrower version(s) of 'custom' became a weapon in the hands" of others.[4] This paper will show how the repertoire by which people identify their relationship(s) to others is indeed used as a weapon to defend their specific interests and claims on their rights to land. We thus need to explore these repertoires in great detail if only to show how such repertoires are constructed and used in the negotiations about land.

Conflicts over land rights, however, can only partly be explained by customary rights to land being reshaped and reconstructed by the introduction of individualized and privatized property rights to land. Property rights in fact are social relationships. Anthropologists have (always) argued that African land tenure is not about ownership per se, but instead rights and social obligations (Shipton 1994; Chanock 1991; Lund 2002). Rights to land are rather embedded rights; embedded in complex social relationships and shaped by obligations, reciprocity and shifting alliances between family members. Rights are not fixed, but often temporal and subject to negotiation (Odegaard 2002). While mapping these conflicts in Luoland, tensions at the level of kinship relations come to the fore. These kin quarrels often become part of or are played out during a conflict over land. Rights to land, whether embedded in customary or state law, then, do not represent one shared and accepted notion, but rather one that is subject to various and often conflicting interpretations that hinge on actors' interests, social relationships, gender, status within the community and to which age group one belongs.

The first part of the paper depicts the Luo kinship relationships with reference to land allocation and inheritance by drawing upon local people's accounts of kinship and customary rights to land gathered during fieldwork that was carried out between 1998 and 2002 in Siaya District in West Kenya. These accounts are supplemented by existing ethnographies of scholars (Southall 1952, Wilson 1961, Ochola-Ayayo 1976, Cohen & Atieno-Odhiambo 1989). Such an account as argued earlier, needs to be treated with caution as it suggests a shared notion of customary law. This article shows indeed that differently placed Luo have been construing and reconstructing, using and abusing, the various distinctions between tradition, custom, customary law and national legal frameworks. The second part takes this further by introducing case material to explore contemporary practices in relation to the complexities of inheritance and acquisition of land. Because of the embeddedness of land relations in wider social relations, genealogies are ideal to present and order the case material. The case material

[4] Ref. Chanock (1991: 67) where he narrates the role of "custom" in the complex process of the transformation of labour power into a commodity form eroding the basis of customary kinship.

underpins that land laws, whether customary or private, are often conflicting narratives or normative repertoires and that land conflicts take place in arenas of contestation. What custom is, and who is in a position to frame custom, emerges as crucial for understanding land conflicts as much as reciprocity of social obligations is.

Settlement and kinship relations

Charles Obudho[5] and other old and well-respected men like him in Muhanda village in Siaya district insisted that if we wished to capture land rights we needed to investigate kinship and the way the Luo have settled over the years. Inheritance, he says, "may become confusing if one does not understand kinship relationships and the terminology used to describe the relationships of the persons involved". Together they constructed in a few meetings an almost ideal typical version of customary rights to land. They began to explain that a (typical) Luo homestead (*dala*) consists of a site where the monogamous or polygamous domestic groups build their houses, in the surroundings of which they have their fields. The smallest social unit in the homestead is the "household". A homestead consists of at least two generations, that of the father and the mother(s), and their offspring. Occasionally, households of brothers of the homestead's owner also reside in the *dala*, as well as servants and "strangers" (see Figure 3.1). Several homesteads make up a *gweng* and resemble what we now recognize as villages or settlements. Residence in a village, as Southall (1952: 27) also noted, is based upon kinship – or more specifically people that descend from the same grandfather *(Jokakwaro)* – but also upon alliances developed out of strategic considerations (Cohen & Atieno-Odhiambo 1989: 14).

The elementary social relationship is patrifocal, which cements the relationships between father, mother and their children. People refer to this as *jokawuoro* ("people of the same father") who operate as one corporate group sharing and distributing most of the domestic activities. Marriage and inheritance of resources are intertwined and shaped by the normative respect of age (i.e. seniority). Seniority works out such that the eldest son has to marry first, then the second eldest, and so on in order of seniority; the same is true of the daughters.[6]

[5] C. Obudho is one of the twelve old men that were selected in the entire district to sit on the District Land's Board chaired by the District Commissioner. He has been on the Siaya District Land's Board for the past thirteen years. We had many and long discussions about his views on Luo customary (land) law and social relationships.

[6] Custom dictating social behaviour is of course subject to changes and deviations. During our fieldwork we came across a "case" in which a junior son has left his father's compound before his older brothers married. Our informants who brought this to our attention referred to this situation as "jumping the seniority principle". To make things even more complicated, the junior son married several wives and had build several but separate houses for them. The elderly informants uttered clear expressions of disagreement with such behaviour.

When the senior son marries and has children, he is the first to build a new and independent homestead.[7] When the father dies, the eldest son takes over the responsibilities of leadership of the family. An implication of the responsibility and prestige of genealogical seniority is that it puts the holder into the primary position of first harvesting (*dwoko cham*), first sowing (g*olo kodhi*), as well as of eating specified parts of an animal killed, which are usually the best parts.[8] The inheritance rights of daughters are limited to before their marriage. When married they leave the *dala* and loose the right to any wealth realized.

If Luo society were composed only of this line of groupings, the study would have been much easier. The complication arises when one considers a polygamous homestead, which is composed of a plurality of matrifocal units (*jokamiyo*). Polygamy shapes the mothers' marital relationships with a common husband. The Luo commonly refer to the relationship between such matrifocal units as *nyiego*. *Nyiego* means "jealousy" when it refers to the relationship between the co-wives, and means "rivalry" when it involves all in a matrifocal unit as a group against another, opposing group.[9] *Jokadayo,* "the people of the same grandmother" denotes the matrifocal unit that combines a mother and her sons in the second generation. At this level, the rivalry and competitive relationships between the co-wives and their sons starts fading.[10] The position of the grandfather becomes important.

Beyond the grandmother and grandfather line, at the third and up to the fifth generation, the *keyo* appears as a next organizational form. People descending from the same great-grandfather constitute a *keyo*.[11] The elders of the *keyo* act as representatives in disputes between various opposing *keyo*. They are also intermediaries between younger members and the ancestors and therefore act as foster father guardians. They form the first organized council to arbitrate land and

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[7] The Luo call this "liberation". They distinguish, however, between two different forms. The first liberation is when a woman starts cooking in her own house in the compound of her father-in-law. The second liberation is when a man establishes his own homestead.

[8] For the Luo living along the shore of Lake Victoria, it is the senior brother who can first own a fishing boat. Since it is he who communicates with the ancestors, he also conducts or leads the sacrifices of religiosity regarding the boat.

[9] The *nyiego* relationship often generates the various kinds of conflicts, competitions, envy, confrontations and even divisions that are so characteristics at various levels of Luo social organization.

[10] The polygamous setting explained above accounts only for the first three wives in a polygamous homestead. A further complication occurs if there are more than three wives in a homestead. In the basic Luo polygamous homestead, (see Figure 3.1) the house of the senior wife (*mikayi)* is at the centre back. The second wife's house is at the right-hand side of *mikayi* to which people refer to as *nyachira*. The third wife (*reru)* has her house on the left-hand side of *mikayi.* Women married after the first three wives are called *nyi-udi*, which means the daughters of the house to which they are attached. They also stand in juxtaposition and compete with one another.

[11] According to Wilson (1961: 7), a *keyo* constitutes extended polygamous families tracing descent from a common great-grandfather. The point of division is descent from the hut of one of his wives. The members of each of them thus constitute sub-groups sharing a common grandfather and are rightly called *jokakwaro*, "people of the same grandfather" (Ochola-Ayayo 1976: 122).

boundary disputes between members of their *keyo*. Social control of the community is here exercised partly through the authority of these elders and in the past partly and certainly through their control over the means of accumulation. The migration of their sons and daughters to towns has changed the role of the elders considerably, but when it comes to land the elders still maintain a large degree of authority.

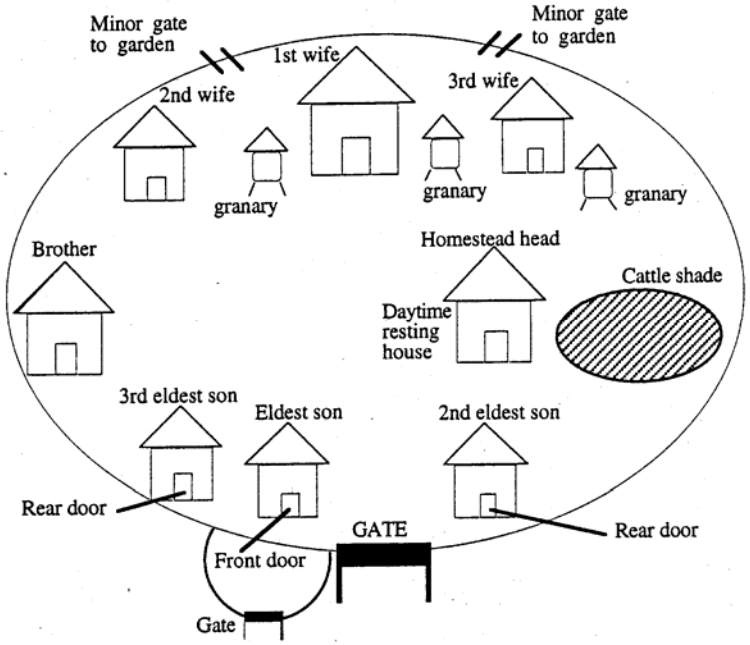

Figure 3.1 Spatial ecology of a Luo homestead
Source: Sennyonga (1997)

A next level in the lineage is the *libamba*, which involves descendants of a common ancestor, usually from four to seven generations back. It is a maximal lineage of landholding co-operating agnates and generally considered by anthropologists as the backbone for settlement, household and family formation, and social reproduction (see for instance Evans-Pritchard 1965, Southall 1952, Parkin 1978). Its members characteristically meet often at the *keyo* level to discuss the distribution of land titles, land conflicts and other property disputes. The study of Luo economic structure is most conveniently in terms of the operation of the *libamba* units, because these units define maximal frameworks for economic, social and political competition. According to Ochola-Ayayo (1976: 121) "the Luo sum up in the *libamba* all those forces of friction and competition, which weaken the solidarity of a lineage segment and lead to its further subdivision". Thereafter, the next level is the clan (*dhoot*).

Luo customary land tenure arrangements

The Luo acquire land rights in several ways. Charles Obudho explains that rights to land derive from being a member of the clan. Secondly, the clan also used to grant access to land to strangers and also slaves and servants were in the past given rights to access land. Finally, roughly since the late 1940s, land can also be purchased. Given that the land conflict cases this article explores in detail all deal with land that is accessed through customary inheritance arrangements, the buying and selling of land is not documented.

Land allocated to clansmen

The basic right to access land stems from being a member of a tribe in a given territory for which lineage or clan members and their ancestors fought, and that is "once acquired by conquest" (Wilson 1961: 18). This represents the strongest claim to land in Luo territory: Every member of a clan has an inalienable right to cultivate a garden within the territory of his grandfather. This right is normative because it is associated with lineage membership.[12] This is important socially, because it provides a sense of security, which springs from living among kinsfolk. It is economically important as well, because a clan member is entitled to occupy such land on terms of correct usage without payment, except customary dues to land-controlling elders.

Natural boundaries well define the land that belongs to the clan, and the natural landscape of ridges and valleys aids this demarcation. One clan usually occupies a ridge or part of a ridge. This now is the area in which a man from that clan may expect to obtain a right to cultivate and to raise stock.

Formally, the land belongs to the head of the homestead. He in his turn allocates land to his wife or wives and keeps that part of the field closest to the gate for himself. Father's field is commonly known as the *mondo*. Before they establish their own compounds, sons work on their mothers' field(s). Below we will discuss how sons inherit land.

Land allocated to strangers

A *jadak*[13] (stranger) is the person who comes to the area of a clan other than his own and asks for land. According to Luo tradition, it is difficult to refuse a stranger the land he requests to provide for his subsistence. It is this tradition that allows people to live among tribes or clans other than their own. Friendship, or maternal or affinal connections, qualify one to ask for land which is given in usufruct. In any case, the council of elders must approve such a transaction. The

[12] According to Luo beliefs, land that was found unoccupied was left as a trap, or smallpox had killed the owners. Advance parties of warriors and diviners tested such land.

[13] In Dholuo *Jadak* is singular, and *jodak* is the plural form.

lands given to a stranger are usually within the territory of the clan. In return, the stranger must show solidarity and allegiance to the clan members. The stranger and his descendants have no right of inheritance; his children can only renew the usufruct right. The length of usufruct is indefinite, and this has led to many misunderstandings by the colonial and current government administration, and still complicates many land cases today.

The *jodak* tradition dates back to the time when a rich man counted his security and prestige by the number of followers he could attract to his holding. It is fair to say that the Luo encouraged *jodak* to settle among them and, until recently, a *jadak* was not normally turned out of the land "given" to him, except in certain serious situations. According to some informants, the expression *chiem gi wadu* ("eat what you have with your neighbour") is strongly associated with the Luo concept of *jadak.* If, on the other hand, the clan in which a *jadak* was a squatter was at war with another clan, and he had shown bravery on the battle-field, upgraded his position to that of landowner. He, after all, had fought for the land and had been prepared to sacrifice his life in the same way, as did the ancestor of the present member.

The allocation of land to a *jadak* was not intended as an economic enterprise in a direct way, but as a means to achieve a higher status. The land was being valued as a source of wealth and as a means of subsistence, which may raise a person into an honorific, higher position. Land distribution was a vehicle for prestige and a means of protection.

Land allocated to slaves

Misumba is the word used to describe a servant or a foundling brought up as a foster child, or a slave in the proper sense of the word (Ochola-Ayayo 1976: 131). Under the first meaning of *misumba,* the homestead head assigns a child, or an adult man, to the house of a *migumba* as if he were her son. A woman is regarded a *migumba* if she has not had a male child. People expect a *misumba* to fill the social position of a male child in the house of the *migumba*, as if he were that woman's actual son. In any case, a *misumba* inherits his foster mother's gardens and livestock, but his position with regard to the inheritance of his foster father's field (*mondo)* is like that of an illegitimate child. If the foster mother gives her *misumba* cattle to marry a wife, then he is expected to become a member of the clan, and his children will be members of this clan. If, however, he should one day decide to return to his original clan land, then not only does he lose the land, but so do his children and their mother. The children are regarded as the legal descendants of the social father, or as an informant put it: "*their mother's bride-wealth was clan wealth*".

The inheritance of land: Customary rights

The way a father while still alive allocates land to his sons resembles the approach to land inheritance. The division of land between brothers or sons in a monogamous family is rather simple and straightforward. Land conflicts usually arise between *nyiego* groups. In the case of two or three sons of the same mother, the senior son takes the centre portion of the land in the homestead up to and beyond the gate or to the buffer zone;[14] the other sons then have the remainder of the land to divide among themselves. If the land is divided among the elder sons after they are married, and they take to living on their lands, it often happens that the youngest son remains in the father's compound to care for him in his old age. His inheritance is the *mondo* and the remaining gardens of his mother (Wilson 1961: 13, Ochola-Ayayo 1976: 129, Francis 2000).

In the event of a father's death, then whoever remarries his wife (indicated as *jater*) is the legal guardian of his fields and his children. A *jater* may take the widow to his village or may live in the village of the deceased. The widow will continue to cultivate her deceased husband's land. The *jater* may also cultivate these lands on a usufruct basis but must vacate them if ordered to do so when the sons of the deceased have married and established their own homesteads. In most cases, a *jater* is a classificatory father to the children, and he will fulfil his obligations to the latter according to custom. Should a *jater* be a stranger, then it is the duty of the clan elders of the dead man's lineage to watch him closely and see to it that the sons get the land of the deceased. The *jater*, whether relative or stranger, has no permanent right whatsoever to any of the dead man's property; nor have the leviratic children (children born of the *jater*), unless there is no male heir. Once the eldest son has built his homestead, it becomes his duty to set up homesteads for his junior brothers. He should divide the land equally; or else the junior brothers may seek redress from the council of elders.

The right of inheritance also depends on the presence of ancestral graves on the land (Shipton 1992: 377). Furthermore, if the ancestors conquered the land, a descendant can lay extra strong claims to it (Ogot 1967: 222). Land is inherited only through patrilineal relationships. A sole survivor of the grandfathers would then inherit all the grandfathers' land. A brother only inherits land belonging to a full brother if the latter does not have a male descendant. The eldest of the group of brothers is the temporary owner of the father's entire land, and acts as arbitrator in disputes between the younger brothers. Younger brothers can appeal to the council of elders. A man can only inherit land belonging to a paternal uncle if the uncle does not leave a son, or full or half-brothers. The unwritten rule of inheritance by the nearest agnatic kinsman operates throughout the clan, that is, if no

[14] A buffer zone is open land between family lands. Nowadays, because of population pressure, buffer zones no longer exist. They have been allocated to homesteads for use.

heirs can be found from the father, grandfathers or great-grandfathers, then the nearest male relative to the deceased within his clan inherits. The sons, when they marry, share their mother's land. A mother usually gives her sons part of her garden at that time, but unmarried sons inherit those fields remaining at their mother's death.

In the event that a man dies without a male heir, then his land reverts to his father or nearest agnatic kinsman, except that portion allocated to his wife or wives provided they remain within the lineage of the deceased. In the case of a man dying without a son and his wife having been unable to provide a male child through another relationship, she may "remarry" a girl, usually from her own clan, with the cattle of her dead husband or with her own cattle. She then calls a close agnatic kinsman of her deceased husband to cohabit with this girl to serve as genitor. Children of this union are the legal sons of the deceased husband, and they will inherit his remaining wealth: Land, cattle and other personal properties. This form of marriage is what anthropologists call "ghost marriage" (Ocholla-Ayayo 1976: 131).

Inheritance of land in a polygamous setting

In polygamous settings, the land is divided along the same lines, except that, within the village, the sons claim the area contiguous to the houses of their mothers. Each wife and her sons constitute a group with similar rights as a son of a sole wife: Children of the senior wife are given that portion of the total area that would have been given to the senior son in a monogamous family. The sons of the second and third wives lay claim to those portions that would have fallen to the second and third sons, respectively, in a monogamous situation.

There is, however, a further complicating factor and that concerns situations where there are more than three co-wives (perceived as attached daughters). These co-wives are attached to the first three sets. The sons of the senior wife inherit as a group with the sons of daughters attached to the senior wife; sons of daughters attached to the second wife and the sons of daughters attached to the third wife will also inherit as groups with the sons of the second and third wives respectively.

Kinship and land inheritance in practice

Let us now examine how kinship and land inheritance work out in the practice of everyday life in the Siaya region of Luoland. Issues of land allocation and inheritance have become much more conflictual and complex as land became scarce due to increased population. Land use has intensified over the years leaving little opportunities to fallow land to restore soil fertility.[15] The room for

[15] See for a detailed account of land use changes, Mango (2002), Chapter 2.

manoeuvre for allocating and dividing land according to Luo customs among clan members, or for allocating land in usufruct to strangers and slaves, has been substantially limited over the years and is virtually absent nowadays. Moreover, the implementation of the Swynnerton Plan from the mid 1950s onwards partly restyled Luo land tenure arrangements. This Swynnerton Plan laid the political groundwork for a state policy to privatize land tenure in Kenya (Hebinck 1990: 59 ff.). Practically all the land is now adjudicated and registered, and subsequently title deeds have been issued. This opened doors for the buying and selling of land. However, private land tenure has continued to operate concurrently with Luo customary law, whereby Luo elders still have to quell land disputes among their people. Where there is no conflict over land, people have been able to buy and sell land on an individual basis. *Jodak* and *misumba* have been able in this way to get land as long as they could afford to buy it from a willing seller. As we shall see in the cases presented below, the legal and written evidence that a piece of land belongs to a certain person stirred intra-lineage and intra-household conflicts. Privatization of land implies a breakaway from the situation where land is collectively owned by the lineage under the authority of its leaders. While in the recent past, Luo elders would act as judges in the case of land disputes and settle them, their role is now minimized and increasingly been taken over by the government's magistrates' courts and district land tribunals.

The cases presented below aim to elaborate on such conflicts. They were chosen in such a way that the different ways by which land customarily may be inherited and allocated are represented. The cases show local legal pluralism at work: Customary and private land tenure systems interface and are embedded in day-to-day quarrels about social obligations.

Case 1

The situation of Oketch Bundmawi and Oduor Lomo with regard to land illuminates the complex nature of land quarrels. They are brothers and have the same father, Ogonji, and are married with children. Despite Luo customary land arrangements, neither has yet managed to inherit land from their father. Their elder brother, Abednego, currently holds all the title deeds of the land of their grandfather, Olum (see Figure 3.2). Oketch for the moment cultivates the land of his deceased uncle, Agina, where he has also established his own homestead. Lomo, as the youngest son, according to the custom should have inherited the *mondo* and the homestead of his father, Ogonji. However, Abednego cultivates the largest portion of his father's land and he has established his homestead on his father's *mondo*, thus dashing Lomo's hopes of inheriting the *mondo*. Their mother retains another portion of the land. According to Luo customary law, his mothers' field should go to Lomo after her death. Lomo currently works on

another part of his mother's field and a small portion of the land of his paternal uncle, Odongo.

To fully explore the many dimensions of this particular conflict we need to go back to the brothers' grandfather, Olum. The origin of the conflict can partly be traced back to him and his eighth wife, Adungairo, who was a seer and a witch doctor. Olum had three sons from his seventh wife: Ogonji, Agina and Odongo. His only remaining son, Odongo, has a hearing problem due to his old age and does not say much about his father. When asked about Olum, his grandson, Abednego, mentioned that he was a well-known farmer who had come to Muhanda at more or less the same time as the British arrived in Luo land. He had six other wives in his original village some ten kilometres from Muhanda. Olum's family also belongs to a lineage of the real landowners, the Gem people who conquered Muhanda village (from the Abaluhya) before the establishment of colonial rule.

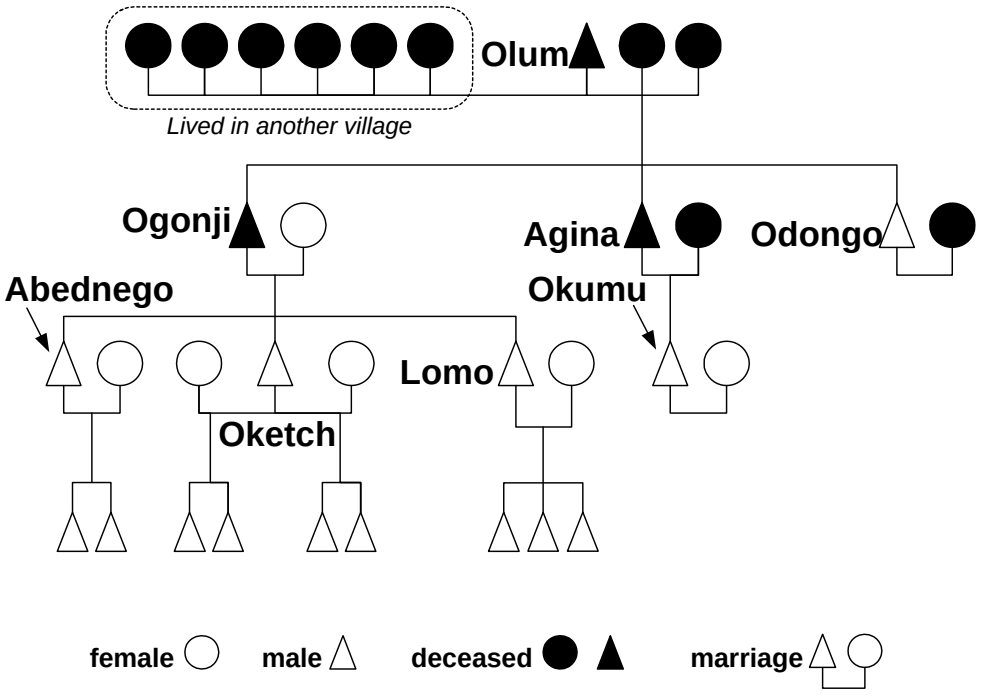

Figure 3.2 The descendants of Olum

Olum came to Muhanda with his seventh wife who died in 1934, after which he married Adungairo. This marriage did not produce any children. People believe that she was possessed with evil spirits who did not allow her to have children, but because she had healing powers, she made Olum rich, as people brought her many cattle and goats. At the time of his death, he was a famous and

a wealthy person.[16] People also believed that Adungairo bewitched Olum's sons, as they experienced marriage problems.

To escape the witchcraft, they went to the Rift Valley to find work on white settler farms. Odongo did not stay for long and came back home almost immediately after his father's death to settle into farming. He got married and had a daughter. His wife died soon after that and he never remarried. Agina married in town and did not return to the village. He died in town and his wife did not live long afterwards. Their son, Okumu, is now a high-ranking railway functionary in Nairobi. He married in Nairobi and never visited his father's village.

Ogonji was Olum's first-born son. When Olum died, Ogonji worked in Kitale as a mechanic for the Hughes Company. He married and had three sons and a daughter. These sons are Abednego Ochieng, Oketch Bundmawi and Oduor Lomo. The daughter is married and lives in Seme. Since Ogonji married rather late, he fathered his children when he was at an advanced age. He retired in 1970, returned home, and died in 1979.

The land tenure and inheritance arrangement in the Ogonji family is that of people descended from the same grandfather (*jokakwaro)*. When Olum died, he had allocated land to his three sons. The records of the District Land Register in Siaya indeed specify that the title of plot no. MN 426 (7.5 acres; 3.0 hectare) is vested in Ogonji, that of plot no. MN 423 (6.5 acres; 2.6 hectare) is on Agina's name, and plot no. MN 424 (5.5 acres; 2.2 hectare) is registered in Odongo's name.

Abednego, being Ogonji's eldest son, customarily holds the title deeds for all three plots. This is because his uncle Odongo is now old, has no heirs and is depending on Abednego and his wife for his daily subsistence. Odongo officially has a say over all the title deeds, but has given them to Abednego for safekeeping. To complicate things even further, Abednego is also cultivating his father's plot (*mondo*). Oketch and Lomo are not happy with this situation at all. They feel that they should get their share. One day when the issue came up, Odongo made clear to them that "*you can subdivide your father's plot among yourselves. I will retain Agina's plot because he was my brother and I will also retain mine. Furthermore I can still marry and get a boy child who can be heir to my plot*". This scared Ogonji's sons. Their mother advised them to suspend their quarrel for the time being. They fear they will lose these plots – the more so, because Odongo has the right to sell his own and Agina's plots. So they do not want to annoy him or else they will lose the land.

[16] After Olum's death, Adungairo left and remarried somewhere else. Her wealth followed her. In Luoland it is believed that when a rich person dies or leaves an area, whatever wealth he or she leaves behind disintegrates.

The reason why Abednego is holding on to the title deeds and not allocating them to his younger brothers is a combination of how authority is exercised and of not complying with expected patterns of behaviour, such as mutual help in return for assistance later. When Ogonji died, Abednego shouldered his responsibility as senior brother and paid for his younger brothers' education up to secondary school level. Furthermore, he says, "*I paid bride-wealth for my brother Oketch when he married*". When they later got jobs, he demanded assistance from them to help him pay school fees for his children. Both refused to help him out. Abednego is not happy with them, given that he expended resources on them that he could have used to improve himself.

On the other hand, Lomo and Oketch argue that they do not like the way Abednego exercised his authority as the senior brother. When they returned home from working in town, neither had yet established own homesteads. Abednego made them eat in his house, while their wives had to eat in their mother-in-law's house. Abednego's objective clearly was to draw labour from his younger brothers and to make them work in his fields; but, when the harvest was brought in, he barely shared it with his brothers. Abednego defends himself by arguing that he was using his position as eldest brother to unite the family. Lomo was not happy with the situation and liberated himself unofficially by 1994, when he ordered his wife to start cooking in her own house. Lomo thus violated the Luo custom of seniority. Being the last born, he should have been the last one to be liberated. Oketch also followed with his wife. Lomo then requested to be given his own plot so that he could engage in serious farming without being controlled by Abednego, but his mother refused. She told him outright that Abednego is everything in their family. Lomo is only allowed to farm part of his father's land and his uncle Odongo's land temporarily.

The conflict, as it now stands, partly involves people of the same father (*jokawuoro*) but has the potential of also involving people of the same grandfather (*jokakwaro*). Okumu, who can claim the land of his father, Agina, will not be a serious contender however. Oketch, who now lives and works on Agina's land, is convinced of this:

> My cousin is a very irresponsible man. When my uncle Agina grew very old, he did not take care of him. When he died, he did not even come home to bury him. When his own mother died, he never came back home. This means he delinked himself from us. We can only give him a small portion of this plot.

The situation will become more complex if descendants of Olum who are still in his original village show up and claim the land. This is because Olum's fourth wife and seventh wife are daughters attached to the first wife's house *(Nyiudi)* and their sons inherit as one group with the sons of the first wife. Customarily,

they are entitled to claim the land of Agina and Odongo, as it is part of the land belonging to Olum, their father.

Case 2

This case is about Martin and his struggle for land. It involves genealogically the Ogonda (I) family (see Figure 3.3) who are descendants from a *jadak*. The case is further compounded by the fact that the son of Ogonda (I), Obudho, had several wives, and this stirred rivalry when it came to land allocation. As a result, one of Obudho's sons, who at that time worked in Uganda, missed land. He remained landless until he died. The problem now is that his remaining three sons, among whom Martin, are landless. Martin only has access to the land he is working on by virtue of being "people of the same grandfather". His other two brothers have migrated to town to seek casual employment. Martin and his brothers are seen as squatters and not entitled to title deeds. Their future will be based on their ability to acquire land through purchase.

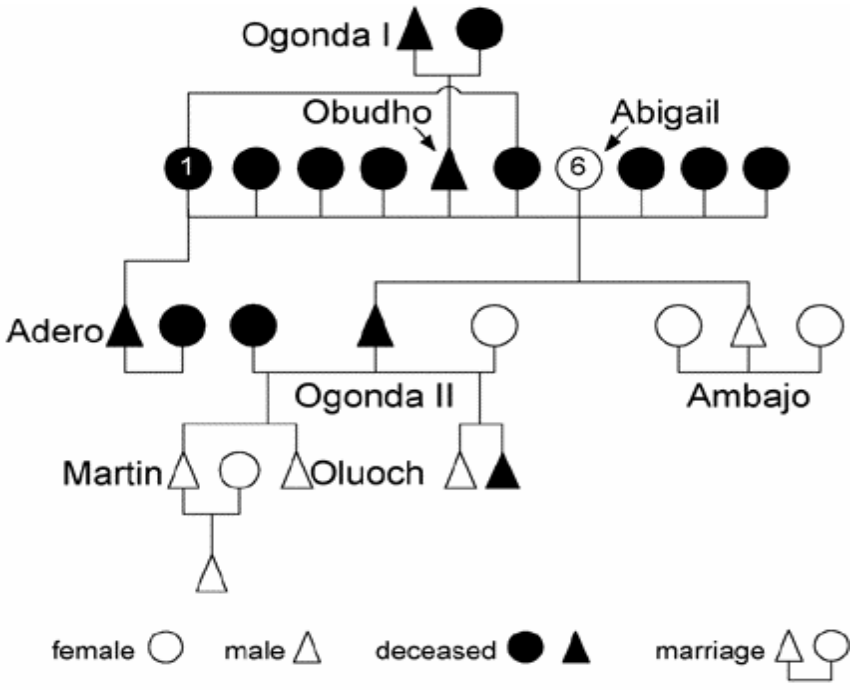

Figure 3.3 The descendants of Ogonda I

The Ogonda (I) family lives in Luero village. Ogonda (I) founded this village a long time after the region had been conquered by the Luo, who, however, had left the place unoccupied until then. Before Ogonda (I)'s arrival, it was used as grazing land for livestock. This pastureland was allocated to Ogonda (I) in the *jadak* relationship by his brother in-law who was married to his sister. His

brother in-law belonged to the Kalanyo clan and Ogonda (I) belonged to the Kathomo clan. Luero was then still grazing land. One of Ogonda's sons was Obudho who married nine wives. He had two sons with his sixth wife, Abigail. The first son to Abigail is Jeconia Ogonda (II) and the other, John Ambajo. Ogonda (II) had two wives. The first wife gave birth to two sons of whom Martin is the eldest. The second wife also had two sons.

Martin lost his mother in 1965 when he was eight years old. When his father completed his primary education, he found work in Mulago National Hospital in Uganda. He came back to Kenya in 1971 on a transfer to work in Kenyatta National Hospital in Nairobi. While in Uganda, he married a second wife who is now a tailor in Kakamega. Martin does not have land himself. He has only access to his uncle's (John Ambajo) land. When the land was subdivided, his father was in Uganda. Since his grandfather had many wives, there was stiff competition for land because of the *nyiego* (rivalry) relationships between the co-wives. As a result, his father was not given land simply because, when he was summoned to come back for the land allocation, he never turned up. His step uncle, Adero (son to Obudho's first wife, Okwatch, Abigail's sister), allocated the land to his paternal uncle, John Ambajo. This is the land on which Martin is now living and which contains Obudho's second homestead. Most of Martin's step-grandmothers' graves are in that homestead, as well as that of his father and mother. John Ambajo, whose name is registered on that land (plot no. L723 at the District Land Registrar's office in Siaya), lives in Nairobi and rarely visits the village. He is separated from his wife, and his two sons still live with their mother. Martin lives in his grandfather's homestead. His father, however, never managed to establish a homestead of his own. Martin still lives with his grandmother, who is about 100 years old, in Obudho's homestead. Martin built his hut behind his grandmother's house in accordance with the Luo customs. Martin is married and has one son, Ogonda (III).

Martin has only usufruct rights to the land in Luero village because he is a member of *jokakwaro*. Most likely, after the death of his grandmother, his uncle may ask him to look for land to purchase somewhere else. He does not know his fate as far as land allocation is concerned,

> I hope my cousins will understand and give me a place to put up a homestead. The field where I planted maize belongs to my paternal uncle, John Ambajo. If I fail to get land here, I will have to look for land in another village and buy. However, this will only happen after the death of my grandmother.

The complexity is heightened by the fact that, customarily, Martin has the right to use the land of his grandfather because his grandmother is still alive and he has the right to use her gardens. Moreover, the homestead where they are living contains the graves of his mother and father. The migration of Ambajo to

town with his sons has enabled him to cultivate part of Ambajo's land, but only under the conditions of usufruct rights.

Case 3

This case also involves a *jadak* who came to live in Muhoho village among his maternal uncles. The man who came to this village was Opiyo Naki. The conflict we will discuss involves brothers from the same mother. The appellant is the biological son and the defendant is a social son.

Opiyo belonged to the Isuha clan and came to Muhoho as *jadak*. He had two wives. The first wife had two sons: Okelo Naki and Otieno Naki (see Figure 3.4). The second wife had two sons and two daughters. Opiyo lived from 1890 to 1939. Before his death, he had allocated both his wives parcels of land. According to Luo land tenure arrangements, the sons were to inherit their mother's land. However, after Opiyo's death, his eldest wife was married by one of his relatives (*jater*) called Agulu. Agulu shares the same grandfather as Opiyo, but they have different fathers. He only came to Muhoho to inherit Opiyo's wife and went back to his village some 60 kilometres from Muhoho. Opiyo's eldest wife produced a son with this man. According to Luo custom, the son, Oluoch Agulu, is a bona fide son of Opiyo, rather than of the man who remarried his mother (*jater*).

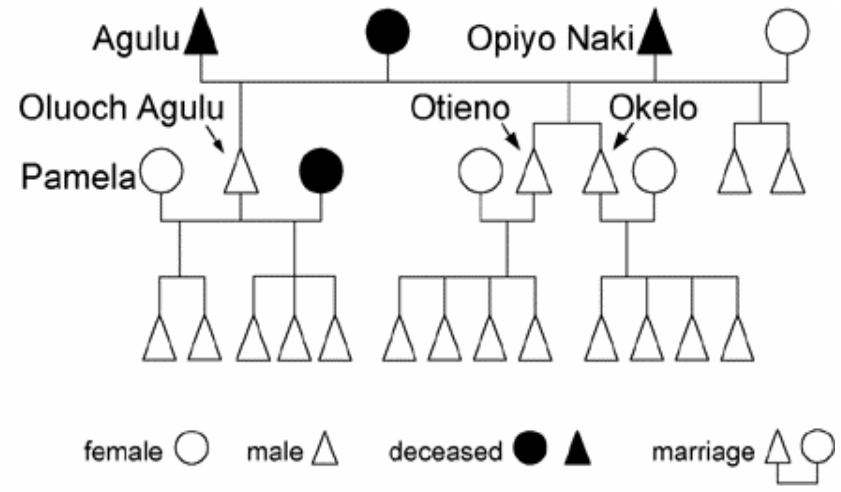

Figure 3.4 The descendants of Opiyo Naki

Oluoch Agulu, born in 1945, does not have land of his own. In this village they are strangers and were not allocated a large piece of land. His brothers, Okelo Naki and Otieno Naki, tried their best and assisted in his education up to college level. He graduated as a primary school teacher in 1966. Oluoch Agulu married two wives. He had three sons and two daughters with the first wife.

However, they were not happily married and so they divorced. He then married the second wife, Pamela, with whom he has two sons and one daughter. Oluoch is a retired primary school teacher.

When we visited Otieno for the first time, we wandered over the plots he was farming. This did not please Otieno. One day, Otieno met one of us alone and started quarrelling about why we were trespassing on his field without his knowledge. When we checked the land register in Siaya town, only the names of Oluoch's two brothers and his stepmother are registered as owners. Plot no. MH 734 is in the name of Okelo (Opiyo Naki's eldest son) and plot no. MH 736 is in the name of Otieno Naki. The plot covers Oluoch's homestead and the fields he cultivates. Plot no. MH 735 is registered in the name of their stepmother. Earlier on, another informant mentioned to us, however, that Oluoch is not a real son to Opiyo, even though he had established his homestead on Opiyo's *mondo*. We were told that he did this on his mother's instructions. Throughout our conversations with Oluoch and his wife Pamela, they did not at all mention the biological father. In any case, Oluoch now calls himself Charles Oluoch Agulu Naki, which is in fact a combination of the names of his biological and social father.

In 1995, Otieno took this case to the council of elders of Muhoho village and some elders from their original village. The case was decided in favour of Oluoch. Based on Luo customary law, he is the son of the deceased. The ruling did not convince Otieno, and he decided to take the case to the High Court of Kenya in Kisumu. The case underwent several hearings and was still pending in court by the end of the research, following the death of the magistrate who was handling it. A new magistrate now has to take it up. Most villagers who know of the case argue that Otieno cannot win because Oluoch is his brother.

This case shows the complications that arise out of confrontations between *jadak*-based land allocations and private land tenure arrangements. Oluoch Agulu refers to customary law to lodge his "rightful" claim on the land because he is a son to his father. Otieno, for his part, is resorting to private land tenure arrangements to secure his case and hopes that the court will rule in his favour. Meanwhile, because of this land issue and some other family-related problems, Oluoch Agulu and Pamela became active members of the Anglican Church and claim to live according to Christian norms and values. Pamela one day made the following remark: "*somehow I get peace in salvation. Christianity is my strength*".

Conclusion

This article has shown that land appears to mean more than property as often is assumed. Land has different meanings and is not just a resource that is required for productive purposes. A whole complex and dynamic set of social relationships is built around land, tying people together and defining their relations vis-à-

vis each other. Over the years, and largely still, the key normative principle has been that one can gain and maintain access to land by membership of a clan. Rights of individuals are not thought sacrosanct; rather, they interlock with the rights of others, and overlap with those of families, their members and wider groups. A place on the landscape implies a place in a kin group, and vice versa. Patrilineality, virilocal residence and the subdivision of holdings devolving from one generation to the next remain the socially defined norms in Luo country. The multiple meaning of land and the intrinsic complexities and conflictive nature of Luo land tenure arrangements are often misunderstood.

Having said this, one cannot escape the lessons of the cases presented. The first case shows that land inheritance is clouded by relationships between members of the same kin group or family. This particular conflict is not necessarily about customary land law and rights, but about actors using and constructing elements of that law strategically to position them in the conflict. The second case of Martin is quite clear, as each party understands its obligations. The two operating land tenure arrangements do not interfere with each other. Customarily, Martin has the right to be on his uncle's land where he resides at the moment, but his identity as a stranger confines him to just that and he will never be able to acquire more land. His dreams of becoming a farmer through investing in perennial crops and soil fertility management will only materialize if he is able to acquire land privately. Martin, like Lomo from the first case, represents the numerous members of the younger generation who have developed a more individualistic attitude, and who are eager to get their own title deeds, since this would enable them to make their own plans, without having to accept the authority of an elder, a father or an older brother. However, in conflict situations, the owner of the homestead, in most cases the one holding the title deeds, tends to hold on to these deeds as long as possible to maintain his authority. In many cases, this hampers the construction of a proper inheritance arrangement, which could mean the continuation of the quarrel between sons after the death of the father. In the "old" days, the eldest son succeeded his father as the head of the homestead. In more recent times however, younger brothers often question and challenge his seniority position. The absence of title deeds is felt as impeding one from acquiring a loan that would enable investment in agricultural production, in other economic activities, or in marrying other women. Obtaining title deeds, either through the private property or the customary route, offers new opportunities.

The third case shows the role played by customary and private land tenure arrangements. Each party in the conflict reverts to the tenure arrangement that fits their particular interest, and engages in strategic positioning. Such cases generate the kind of conflicts and confusions about land and inheritance with

which Kenya as a nation, with its recent politically and ethnically induced land conflicts, is grappling. In the absence of an integrated land policy, the unresolved issue of land tenure persists.

The paper has also shown *inter alia* that women do not normally inherit cultivation rights but acquire them mainly through marriage. Women's rights are only ancillary, depending on allocations from their husbands. Their position regarding land can also be seen from the angle of matrilineal relationships in a patrilineal society. Women are the ones who work the land most of the time, and obtain rights in their post-marital homesteads by devolution from their mothers-in-law.

The argument developed in this paper is that it is too simple to explain land conflicts only with reference to situations as evolving around overlapping customary and private land tenure arrangements shaping the way the Luo deal with land, understand land issues and resolve conflicts over land. In more theoretical terms this paper has underlined the usefulness of legal pluralism as an approach to research situations constituted by co-existing normative legal repertoires. Claims on land are subject to various, competing interpretations of customary and state law that often result from and lead to embroiled relationships between family and/or clan members. But as this article has shown, there is a need to go beyond legal pluralism and emphasize the wider set of social relationships people are embedded in. Rights to land have to be seen in relation to other social relationships (seniority, kinship) with their associated rights and obligations. Land conflicts thus take place in *arenas of contestation* wherein people position and reposition themselves continuously in their understanding and (re)construction of the existing customary and modern, private laws with regard to land. The metaphor of "forum shopping" as a social practice, borrowed from von Benda-Beckmann (1981), seems to do justice to an attempt to characterize the land rights arena. People literally shop between the various kinship and legal repertoires and actively (re)construct them in situations of conflict. In contemporary Luoland, legal shopping manifests itself in the socially constructed tension between collective/customary versus individual/modern. Differently placed Luo, both in terms of membership of social categories and in terms of their immediate social circumstances, have been construing and reconstructing, using and abusing, the various distinctions between tradition, custom, customary law, and national legal frameworks for as long as these have been around. The challenge for any advocacy group and government to address seriously local level land conflicts is the question to adhere to which legal repertoire of (customary and private) law and find ways for relating to conflicts at the level of social relationships.

Meanwhile, people tend to organize their daily lives by doing their own thing. Kinship principles and customary arrangements and obligations are not dead but

subject to reinterpretation and negotiation. Despite the fact that nobody talks about them, kinship-defined social relations and customs still act as a go-between the tensions of contemporary, everyday Luo life.

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4

"Frivolous squandering": Consumption and redistribution in mining camps

Katja Werthmann

Introduction

Mahmoudou Traoré has been working in gold mines in Burkina Faso for many years. He explains: "Gold mining is like an addiction. Even if you want to quit, you cannot. Many who come to the gold mines for the first time have a specific goal, like earning enough cash for a moped, a cow or a corrugated iron roof. But once in the mines, they forget about their goal. In the mines, you can earn more money in one day than during a whole season of strenuous farm work. So you spend your money for alcohol, meat, cigarettes and clothes until it's gone, and you have to start again" (interview 8.3.2001). In fact, many gold diggers admit that they stay in the mining camps "despite themselves". The main reason for staying is the experience or the hope of being one of the lucky few.[1]

Mining camps all over the world are predominantly male worlds in which money is "frivolously squandered", as one observer put it (Biersack 1999: 68). Some authors have interpreted these "irrational" ways of spending money in mining camps as a response to modernization.[2] My article questions this

[1] Cf. Znoj (1998: 202) about gold mines in Sumatra: "There are a few tales of success ... But there are many more tales of those who were 'fixed in enchantment in the mines' ... and never struck the vein that would lift them, even temporarily, into luxury". For the equation of mining and drug addiction see also Maennling (1996: 383).

[2] Similar processes took place in Europe during the industrialization. By contemporary bourgeois observers, the alcohol consumption of the lower classes in 18th century London was judged irrational.

assumption and highlights the role of consumption as a means of engendering social coherence in the mining camps. Drawing on some recent empirical studies about non-industrial mining including my own,[3] I will point out how consumption serves to create and maintain a "moral economy of mining".

Not only in Burkina Faso, but in several developing countries there have recently been discoveries of gold, diamonds, or other important mineral resources. These discoveries have led to "gold rush" phenomena that are reminiscent of 19th century California.[4] Although anthropologists and sociologists study these phenomena, there have yet been few attempts to relate findings about particular localities to research about other regions or continents, or, as two authors recently put it: "... studies of mining have been persistently parochial and regional in their scope" (Ballard and Banks 2003: 287).[5] This neglect of comparison is striking, especially since there are so many similarities. This paper, therefore, aims at comparing some features of non-industrial mining in some African countries with case studies from Latin America, South-East Asia and Oceania. I am focussing on one particular aspect: The peculiar ways of spending money in the mining camps.

Common features of non-industrial mining

Let me briefly outline some general characteristics of non-industrial mining. According to a World Bank publication, "informal" or "artisanal" mining constitutes "the most primitive type of mining, characterized by individuals or groups exploiting deposits … with the simplest equipment" and is regarded as a response to poverty (Barry 1996: 1). However, on an assumed scale non-industrial mining can vary between a seasonal, artisanal activity by farmers on one end and a semi-mechanized business that involves tens or even hundreds of thousands of people, many of whom consider themselves "professionals", on the other end. Whether it is "informal" depends on the degree of intervention by the nation-state that may range from benign neglect to tight control, including, for instance, the expulsion of non-nationals from mining areas.

The historian H. Medick (1982) concluded that these drinking patterns expressed both a new desire for distinction and a kind of surrogate commensality that replaced pre-industrial patterns of social life.

[3] This article is based on several field trips to Burkina Faso between 1997 and 2001 under the auspices of the Special Research Project 268 "Kulturentwicklung und Sprachgeschichte im Naturraum Westafrikanische Savanne", Johann Wolfgang Goethe-University Frankfurt/Main.

[4] There are also "rushes" to other new resources, as for instance land that was formerly covered by Lake Chad in north-eastern Nigeria. Not only fishermen and farmers, but the whole panoply of providers of goods and services from all over Nigeria and the neighbouring countries are attracted to this area (Freyer 2001, Kirscht & Krings 2003, Krings 1998, Platte 2000).

[5] The article by Ballard & Banks (2003) focuses explicitly on the Asia-Pacific area, and on English-language material.

The discovery of mineral resources can initiate the immigration of tens of thousands of people into one area in a very short time. Especially in the initial, dynamic phase, fortune seekers may appropriate claims by force. Sometimes, this has led to violent attacks and even massacres of local populations as in the well-documented case of the Yanomami in northern Brazil (MacMillan 1995: 48). Although this was an extreme case, desperadoes are in fact attracted by discoveries of mineral resources. In a gold mine in Burkina Faso, a small group of criminals terrorized the mining camp for about two months after it had been established in 1998. Eventually a military unit was sent in, and four men were shot (Werthmann 2000: 94). After this incident (which was reported by Amnesty International as a case of extrajudicial execution), life in the camp became more peaceful.

In spite of the proverbial "lawlessness" in mining camps, there are certain hierarchies and rules. These rules are sometimes based on social structures and norms of the original communities of the immigrants, as for instance in Papua New Guinea:

> At first glance, Mt. Kare seems to epitomize the popular conception of a gold rush as a chaotic free-for-all in which people will endure any privation for the chance to make a fortune. ... Miners suffered from sickness, drank, gambled, brawled, and stole, and groups fought pitched battles. Yet, paradoxically, there was an orderliness on the gold fields that impressed observers ... . This stability stemmed not from the embryonic government presence but rather from the traditional law that regulated life in the miners' home communities. (Vail 1995: 356)

Mining camps in Burkina Faso – like elsewhere – have been commonly perceived as "a collection of strangers rather than a community of kinsmen, friends and neighbors" (Douglass 1998: 100). A closer look, however, reveals that many of its temporary inhabitants have known each other for years. Even people in positions that are structurally opposed to each other, such as representatives of the state authorities and black market traders, will reminisce about times they spent together in previous mining camps, or swap news and gossip about common acquaintances.

In some extremely remote areas or war zones, where state control is weak, powerful individuals may establish a mining camp as a "state within a state", as for instance in the former Zaïre. Tshonda (2000) described how Big Men in Zaïre established diamond mining camps as "fiefdoms" that resembled miniature versions of the Mobutu state. Access was controlled by "brigadiers" who guarded the main gate and who issued "residence permits" to traders after a kind of customs duties had been paid (Tshonda 2000: 107). The mining camps were subdivided in sections, each headed by a "chief". In the middle of the camp a tower of 5 to 8 m height was erected from which the "minister of information" made daily announces about work regulations, collective activities, or offenses

and punishments (Tshonda 2000: 108). These "fiefdoms" resemble the "closed garimpos" in Brazil (Cleary 1990: 69-72, Rodriguez Larreta 2002: 23).

In Burkina Faso, there are no "closed" mining camps. Nevertheless, one man in a gold mine in Burkina Faso attained a leading position by creating a "system of personal power" (Médard 1992: 174) that resembled Sahlins's classic model of the Big Man in Melanesia. Although he was elected to represent the gold diggers vis-à-vis the state authorities and local communities, his leadership rested not so much on a formal vote as on wealth, violence, and charisma, and he was definitely more powerful than the state representatives in the camp (Werthmann 2003b).

Workers and bosses

The organization of work varies according to the type of mineral deposit. Whereas alluvial (or placer) gold, for instance, can be worked individually or in small teams by washing, panning or shallow-pit surface mining, lode (or reef) gold requires deep shaft mining. Where mining is mainly a seasonal activity that supplements agricultural production, teams may consist of men and women from the same family or kin group who share the proceeds among themselves (Maennling 1996: 225, Vail 1995: 347). In full-blown mines that attract tens of thousands of people, teams are not necessarily recruited according to ethnic or regional origin and can comprise of 30 or more workers (Cleary 1990: 106, 144-146, Kivilu 2000: 134, Werthmann 2003a: 160).

Many gold diggers or diamond divers do not receive salaries or wages, but a part of the raw material. Both possibilities may also co-exist. In eastern Brazil, gold diggers can choose between a daily wage or a percentage of the gold. The first option is "ideal for those who do not wish to make a long term commitment to garimpagem [mining], and want a guaranteed sum, which they can calculate in advance" (Cleary 1990: 84), whereas the second option allows for striking it rich.[6]

In some gold mines in Brazil as well as in West Africa, the extracted ore is equally divided between the crew and the pit owner. For the most part these pit owners claim the most valuable pieces of ore for themselves, citing the overhead costs of running the mine to justify their larger share. Nevertheless, these pit owners do not constitute a "dominant class". Due to the unpredictability of chances and risks, workers can quickly become bosses and vice versa. Since everybody knows that a "rags to riches"-career is easily reversed, many pit

[6] There is a social differentiation between *diaristas* (wage workers) and *porcentistas*, as the former tend to work in the mines only seasonally and only in order to supplement their agricultural production, whereas the latter tend to be professional miners who "regard the daily wage with contempt" (Cleary 1990: 86).

owners refrain from abusing their temporary power, although there are of course some well-known "bad" bosses. A good boss will see to his crew's needs and tolerate minor cases of ore pilfering. The crew, on the other hand, will endure a lean period provided the boss will compensate them later. However, the transgression of certain limits will lead to the boycott of a pit owner or the sacking of a worker respectively (Cleary 1990: 108-109, Grätz 2003a: 200-201, Rodriguez Larreta 2002: 54, 80, Werthmann 2003a: 174-175, Znoj 1998: 203).

There is, however, one category of thieves who will not go unpunished. Cleary noted in eastern Brazil that entering and working the pit of another man in his absence was considered "the most heinous sin, short of outright murder, that a garimpeiro [miner] can commit" (Cleary 1990: 59). In Burkina Faso, the so-called *topo-man* are not members of a crew but live excluselively on stealing ore from temporarily unsupervised pits. Since they are damaging not only bosses but potentially everybody, they will be detained – or worse – when they are caught (Werthmann 2003a: 174).

This does not mean, of course, that cheating or theft does not occur. On the contrary, it may occur on all levels of ore processing. In Burkina Faso, gold diggers who sell their sack of ore on the spot may mix it with worthless stones in order to dupe the buyers who only take samples to estimate the sack's value. The ore buyers, for their part, keep a poker face when paying a much lower sum than the actual value. The day labourers who crush and grind the stones may steal valuable stones – or, if they receive a wage, simply throw a portion away to lighten their workload. The women in whose stalls the ore is processed, store worthless stones or stone powder in order to quickly switch it for the good ore brought by a customer as soon as his attention is diverted. Gold buyers can fool inexperienced gold diggers by manipulating their scales. Gold diggers, on the other hand, may sell counterfeit gold to inexperienced gold buyers. Of course, everybody is aware of the possibility of being cheated and invents ways of guarding against these possibilities. In order to survive – and possibly prosper – in a mining camp, one has to learn the rules of the game.[7] Moreover, one needs at least one close relative, friend or colleague who may assist in various activities (Grätz 2004, Werthmann 2003a: 176-186).

"Bitter" or "hot" money

In several cases, local communities as well as immigrating miners regard the proceeds from mining as "bitter", "hot", or "sterile". These notions are based on the conceptual connection of mineral resources with supernatural powers. The sale of gold or diamonds is identified with the sale of the earth, the ancestors or

[7] Cf. Cleary (1990: 130): "A prudent garimpeiro will work on the assumption that the other party, if not actually cheating at present, is looking for an opportunity to do so in the future "

nature spirits. Investing such proceeds in bride prices, cattle or other items that are considered essential for the reproduction of a community may lead to sterility or death.[8] Consequently, cash from mining is often spent on short-lived consumer goods, food, cigarettes, and alcohol.

The present-day populations of southern Burkina Faso started immigrating into the area during the eighteenth century. With the exception of Lobi and Birifor women in the Gaoua region who perform seasonal small-scale shallow-pit mining and panning (Schneider 1993), most of these groups seem not to have practiced gold mining except as forced labour during colonial rule. The recent appropriation and exploitation of gold deposits by immigrants from other regions or neighbouring countries threatens the local population's land use rights and affects religious beliefs regarding "natural" resources. Despite differences in origin and language, the populations of present-day southern Burkina Faso share the idea that gold is dangerous. A commonly held view is that gold is a living creature, which moves and can suddenly appear or disappear. It can make a person blind, lame or crazy and can even kill. If one happens to find gold in the bush or while working in the fields, one must first "kill" it before it can be taken. Gold is killed by sprinkling it with blood or urine; but the corresponding body part will "die" too. It is not the gold itself that brings bad luck, but rather the nature spirits to whom the gold "belongs" (Werthmann 2003a: 62-108). Such beliefs exist not only in the Southwest, but also in other regions of Burkina Faso, for instance among the Mossi and Gurunsi (Kiéthéga 1983: 187).

Although the Mossi are stereotyped throughout Burkina Faso as capable to do anything for money, Mossi gold diggers may also refer to the supernatural powers of gold. Some say that when gold was first discovered in their provinces, they too were afraid of gold. It was said that one could not find gold without a relative falling ill or dying. These gold diggers too say that gold "belongs" to the spirits. Whoever discovers a gold deposit runs the risk of dying, because he has uncovered a spirits' secret. On occasion, spirits appear in the mines, manifesting themselves in human or serpent form.

These notions regarding the origin and nature of gold are by no means restricted to Burkina Faso. Similar ideas regarding nature spirits or "local demons" may be found throughout Africa (Zwernemann 1968: 388f.). Moreover, "ideas about the mountain spirit" characterizes mining folklore all over the world (Heilfurth 1981: 209). In southern Burkina Faso, gold is thought of as belonging to the realm of the earth deity, the bush spirits and the ancestors. Any intrusion into these spheres is potentially dangerous and has to be accompanied by ritual

[8] E.g. Biersack (1998: 77), Clark (1993: 742), Harris (1989: 254), Sallnow (1989: 212), Schneider (1993), Shipton (1989: 37), Werthmann (2001, 2003c), Znoj (1998: 203).

measures. These conceptions help to explain why many people in that region do not engage in gold mining.

The dangerous properties of gold may contaminate the money that one earns for selling it. Gold is associated with the earth and the earth deity, and its sale generates "bitter money" (Werthmann 2003c). Just like other kinds of bitter money, the proceeds from gold extraction must under no circumstances be used for payments that are vital for the reproduction of the patrilineage and by extension for the relationship between the living and the ancestors. If one were to use "bitter" money for such a payment, this would risk the wife dying or the marriage failing soon. "Bitter money" can only be used for certain purposes. One should spend it on the occasion of social events such as markets or funerals by inviting others to grilled meat, bean cakes or millet beer. If it is not spent in this way, it should be used only for payments that are not linked to subsistence activities or ceremonial exchange. One may, for example, pay taxes ("debts to the white man") or repay one's debts. It is also permissible to pay personal, short-lived consumer goods that are not inheritable, such as clothes or bicycles. It is not just older people who emphasize this difference between "good" and "bitter" money. Even younger people are very conscious of the difference. One of the few Dagara gold-diggers, for instance, justified his working in the mine by claiming he needed to pay off his debts at the *Caisse Nationale de Crédit Agricole* and that he would not do anything serious with it.

Of course, the phenomenon of "squandering" money also occurs in places where the proceeds from mining are *not* considered as dangerous. What Znoj observed in Indonesia applies to mining camps all over the world: "The average daily incomes of goldminers are roughly five to ten times the wages for day labour in agriculture … But the drains on this income are heavy. Cigarettes and food are extremely expensive in the mining settlements, and miners eat a lot of meat and smoke the best cigarettes. A great deal of gambling and prostitution goes on, and there is an etiquette of generosity among miners that makes it hard to economize" (Znoj 1998: 203). In Brazil, miners say that the money from the first rich strike *must* be spent on whores and rum. If the money was not dissipated in this way, one would never have another strike (Cleary 1990: 125). Diamond miners in the former Zaïre who return to town from the diamond fields with money in their pockets do not stay with their relatives but prefer hotels where they can indulge in "extravagances" (Tshonda 2000: 91). In order to show that they can afford it, gold diggers in Benin and Burkina Faso go to the nearest town, where they stand rounds for friends and other customers in bars and flirt with local women (Grätz 2003b: 160-161, Werthmann 2003: 186). The consumption of alcohol, cigarettes, clothes and other luxury goods is literally staged on photographs, and paying for these pictures taken by ambulant

photographers is in itself a way of conspicuous consumption. Yet another way of excessive consumption leads to the destruction of the objects of desire, for instance when the newly-bought pair of white jeans is worn for work the next day.

Many anecdotes that refer to excessive consumption have recurrent motives such as lighting cigarettes with dollar bills (Roopnaraine 1996: 39), or going to town in two taxis: One for the miner and one for his hat (Cleary 1990: 125-126). Cleary even attributed the gold miners' hope to strike it rich to the desire of becoming "somebody who can afford to be mythically generous, in a way that ensures they will become celebrated figures in garimpagem's oral pantheon" (Cleary 1990: 126).

Huli people in Papua New Guinea considered the proceeds from gold mining at Mount Kare as "barren". They were mainly used "for the purchase of luxury commodities such as beer, gifts, and airline tickets. The gold, as one myth relates, is closely associated with Satan, and this belief is strikingly similar to that of the Colombian peasants described by Taussig" (Clark 1993: 724).

By referring to Taussig, Clark interprets the notions about gold-induced illness and unproductive money as a "metacommentary" on colonialism and new power structures: "Work at the goldfields, like that on plantations, is comparable to prostitution; it is an impersonal relationship between Huli, their labor, and Europeans, one that is mediated by money" (Clark 1993: 750). However, the application of Taussig's model to this and other cases of non-industrial mining is misleading. Gold mining at Mount Kare was not predominantly a capitalist venture where Europeans controlled the local labour. An Australian mining company was but one actor in a contested field where conflicts occurred mainly between different local groups (Vail 1995). Moreover, when Vail visited the area some years after the gold rush, he found that not much had changed (Vail 1995: 356). Most people had returned to subsistence production, and the only traces of the gold rush were some luxury items. These and other findings confirm Godoy's statement that Taussig's view of mining and "proletarianization" as a "coercive, tyrannical, and unilineal" process was far too narrow: "... contrary to Taussig's claim, ... miners in many LDCs [less developed countries] may be currently shifting back and forth between precapitalist and capitalist relations of production with much less conflict, stress, and agony than he assumes" (Godoy 1985: 210).

Life-style and male-female relationships

People from all walks of life flock to the mining camps. There are various economic and social reasons for individual migration to the mining camps. On the one hand, mining camps provide a wide range of economic opportunities for

men, women, and children. On the other hand, they are also a refuge for people who have lost their jobs in the city, who have been in jail, or who, for one reason or another, do not wish to remain in (or return to) their communities of origin.

Although many people come to the mines in the hope of striking it rich, those who are most likely to earn a steady living in the mining camps are the providers of goods and services. A new mining camp, even if it is in the middle of nowhere, soon attracts a whole range of commercial activities that can normally be found in urban settings: Bars, restaurants, video cinemas, barber shops, tailors, butchers, shoe-shiners, etc. Those who pursue these commercial activities are often as mobile as the miners and may similarly have spent many years in mining camps.

For people from more remote rural areas, going to the mines also offers access to an urban life-style without having to go to the cities. Especially the very young gold diggers in West Africa emulate US-American popular culture and fashion. They wear jeans, T-shirts, baseball caps, and sneakers, and they carry nicknames which refer, among others, to prominent actors, athletes or politicians (Grätz 2003: 160-161, Tshonda 2000: 81, Werthmann 2003a: 182). Adopting this urban life-style also includes a particular kind of speech. In Burkina Faso, some of the miners' vocabulary is imported from Nouchi, a sociolect spoken by street gangs in the ghettos of Abidjan in Côte d'Ivoire, but there are also some terms and idiomatic phrases that are used only in the gold mines. A lot of this vocabulary is related to leisure activities such as drinking. For instance, a specific brand of beer is called "donkey piss", Pastis is called "lion's tears", and a mixture of Nescafé and Pastis is simply referred to as "the drug". If a gold miner wants to get a colleague to buy him a drink, he says "I need help", "Give me water", or "Do something!". If someone is really drunk, he is "at the top" or "dosed". A gold miner's girlfriend is called "vulture", as is pork (many gold diggers are Muslims who even so eat pork). The usage of the name for an impure animal for two of the most wanted "objects of desire" in the mining camps points to the ambivalence of these desires.

Although many women provide goods and services in the mining camps, the camps are frequently represented as predominantly male worlds by both in- and outsiders. In many mines, women must not enter the mining shafts. In one mining camp in Indonesia, women are not admitted in the camp at all and prostitution is carried out by male transvestites (Znoj 1998: 203). In several cases, migration to mining camps is explicitly compared with male initiation rites. Diamond seekers in Angola identify the diamond mines with the bush camps where young men become hunters (de Boeck 1998). Faiwolmin in Papua New Guinea say that mining camps have replaced the men's house (Polier 1996: 10). Physical force at work and endurance during drinking bouts as well as

friendship among peers are highly valuated. At the same time, the social atmosphere in mining camps – like in many predominantly male settings – is characterized by potential violence and specific uses of bad language that is aimed at questioning other men's virility.[9]

Male-female relationships in mining camps are clearly governed by economic considerations. Whereas men tend to regard women as objects of desire through whose consumption they can prove their financial success and their virility (de Boeck 1998: 793, Rodriguez Larreta 2002: 122, Tshonda 2000: 91, n. 25), women may have an equally instrumental approach in dealing with men. Women traders in Angolan diamond areas carefully choose their temporary partners on the basis of their economic performance and their political influence and may leave them as soon as they have served their purpose (de Boeck 2000).[10] In gold mines in Burkina Faso, women are well informed about the current production of individual mining pits and pay visits or offer drinks to successful pit owners and gold diggers in order to attract their attention. The relationship, however, only lasts as long as the gold digger is capable of demonstrating his affection through gifts of cash (Werthmann 2003a: 169-176). These relationships should not, however, be equated with "prostitution". Even if the directness of male-female relationships in the mining camps is shocking for outsiders, material considerations are always present in the choice of a partner, even in regular marriages. In Burkina Faso, as elsewhere, marriage (and thus adult status) is increasingly difficult to obtain for young men without sufficient financial means. Although extra-marital relationships are on the increase, an unwanted pregnancy often terminates these relationships. This is especially problematic for the female partners who thus lose both their reputation and the material support of their partner. The potential readiness on both sides to look for a more suitable partner colours many male-female relationships that are consequently marked by distrust and a constant fear of "betrayal" (Attané 2000). In the mining camps, many fights among men are about women. Since there are no other instances such as family heads or elders, conflicts of couples are often mediated by the police. If the relationship is terminated, the police may fix compensation payments to the "guilty" party (Werthmann 2003a: 189-192).

Men's feelings of uneasiness about shifts in gender relations may discursively connect to other aspects of mining. Gold diggers at Mount Kare in Papua New

[9] For an overview on anthropological studies about the cultural construction of masculinity see Gutmann (1997).

[10] Congolese women traders who go to the mining camps in Angola on their own are called "dogs breaking their leash" (de Boeck 2000). Tshonda (2000: 122) reports that in a mining "fief" in Zaïre married women had to wear two wrappers in order to be distinguishable from non-married women who wore only one wrapper. Prices for sexual intercourse with the latter were periodically fixed and announced publicly.

Guinea attributed diseases in the mining camps not only to the gold itself but also to the presence of women. Here, the discovery of gold was interpreted as a millenial event and the gold was identified with the skin or excrements of a mythical snake. Strictly speaking women should not be in this sacred area at all, because menstrual blood and traces of sexual activities on women's bodies could anger the serpent, but the gold rendered the men weak and thus incapable of enforcing taboos (Clark 1993).

The moral economy of mining

In mining camps all over the world virility and success is equated with a capacity for excessive consumption. These patterns of behaviour have been termed "performances of profligacy" (Roopnaraine 1996: 39), "economies of ejaculation" (de Boeck 1998: 790) and "daring consumption" (Walsh 2003) respectively. De Boeck rejects the interpretation that such behaviour demonstrates the incapability of adapting to capitalist ideologies and practices of accumulation. Instead, he stresses the continuity with pre-colonial patterns of becoming a man by becoming a hunter. Young men "hunt" dollars and diamonds in order to domesticate and consume them. In pre-colonial times a man acquired prestige by killing and distributing the meat of a wild animal. Today, it is by standing rounds or by flaunting jewellery and ghetto blasters. De Boeck sees the "hunting" of diamonds both as an initiation and as a way of actively shaping modernization processes. The Zaïrean fortune seekers in the Angolan diamond fields are not passive consumers of imported Western commodities or patterns of behaviour, but transform local moral discourses in order to "capture" modernity without being "captured" themselves (de Boeck 1998: 802). In a similar vein, Walsh (2003: 299) writes that sapphire miners on Madagascar "consume daringly in the process of being and becoming active, powerful, attractive, and even 'charismatic'".

Gold mining camps on Sumatra represent a slightly different case. Znoj (1998) describes them as spaces where a discontinued model of male identity is revived or rather reinvented. Znoj presents the seasonal migration of Rejang rice farmers to the gold mines as a kind of adventure holiday. There, men can temporarily withdraw from the drudgery of farming in their home communities where their wives actually control the family budget. According to Znoj, male self-esteem is threatened by the growing influence of the nation-state, Islam, and the economic success of immigrants. The farmers compensate this situation by reviving the cultural concepts of "hot money" and "war debts". These concepts include the creation and maintenance of social relationships among men that are based on pre-colonial patterns of debt bondage and patron-client relations. The "hot" money earned in the gold mines must be spent quickly on alcohol, cigarettes and cash gifts among friends in order to avoid conflict. Znoj concludes: "The hot

money of Rejang men has its sources in this traumatizing modernization-conflict and is a symbolic means to maintain a cultural identity in spite of modernization" (Znoj 1998: 209).

Clark, de Boeck and Znoj agree that patterns of consumption in the mining camps may be interpreted as reactions to modernization processes. However, Clark and Znoj view these processes as external forces that may have destructive effects on local communities and identities, whereas de Boeck stresses the agency of the young diamond miners. By appropriating objects and symbols of modernity, they actively transform cultural concepts of work, fertility, and wealth.

Referring to Shipton (1989) or to Bloch & Parry (1989), the seemingly irrational handling of money may be interpreted as a reaction of subsistence-oriented communities to the introduction of the market economy. By classifying some kinds of income as "bitter", "hot", or the like, such money is largely kept out of a community's morally embedded subsistence economy. These assumptions are clearly reflected in a statement by Znoj who says: "The tolerance shown by mine owners towards theft of gold ore, the lavish gifts of money that can reach hundreds of thousands of Rupiah among mine owners, and the 'war debts' that may legitimately never be paid back can all be interpreted as the politics of conflict-avoidance in a group of people with an egalitarian ideology and suspicion of the wealthy" (Znoj 1998: 203).

But what about the "Wild West"? Given the fact that similar patterns of dealing with the proceeds from mining also exist in non-egalitarian societies, this explanation seems rather limited. Such an interpretation does not explain, for instance, why gold and diamond mining seem to engender almost uniform patterns of consumption both in the "classic" Wild West and today. Many of those who went to the goldfields of California or Alaska in the 19th century were clearly not members of pre-industrial, subsistence-oriented societies. Yet, the term "gold rush" became proverbial not only in the sense of "fast fortune" but precisely because this fortune was frequently lost as fast as it was gained by spending it on drinks, gambling, and prostitution. Interpreting such a behaviour as a lack of experience with capitalist practices is inadequate. It rather expresses a very capitalist belief in the unlimited possibilities of getting rich. What connects miners of the past and the present is the fact that mining is experienced as a form of addiction, as many gold diggers in Burkina Faso put it: Even if you want to stop, you cannot.

Recent ethnographies about gold and diamond mining suggest an alternative hypothesis: The seemingly irrational squandering of money is in fact a form of redistribution. The redistribution of money from mining contributes to create and maintain a moral economy *within* the mining camps. The conspicuous and exces-

sive consumption is based on an etiquette that stresses generosity and sharing. Although violence, theft and fraud do obviously occur on a daily basis, a person who permanently deceives others will eventually be sanctioned. A miner who stands rounds or gives cash to friends not only demonstrates his success in this risky business but also acquires prestige, and thus trust- and creditworthiness. In emergencies, he can expect support from others. Although this general rule is obviously not realized in every single case, there are normative expectations and sanctions that prove the existence of this moral framework.

Even though single mining camps may be short-lived, their temporary inhabitants will meet again in other camps. This creates the need for a shared rule of conduct. Economic and social relationships in the mining camps are often based on mutual obligations and debts. What Cleary noted in mining camps in eastern Brazil also pertains to other countries: "Credit is the lubricant of the economic system in all garimpos; without it, most operations would never get off the ground" (Cleary 1990: 118). Newcomers get credit from traders or shop owners; shop owners help out pit owners, pit owners lend equipment to one another, and so forth.[11]

In Burkina Faso, gold buyers do not only lend money to gold diggers who in turn sell their gold to them, but provide mercury[12] free of charge in order to attract more customers. Friends help each other out with cash, buy drinks for one another or cover up for each other in cases of absence of work or when organizing the pilfering of ore (Werthmann 2003a: 168-169). When a miner is sick or has an accident, it is often friends who collect money and organize transport to a hospital or the home town. Whoever has money is expected to stand rounds. If a miner is reluctant to share his money with others, there are ways of pushing him more or less gently. A friend can ask him for "help" which means buying him a drink. In order to avoid this, some gold diggers buy a bottle of beer in a bar and hide to drink it in their hut. But a person who consistently refuses to share acquires a bad reputation and eventually becomes isolated. Miners in Burkina Faso are also expected to express respect for superiors by offering them drinks, and some less benevolent bosses may systematically search the bars for their workers who then have to buy them a bottle of beer. Consequently, those bars that are frequented mainly by the bosses will be avoided by the workers. A boss who consistently spends his money for luxury goods and women without taking proper care of his workers is characterized by the proverbial saying: "His pit is open, but his mind is closed". In such a case the workers see it as their right to steal ore from his pit.

[11] Roopnaraine (1996: 26-27), Walsh (2003: 293-294), Znoj (1998: 202).

[12] The use of mercury is officially prohibited, but there is little enforcement of this regulation.

In Latin America as in West Africa, information circulates between different and sometimes remote mining camps. A person who consistently disappears without settling debts will eventually be sanctioned or avoided. In mining camps in Burkina Faso, shop or bar owners require pawns such as radios, bicycles or other valuable items for outstanding debts. Sometimes these pawns are never recuperated. If a creditor learns about the whereabouts of a debtor, he may go there in order to retrieve his money. When I visited one mining camp in the company of a former bar owner from another mining camp, many people thought he had come to collect outstanding debts. One woman told him to keep the bicycle she had left as a pawn two years ago. Debts in gold mines on Sumatra are considered as "war debts" that are not retrievable outside the immediate context of the mining camps, like for instance from the wife of a miner. However, they are "revived" when the miners come back in the next season (Znoj 1998: 203). Pit owners in Brazil help each other out with tools or spare parts. If a pit owner cannot return a loan when asked, he will rather borrow the item from a third person in order to pay back the original loan than admit his incapacity to reciprocate (Cleary 1990: 139). Of course all this does not mean that friendship and partnership in mining camps are always reliable and harmonious. But it seems that petty theft, insults or brawls are forgiven more easily in the mining camps than for instance in the villages where the miners come from.

Conclusion

Mining camps are paradoxical social and spatial formations. Although they often emerge in the middle of nowhere, they bring about a pronounced urban lifestyle. Although heterogeneity, anonymity and individuality are characteristics of social life in the mining camps, relationships of trust and solidarity are prerequisites for the individual's survival. These contradictory dynamics may be reconciled through the construction of mining camps as spaces where "conceptions and categories of wealth, accumulation, expenditure, physical and social reproduction and well-being" are tied up with particular notions of masculinity that entail the obligation to share (de Boeck 1998: 779).

From an anthropological point of view, the seemingly irrational "squandering" of money is in fact a form of redistribution that contributes to the social embeddedness of mining. The case studies from Africa and other areas cited above show that there are norms and relationships in mining camps that help to limit the dangers of the work and the violent or fraudulent appropriation of resources. The ostentatious and excessive spending of money is not necessarily an "irrational" response to new ways of production and consumption. Of course it may in fact be irrational and self-destructive in individual cases. It is precisely the potential for, or the tolerance of, "irrationality" that draws some people to the mines. Many

mines in the past and present have been the last refuges for people who for one reason or the other failed to lead a "normal" life. Nevertheless, the peculiar patterns of spending money in mining camps all over the world do seem to create a moral economy of mining. Whoever makes money in the mines is expected to distribute at least a portion of it in the form of alcohol, meat, cigarettes and the like among his companions. Those who fail to conform to this expectation are eventually isolated. Speaking in terms of Bourdieu or the New Institutional Economics, by redistributing money miners acquire social capital which generates trust which in the long run reduces transactional costs. Thus the emergence of a moral economy of mining helps to aggregate people in a social context where kin or ethnic ties are absent, to curb violence, and to maintain a certain degree of social coherence and reliability in the context of this extremely mobile and risky way of life.

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PART II

STRUGGLE AS POLITICS WITHIN LOCAL AND NATIONAL COMMUNITIES

5

The construction and de-composition of "violence" and peace: The Anyuaa experience (Western Ethiopia)[1]

Bayleyegn Tasew

Introduction

This chapter investigates a tradition of the Anyuaa, a Nilosaharan-speaking people of Western Ethiopia, in maintaining peace through an indigenous method called *agem*. It is a culturally instituted way of controlling traditional political organization and normalizing social crises either peacefully if possible, or else violently. The question posed is what the logical principles of the tradition are. Secondly, as field data show, I claim that this indigenous tradition is at risk, and has in fact been declining in the past three decades. It can be asked why this happens, and why it cannot be preserved for peace-making attempts and for traditionalizing 'modernity' based on local experiences.

As with other African countries, multi-ethnic Ethiopia exemplifies the paradoxical relationship of 'tradition' and 'modernity'. According to theories, 'modernity' needs first to create interest in and be minimally appealing to the prevailing traditions of local people. It demands appreciation, acceptance, adoption and absorption by a target group (cf. Hobsbawm 1983, Bauman 1983, 2001, Nyanga 2005). Hence, demonstrating the peculiar nature of the conflict between tradition and modernity in Ethiopia becomes a main issue in this

[1] My grateful thanks to the Editors of this volume for their detailed comments and suggestions on an earlier draft of this chapter.

chapter. The interpretation rests on an analysis of texts in their socio-cultural context (cf. Dundes 1980, Bauman & Briggs 1991). In addition, in this chapter, narrative is taken both as method and embodiment of theory.

The Anyuaa live in the western part of Ethiopia, bordering south-eastern Sudan. They speak a language of the Nilosaharan family. The total population is estimated at 41,000, but several sources suggest the number to exceed a 100,000.[2] According to many observers and the people themselves, the estimations often seem political.

Anyuaa livelihood strongly depends on the rivers. Fish is their main food. They also cultivate crops and vegetables using river-bank fields. Their homesteads are built along or near the rivers, and they hunt game animals around the rivers. The Anyuaa are thus sometimes referred to as 'river people'.

The Anyuaa are traditionally administered by kings and chiefs. They elected their leaders through rituals called *rony*. The Anyuaa also remove their leaders when they consider them morally weak, violent, or deviant from certain norms. Real power is in the hands of the people. They control power through a mechanism called *agem*. Perner says:

> The Anyuak are convinced that the principle of justice is stronger than any other power in the universe and that it will always have the upper hand on all forms of existence … The entire Anyuak worldview is rooted in this belief in Justice as the principle of creation, in its spiritual as well as in its material life. (Perner 1991: 29)

In my view, the Anyuaa conceptions of justice, order and peace seem to rest in the belief they have in *agem*. What is *agem*? Basically it is a notion of justified popular protest against abusive personal rule damaging the interests of the wider community. How do the Anyuaa understand it and implement this concept in practice? From the Anyuaa point of view, *agem* functions to regulate traditional political authorities through some form of election, evaluation and correction. It is also used to keep peace and order and protect the whole community from *ačieny* (curses). As we shall see, *agem* is intended action with predictable outcomes, as well as culturally structured 'violence', articulated in discursive forms and channeled into use in times of abnormal situations.

Scholars like Evans-Pritchard (1940), Lienhardt (1958), Wall (1976), Ellman (1985) and Kurimoto (1997) made mention of the concept and practice of *agem*.

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[2] The figures are controversial. In 1911 the total population of the Ethiopian Anyuaa was estimated to be between 30,000 to 40,000 (Bahru 1990: 82). Evans-Pritchard (1940: 7) talked about "forty to fifty thousand and probably between thirty to forty thousand", based on figures estimated by the then Sudanese Colonial government. The Central Statistical Authority of Ethiopia mentioned 65,000 as the total population figure in 1970, and 85,000 in 1985. Many observers, for example Kurimoto (1992, 1997), suggested the total Anyuaa population to be no less than 100,000. The figure of 44,581, given by the 1994 Ethiopian Population Census, can also be questioned when compared to the number of Anyuaa refugees of 51,000 recorded recently (2004) in Pochalla, a refugee camp in southern Sudan (*The McGill Report* 16 May 2004).

In the views of Evans-Pritchard and Wall, *agem* is described as "village revolution." Particularly Evans-Pritchard values the Anyuaa political system as "democratic in nature." He also expresses it metaphorically as "the power of the chief as an individual is more apparent than real. … It is the tail that wags the dog" (1940). In this context, "the tail" stands for the people who can control political power through *agem*. The "the dog" stands for a leader, who serves as a symbolic object (Caam Adhom 1997: 9-12). Lienhardt sees *agem* also as "a village rebellion" and alternatively as "violent rebellion". 'Rebellion' might connote unregulated social action with unpredictable outcome(s). However, interestingly, on the other hand he notes:

> [T]he Anuak are able to avoid diffused and uncontrolled conflict within the village, and to rule themselves, rejecting any submission to the symbol of their implicit contract which they themselves have created. The Anuak indeed believe that *nobody* ought to be in office for a very long time, and in fact as will be seen a headman must be a person of exceptional talent and wealth to remain in office for more than a few years at the most. (Lienhardt 1958: 32; emphasis original, notes omitted)

But when he makes remarks on the effects of *agem*, he says, "no compensation is payable for killings in the course of a rebellion. … Killing in a rebellion is compensated for by killing in a rebellion. … Like the feud also, a violent rebellion is never completely settled and done with (Lienhardt 1958: 31). If seen in ethnographic reality, types of conflict between rival individuals or parties are effectively settled through a mechanism known as *kwor,* while conflicts among traditional political authorities and the community as a whole are not unsolved matters either, but they get an end through the Anyuaa tradition of *agem*.

Kurimoto (1997) describes *agem* ambiguously when explaining it as "a total anarchy" on the one side and as a "revolution" on the other. He says, *agem* means "a rebellion" or "coup d'état" against a ruling noble or village headman in order to replace him with a new one. The Ethiopian revolution in 1974 fits this notion. After May 1991, when violent clashes between various armed groups deteriorated life conditions among the Anyuaa, the term *agem* was replaced by *girgir*, borrowing an Amharic word meaning "a riot" or "rebellion". It applies to a situation of "war against all", "a total anarchy", an action without end or without being able to be controlled (Kurimoto 1997: 807).

This fact of institutionalized resistance in Anyuaa society raises the question of how conflicts of any kind can at all be ended, and how society can continue as a society? Does it exist without certain mechanisms of regulating conflicts and conflict behaviour?

The mythic *agem*: Conception and construction

Agem, as an ideology of (justified) social correction or reordering, is a strong belief which is held as dating from creation, and is claimed to be established in accordance with the myth told about a divine culture hero called *Očudho*. Rather than being seen as a socially constructed tradition*, agem* is seen as a transition to culture, as a foundational law endowed by the divine hero. *agem* was initiated and consecrated when Anyuaa ancestors were killing each other in a time of absence of order, peace, justice and laws. As narrated by a 98 year-old informant, Othow Adier,[3] the tradition evolved out of necessity:

> In ancient times there was a *kučlwok* (clan leader) whose name was Čway. He was cruel and injudicious. His rule was known as *Molčway*. Čway was killing people without any reason. If one accused another, Čway's judgment would end up in killing. He was simply saying "kill him …" One day Čway's son, Dičär, killed a man. The victim's family went to Čway to report their complaints. This time Čway pronounced "*Nekkyie*." "*Nekkyie*" means "punish not Dičär but his belly". This was unclear. It can mean "take his property" or "attack him". As that was not considered fair, the people did quite the contrary, and instead of taking away his property they killed his son, Dičär. Čway then took revenge. He was cruel: He killed children. He was taking women by force. He was slaying whomever he disliked. As he was cruel and injudicious he destroyed the "*toro*"[4] and imposed a severe law on the people, prohibiting them to dance, sing, play, or enjoy music.

Another narrator, a chief called *kuaro* Philip Ngenynyo, described the time designated by the myth about *agem* as being full of disorder. He said:

> Rivalry among members of the society was very strong. Glory was won by snatching other men's wives, daughters, cattle, and by taking lives. Blood feuds and revenge were incessant phenomena among individuals, groups and clans. The injured took revenge against rivals. The consequences were frequent murder and mutilation. These men were applauded by their accomplices and followers and enjoyed their respect and admiration. The defeated were evicted to places they didn't know before. Feuds and disputes were not settled on the basis of the wrongs and the rights ascribed to them. Men, before the coming of Očudho, took justice into their own hands. After the teachings of Očudho, however, those chaotic situations came to an end.

As we can understand, realities of killing, looting, robbery, adultery, cruelty and fear gave way for the consecration of the myth. Causing factors are also represented by the opening episode of the mythic narrative, typically symbolized by the quarrelling brothers:

> …. Očudho came in that time. … He emerged out of the water when two brothers were fighting for a fish. … One day, two brothers caught a fish. The elder brother held it by its

[3] I recorded several versions of the myth. Othow Adier, 98, gave one version. Othow was born in Čiro, near Ethiopian Akobo. He was living in Gambella town when he told me the myth. With him I conducted discussions and interviews during the period 1997-2005. The other narrator was Philip Ngenynyo. He narrated the story of Ocudho at an impressive ceremony called *rony,* where he was elected as a chief, *kuaro*, at Ukuna village, Abobo *wereda*, on 26 February 1998. No less than 800 people (male and female) of differing ages participated at this *rony*.

[4] "*Toro*" refers to an inter-village central place for dance, music and plays, and thus can represent the central sphere of social and spiritual life of villages.

head. The younger held it by its tail. The boys held the fish simultaneously. Therefore, they started quarrelling over the fish. The boys were fiercely shouting and insulting each other. The elder said "it is mine." The younger also said "it is mine." While they were insulting and wrestling with each other the boys heard a strange voice saying, "Stop quarrelling!"

Immediately, the boys looked in the direction from where the strange voice was coming. Grabbing the fish firmly, they saw a strange man emerging out of the deep water of a river swimming toward a *čudho* standing in the midst of the stream. The *čudho* was … a very thick big piece of dry wood. The strange man climbed on the *čudho*. His head was covered with sedge. The man had strings of four types of glittering beads. The beads were *učuok* beads tied round his neck and strings of *dičär, udëëge* and *dimui* beads round his waist. He also held an *učale* (a special type of spear) with it rest – *diqweri* – in his hands, and wore *udole* (thick circular ambers) round his wrists and ankles. The boys were very surprised with the man and his decorations. They had never seen such a man and such kinds of objects. Sitting on the *čudho*, the man looked at the quarrelling boys while they gazed at him full of wonder. One of the boys grabbed the fish's head. The other grabbed the fish's tail. Then, the man asked the boys to know the cause of their quarrel.

"Why are you fighting my sons? What is your problem?" he asked them.

The elder brother uttered: "I caught the fish but he says, 'it is mine'."

The younger also complained: "I have caught it. The fish is mine! But, he wants to take it for himself. 'It must be mine!' he says scornfully."

Then the man advised the younger one who held the fish by its tail to set the fish free. The boy released it. But the fish could not escape. Next, the man told the boy to hold the tail again and the elder boy to let the head of the fish free. The younger held the tail tightly. Then, the elder released the fish out of his hands. The fish easily slipped out of the hands of the younger boy.

Then, the man asked the boys "Why did the fish escape when it was held by its tail and did not escape when it was held by its head?" The boys could not give the right answer. Then, the man told them: "The power of a fish is in its head. Therefore, a person who holds a fish by its tail should not claim to be its owner because its tail is slippery … It can escape easily. But, a person who holds its head can claim to be its owner because a fish held by its head is powerless. Remember. A fish's power is in its head, not in its tail", he said.

Then, the man asked the boys again: "Who should be the owner? You can solve your quarrel now."

The boys fully accepted his wise words, so that they gave the right answer for the man. The younger said, "I understand. The owner should be the one who catches the fish by its head. He should really be the owner but I should not be." The boys settled their problems by themselves. As a result the boy who held its head took the fish for himself.

But soon, a miracle took place. The strange man disappeared at a glance without being noticed by the boys. The boys could not tell whether he ascended into the sky or immersed into the water or fled to any other direction. He suddenly disappeared. The boys … were frightened with the event. Therefore, they ran quickly to their village out of fear. Then upon arrival they told the villagers all about what they had observed and experienced at the river that day. The news excited the villagers. They admired [the man's] way of solving the problem. They appreciated his wisdom. They also assumed that the man who came out of the water and disappeared suddenly without being seen afterwards could be no other than a *nääm-jwøk* **(**the god of the water) – "He might be a *nääm-jwøk*", they said. Therefore, they wanted to find this man around the river. At last, they decided to find him. … There was no order, law and justice in that time. There was a cruel leader called *Čuai*. His way of ruling was called *mol-Čuai*. It means rule of *Čuai*. …

The story continues with the villagers going to the river and finding the strange man after a long search. After great effort, they took him to their village

and he then taught them laws and wisdom, established the *agem* and *kwor* traditions of conflict resolution, and for the first time in their history installed traditional political authority – Anyuaa chieftaincy and kingship.

Očudho is also regarded as the primeval ancestor of the noble lineage. The name of the hero, *Očudho* is composed of two words: "*O*" and "*Čudho*". "*O*" means "a man" while "*čudho*" refers to "a big-thick-dry log of wood". The words in one form bring to us a lively image of "a man sitting on a big dry log of wood". As indicated, the hero came out of water while the two brothers were fighting for a fish. The conditions leading to the formation of the traditions have been symbolized in oppositional terms, as "dry" and "wet" substances. A dry log of wood standing firmly at the centre of flowing water can remind us of death in life, representing the time in which the Anyuaa ancestors were suffering before the coming of the culture hero.

As depicted from the boys' point of view, the hero, a strange figure wearing strange objects (glittering beads round his wrists, neck, waist and ankles and holding spears and harpoons, etc.) emerged out of the water in the same way as put in the opening episode of the myth (i.e., the boys' dispute) that preceded the first revelation. We are also told about the quarrelling boys from the strange man's perspective. Though the contesting boys were very fascinated with the unknown figure and his colourful possessions, they still greedily held on to the fish. After looking at them fighting in this way, the man asked them to let him know the reason for their quarrel.

Desire was induced in the villagers as a result of the boys' story. As indicated in the opening episode of the narrative, the villagers were 'in need of peace and order', so that they decided to find him and use him to help them devise a way out of the times of cruelty and chaos. The villagers made to make quite some efforts to get to him. One day, Očudho emerged from the water just in the way as had been narrated by the boys. The villagers then told Očudho about the chaotic conditions they were enduring and begged him to show them a way out. Očudho initially refused to accept their demands, as evident from the next episode in the myth:

> … Then, they requested the *nääm-jwok* to go to their village to teach them laws. But the *nääm-jwok* rejected their request. He said, "I must go back to my country. I am the king of the underwater world. Why do you insist and make me desert my kindred: My sons, daughters, wives and relatives living in water? My country is in the underwater. Therein I have cows. How can I live without my cows and my people?" he said.
>
> Although he refused to accept their demand, the Anyuaa begged him to go with them to their village. Finally they caught him and tried to force him to go to their village. They grabbed him to take him by force. But … he changed into a lion; then into a leopard, then into an elephant, next into a half-bull and half-man, and, finally, he changed into human form. This was a miracle. The people believed him as a true river-god. They said, "It is true. He is a *nääm-jwøk* without doubt." Therefore, instead of running away they held him and tried catching him while he was frequently changing himself into many terrible beasts.

At last, the *nääm-jwok* went with them to their village. He was welcomed by all people except Čway. As the way of life in the time preceding the myth had seen the application of force, the villagers captured and dragged the hero into accepting their demands.

However, he (re)asserted his superior abilities. It is important to note the series of repeated supernatural actions that create grounds for generating mythic images, ideas prescriptions, and actions. Therefore, as encountered by the boys in the first episode, the hero metamorphosed himself into the shapes of an elephant, a lion, a tiger and then into a human form. This, in a mythic conception, serves to narratively create for an audience a divine hero 'absolutely', as a supernatural being, with the villagers accepting him as a god. They built up a belief in his divine power. Thereafter he became willing to help and accompanied them to their village.

As the story goes on, the hero, after entering into the human sphere, preferred to live in a solitary hut, abstaining from eating food and drinking water. He constantly went on (re)confirming his superior ability of existing without nutrition, unlike the common people as seen in other mythological conceptions and hero worship. The villagers learned about his ability of living with the aid of a certain mysterious force he had. In what follows I focus on the construction of *agem* given to the Anyuaa forefathers by their hero as "boons", to use a term suggested by Campbell: "A hero ventures forth from the world of everyday life (1960: 30) into a region of supernatural wonder: Fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: The hero comes back from his mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellowmen."

The "boons"

As we saw, the hero taught them laws in compliance with the villagers' interest in peace and social order. Interestingly, the hero's methods of teaching the villagers about "law" and cultural order were more participatory and interactive than prescriptive or authoritative, to use some of our modern concepts. He did not force them to obey his ideas or interests. For example, questions and answers modelled in the mythical narrative suggest his methods of teaching:

> …. The villagers were always petitioning Očudho to teach them rules and to be their leader. One day he summoned all the villagers. Then he asked them, "You are asking me to teach you laws and be your leader. If I do as you demand, will you give me your properties: Cows, goats, and sheep?"
>
> The people replied cheerfully, "yes!" in one voice.
>
> Očudho continued asking, "I have left my daughters and sons in the river to live with you. Thus, will you allow me to take your sons and daughters as my own children?" The people unanimously answered "yes!"
>
> Očudho asked them again: "I have left my wives in the under water. Are you willing to give me your wives if I become your king?"

This time, the crowed kept silent.

Then, he repeated his question: "You are insisting on me to teach you laws and to be your king. Aren't you insisting me?"

The people replied "yes!"

"If I do as you want, won't you give me your wives?"

Everyone kept quiet.

At last, Očudho said, "I understand your silence. A wife belongs to her husband. Remember! A person who commits adultery can be killed. Except that no one should be killed for any crime he commits. Instead, he should be set free from any wrongdoing through *kwor* … Then, he taught them about *kwor* …

Očudho taught wisdom to the villagers. Čuai was opposing him. One day he came to a gathering to stop Očudho from teaching. But he suddenly fell on the ground. He was not able to stand in front of Očudho. His body was trembling. At last he knew that Očudho was certainly a *nääm-jwøk*. As soon as he knew this he stood up and could again move his limbs freely. … Then, Čuai asked Očudho to sit on a lion skin. But, Očudho refused. He said, "Unless the skins are new, I will not sit on them. I do not sit on old lion and leopard skins". Soon, the villagers brought new lion and leopard skins. Očudho sat on the skins.

According to the story, Očudho begot a son called Gilo from Čuai's daughter called Korie, and disappeared a little before Gilo was born. As told, "he returned to the water, to his country", leaving his personal property to his son. His personal belongings were held as emblems of power. For example, the *čudho*, the thick beam of dry wood on which he sat for the first time in the midst of the river, has been imitated as a throne. It is now called *woolo*. In addition, the hero's teachings, conduct and actions were adapted as laws, rules and norms regulating traditional political power, governing *agem* and *kwor*. *Kwor* is a method of dispute settlement between individuals or parties through compensation. He installed *rony* (the ritual of electing leaders and investing them with power; Bayleyegn 2002). As modelled in the myth, the cruel Čuai changed into a more human character. He voluntarily transferred his power after being influenced by the hero's teachings. In the myth we see Čuai ritually asking forgiveness for his evil doings against the people, which is today considered as a model to be applied in times of *agem*.

Očudho became the first king based on the choice of the villagers. The choice and consent of the villagers are an important norm in regulating traditional authorities. As Očudho was seen as a divine power, kings and chiefs were also seen as divine. Očudho abstained from nutrition for some time. Traditionally, a king is not expected to eat food in the presence of common people. In this way, sets of actions ordered in the myth have been taken as laws, procedures, and principles of *agem* with which Anyuaa collective identity and ideal values may be defined. Authority and governance are interpreted locally in connection with the logical principles of *agem*. In brief, *agem* is said to have been proclaimed through the myth presented above about Očudho. It is conceived as given rather than as the outcome of a social process.

In the normative sense, *agem* is set in motion to replace a morally wicked leader by another leader. As believed, to let a transgressing chief stay in power is seen as *ašeni* (curse), which might cause war, drought, plague, or flooding. A leader is expected to be free from the following weaknesses:

(1) disrespect of his people;
(2) irreverence to heroic deeds;
(3) discrimination between his people;
(4) showing greediness;
(5) negligence of feeding his people by preparing festivals at least three times a year;
(6) lack of courage in fighting a war;
(7) unfairness in sharing war booties among warriors;
(8) decisions without the consent of his people;
(9) failure in performing public rituals;
(10) disregarding advice addressed to him through elders, etc.;
(11) having sex before midnight;
(12) killing, harassment, offence of or applying force against an Anyuaa;
(13) heedlessness of the emblems of power, etc. (Bayleyegn Tasew 2002: 19-23).

A leader will be at a risk of removal from his position if he is proved to be a violator of one of the above norms.

Agem is achieved in two ways: Mostly peacefully, but by force when peaceful means have proved to be impossible. The process has two major phases, categorically put as *immature* and *mature* and also follows steps and procedures with expected outcomes. The first stage needs to be secretly prepared by elders, while the second is carried out overtly. The following are some of the steps of the first phase:

(1) Substantiating an alleged offence. If the allegation is considered to be damaging, the case needs to be discussed by elders. Therefore, elders from different villages meet to discuss secretly with the following aims:
    (a) to agree on the allegation(s);
    (b) to weigh the degree of the offence;
    (c) to gather additional information;
    (d) to assess which section of the community might or might not ally with the accused leader;
    (e) to address the problem to all adult members on underground basis, etc.
(2) If the elders believe in the villagers' readiness for the *agem*, they take it as *mature*. Therefore, elders take the following steps:
    (a) informing their spiritual leader (*nyibour*);
    (b) electing representatives among them;
    (c) the representatives led by the *nyibour* address the community's grievance to the deviant chief or king.
(3) At this point, the people can also expect the *agem* to follow one of these directions:
    (a) It may end in peaceful ways if the deviant chief's or king's responses were positive, following Čuai's conduct as modelled in the myth. In this case, he will summon a gathering either to ask forgiveness or resign for the offence he made against not only the whole community but also against the souls of the dead. If he asks forgiveness, he should promise to improve his behaviour in a short period of

time. If he improves his "bad" behaviour within the promised time, the community becomes pleased so that the end is appreciated as peaceful. The *agem* is also considered peaceful if he resigns from his position based on his decision. In this case, the people hold a series of *rony* (election ceremonies) to appoint another leader from the noble lineage. Therefore, these ways are often regarded as ideal means of restoring peace.

(b) The second direction is a violent one. This may be experienced if an accused chief or king is irresponsible and decides to quit the *agem* using force. He can try to organize his "*teiieng*" (age-mates),[5] *jobura (*militia defending villages*)* and *wadi* (guards) to avert the *agem* by killing or punishing active protestors. This may end up in bloodshed. If the *agem* moves in this direction, the people may prefer to boycott or capture the violent leader before he can act. In case of boycotting, the villagers may totally desert their villages leaving the violator alone in his *bura* (residence), by joining neighbouring villages or by migrating to far-away villages. As a result, the tyrant chief or king will suffer from psychological, social and economic crises, which eventually compels him to flee to a place where his people doing the *agem* are not settled. But as soon as he abandons his *bura,* the people return to their deserted village.

(4) When the above means are found impossible, an *agem* can end in bloodshed. The people can finally overthrow a violent leader by capturing him at any time. The tyrant will be subjected to punishments, ranging from flogging to expulsion from his village. If he is captured he would be ritually flogged, deprived of his property, expelled from his quarter and even evicted from his village. These are not the only consequences; his offspring will be transformed into a *watong* section of society. *Watong* means the lowest section of the society, deprived of legitimate claims to be descendants of a noble lineage through Očudho, the culture hero. This means that his offspring will never be elected or come to power, for their father had once been proven a violator against the respected societal norms ordained by the divine ancestor.

As we see, *agem* is a very important tradition to lay the ground for 'good governance' within Anyuaa society. Traditionally, the people elect their leaders. They debate on the personal qualities of a candidate. They invest a person with power when they agree on his leadership qualities. The Anyuaa thus evaluate, criticize, advise, and also remove a bad leader from his position when they find him a transgressor, a norm breaker.

The conflict between "tradition" and "modernity"

It is a generally excepted fact that a culture is or cannot be a 'pure', closed, entity. Cultures influence each other. As the UNESCO report *No Culture is an*

[5] People born on the same day, within the same week or in a month are called "*teiieng*" (same in age-grade). They are regarded as sharing common fate and fortunes. Attachment, considerateness and endearment among age-mates are much stronger than between brothers or sisters. The intimacy is cultivated from childhood. They grow up eating in groups at fireplaces. They also feast together at ceremonies such as weddings, based on age and on "*teiieng*" affiliations. They go in groups to hunt, fight or to catch fish. If one quarrels with another person his or her age-mate considers the quarrel as his or her own concern. One selects a lover or marries a wife through the mediation of his/her "*teiieng*". One may know the secrets of another through "*teiieng*". Based on the tradition, "*teiiengs*" of an accused leader often ally with him in a time of *agem*.

Island (1995) states: "All cultures are influenced by and in turn influence other cultures. Nor is any culture changeless, invariant or static. All cultures are in a state of constant flux, driven by both internal and external forces. These forces may be accommodating, harmonious, benign and based on voluntary actions, or they may be involuntary, the result of violent conflict, force, domination and the exercise of illegitimate power."

Contacts of the Anyuaa with the central state led to culture change. These contacts have usually been to be punitive and violent, based on misunderstandings and disregard for local ideologies. This was especially the case since 1974, when a military government assumed power. As oral data and written sources indicate, centre-periphery relationships during the feudalist monarchy of Ethiopia (1883-1974) were by far better than contacts at present. During the feudalist monarchy, the central state approached the Anyuaa indirectly and differently, partly for reasons related to the unsettled controversies on the international boundary lines between the Anglo-Egyptian Colonial Government of the Sudan and the Ethiopian government (Bahru 1990, Johnson 1981, 1986). While in imperial times new things were introduced to the Anyuaa, such as a *taxation* system and the *balabbat* structure of appointed local leadership, they retained most of their internal autonomy. Some chiefs and kings were appointed as *balabbats.* Showing fidelity to the Emperor, collecting taxes, keeping peace according to their own ways were the main requirements. Though there were incidents of resistance, the Anyuaa culture continued to be more or less undisturbed until 1974. As Abbink (2002: 155-156) writes,

> Up to 1974, imperial policy towards the smaller and politically less relevant populations on the margins of the empire was marked by a situation of what one might call 'tolerated difference. … For example, they became part of the political economy of this state through indirect rule (via *balabbats* or local chiefs). … Ethno-cultural differences and indigenous social organization were largely tolerated in the imperial system of governance: There were no mass campaigns of forced conversion or abandonment of customary law, traditional socio-political organization, or 'harmful custom' as long as political loyalty was shown to the centre.

Nevertheless, the creation of *balabbat*s led to a first reorientation of political thinking among the Anyuwaa.

Problems developed markedly when the military socialist *Derg* government took power in 1974. Its socialist policies and ways of implementation were radical, naïve and wasteful. First and foremost, "Marxists" as they were, they considered indigenous systems of knowledge and traditions in Ethiopia as "backward elements" that had nothing to contribute to progress as they saw it. Therefore, the *Derg* engaged in eradicating what they saw as *hualaq'er-bahiloch* ("backward cultures") and abolishing 'reactionary forces', and tried to wipe out traditional beliefs and practices. In this context, the Anyuaa were labelled as

"violent", "unruly" and "aggressive". Their traditional institutions, customary laws, the *agem* tradition, knowledge, values, beliefs, rituals, etc. were defined as irrelevant. Traditional authorities were seen as seen as "anti-revolutionary elements", so they repressed and isolated chiefs, divine kings, spiritual leaders and even elders. Symbolic objects and emblems of power kept as marks of identity and sovereignty were either confiscated, burned or thrown into rivers (Kurimoto 1997, Dereje 2004). The values of *agem* went through demythologization and endured delegitimization and ridicule when qualified as a feature of "backwardness". Minority groups in Ethiopia were generally called *anasa* (in Amharic), meaning "small in number" in a literal sense, but "inferior" in its deeper sense. As an effect, the people fell into confusion. Cadres of the ruling party and government authorities misinterpreted inter- and intra-ethnic conflicts, regarding them as manifestations of "primitive communities in the tribal stage". So in these contexts, negative images towards ethnic groups and destructive tendencies towards cultures of the periphery intensified. Changes and discontinuities in administrative structures affected internal stability. Opposing beliefs and interests brought up cultural conflicts and destabilization.

The *Derg* also settled about 60,000 people with a different language and culture from draught-stricken parts of northern Ethiopia in Anyuaa-land. As a consequence, the Anyuaa were forced to integrate into the new villages of the settlers, and to abandon their villages and the burial places of ancestors behind their homesteads. In the view of the indigenous people, these acts of coercion were damaging and disturbing and had to be checked through *agem*. The Anyuaa were criticizing such anomalies, which created gaps between the indigenous people and government cadres and also settlers.

The SPLA/M (the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement), backed and condoned by the *Derg* and then after 1991 to some extent by the EPRDF-led government to use Anyuaa land as a spring-board and training ground, frequently attacked the Anyuaa from 1983 to 2003. But whenever the latter tried to defend themselves, or to appeal to the government when in need of protection, the government repressed the Anyuaa by force. Surprisingly, the Ethiopian governments endorsed the SPLA to administer the peripheral peoples in the Gambela region, including the Anyuaa. The Ethiopian government opened four camps at different sites in Anyuaa-land for refugees from southern Sudan, numbering about 350,000 in 1985-1987 (currently estimated at 85,000 (IRIN 2003). Refugees were involved in the massive clearance of land and forest. Especially Nuer refugees from southern Sudan were allowed to settle in Anyuaa-land, quickly gaining Ethiopian citizenship. The future of the Anyuaa remained jeopardized even after the fall of the *Derg* government. As recent reports indicate, more than 20,000 armed pastoral Nuer have crossed into Anyuaa territories up to 2005.

Many Anyuaa lost their land and were forced to live as refugees in other districts, pushing other neighbouring people.

After the fall of the *Derg* in May, 1991, ethnic ideology blended with a sort of 'revolutionary democracy' promoted by the new EPRDF-led Ethiopian government replaced Marxist ideology. The new government also came to accept a similar policy to that of the *Derg* regime toward the SPLA/M. According to oral data and written documents, the SPLA accused the Anyuaa before the government of any complaints made against it. On the other hand, the Anyuaa sought protection from "their government" about the SPLA's attacks against them, as for example, in the case of the SPLA killing ca. 120 Anyuaa in villages in Punydho in 1989 (Kurimoto 1997). The Anyuaa often report to the government following a killing; however, the blame was always put on them. As a result they were often subjected to further harassment by the Ethiopian authorities.

In sum, the more the responses of the government authorities in the last three decades has been destructive, the more the psychological and physical damage was done to the Anyuaa. But the *agem* procedure could not be followed. The Anyuaa tend to resist against unjust government actions and negative stereotypes informed by their tradition of *agem*. If it were not seen as harmful culture (in Amharic *goji-bahil*) and if it had not been negatively used in stigmatizing the people as "lawless", "unruly", "rebellious" etc., many of its aspects could have been utilized in discussing or restoring local order and even in culturally oriented development. The indigenous legal political culture based on ideas of a popular control of power was continuously sidelined and devalued in the past three decades. But *agem*, being a culturally structured tradition of just government and limits to authority, has been an authentic marker of Anyuaa identity. It could have been drawn upon in cultivating mutual respect between cultural and political traditions and in devising developmental initiatives in the region.

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6

Maintaining an elite position: How Franco-Mauritians sustain their leading role in post-colonial Mauritius

Tijo Salverda

Introduction

The island of Mauritius, located in the Indian Ocean roughly eight hundred kilometres east of Madagascar, has an interesting mixture of ethnicities originating from India, Africa, China and Europe. During the colonial days of Mauritius the different ethnicities strongly corresponded with the social hierarchy of its population, with the whites, the Franco-Mauritian planter elite, at the top.

The independence of Mauritius from the United Kingdom in 1968 changed the social hierarchy and influenced the elite position of the Franco-Mauritians. The prospect of an independent Mauritius, the shift of political power to the Hindus originating from the Indian subcontinent – creating a Hindu political elite- and the fear of losing their economic privileges, triggered the exodus of a substantial number of Franco-Mauritians. Nearby South Africa where white minority rule was still prevailing was an important destination, and the east of South Africa nowadays has an estimated Franco-Mauritian community of more than 10,000 (Boudet 2001: 1).

Today the Franco-Mauritians constitute about one percent of the total population of 1.2 million, and fear over Hindus bringing the country to bankruptcy proved unjustified, and losing their economic privileges and plantations never

became reality. On the contrary, the last few decades have been rather prosperous for Mauritius. In the 1960s the island was considered a hopeless case in which the future of its inhabitants was at stake, because of a rapidly increasing population and an economy mainly relying on one single product: sugar, very susceptible to world market prices. The first decade of independence was difficult indeed, but from the 1980s onwards two newly emerging economic pillars, tourism and the textile industry, grew at a fast rate, making Mauritius into an Indian Ocean equivalent of the Asian Tigers. Franco-Mauritian businesses benefited importantly from this diversification, investing heavily in luxurious hotel resorts and the textile industry. Although losing most of their direct political power with the island's independence in 1968, new economic opportunities sustained the Franco-Mauritian elite position, and until today they have remained an important factor in Mauritian society – especially in the private sector (Eriksen 1998: 19, 63).

In the context of this transformation of a colonial society to an independent, democratic society with a majority of non-whites and significant global and regional changes, processes of Franco-Mauritian elite maintenance, and their correlation with ethnicity, are worthwhile to study. How do Franco-Mauritians sustain loyalties from other parts of the Mauritian society? Do they downplay their "white" and ethnic identity, because of its negative association with the colonial days? What happened to the social hierarchy of the island?

Before taking up the Franco-Mauritian case study in more detail, however, I will summarize some important aspects of elite theories in order to enhance our understanding of the current state of affairs of the Franco-Mauritian elite position. It will increase also our understanding of the mechanisms involved in maintaining their important role in the social hierarchy of Mauritius.

Theorizing elite cultures

In anthropology, relatively little attention is paid to elite groups (Marcus 2004: 633). In other domains of social sciences, especially political science and sociology, we find more contributions devoted to the roles of elites in contemporary societies. Theory coming from these domains, combined with anthropological studies of elites, will, nevertheless, give a clear picture of mechanisms involved in maintaining and sustaining an elite position and culture.

Below I specifically focus on a few important aspects of elite theory that are highly relevant for studying the Franco-Mauritians. First, I explore some theories on the interaction of elites with the rest of society in order to create and sustain loyalties between them and other segments of society. Second, I elaborate on the dual aspects of being an elite group and an ethno-cultural community, because

apart from the social and political roles elites often coincide with other ways of group categorization or definition, like nobility and, in this paper, ethnicity.

Privileged

Elites appear in many different ways. Chris Shore and Stephen Nugent (Shore & Nugent 2002: 4) argue that we should use qualifying adjectives such as "business" (in the case of the Franco-Mauritians), "military", "governing", "modernizing", "religious", "academic", or "bureaucratic" to distinguish between the different varieties of elites. Other authors refer to the varieties as "functional elite diversity" (Dogan 2003: 1). These are useful additions because we have to take into consideration that different societies indeed engender different elites. Also, old and newly emerging elites significantly impact each other's position in society.

Despite the above-mentioned "qualifying adjectives" and parallels with other ways of belonging, elites share similarities. First, an elite has privileged access to, or control over, particular resources which may be mobilized in the exercise of power (Woods 1998: 2108). For purposes of clarification, I would like to add: an elite is a collectivity of persons who occupy commanding positions in some important sphere of social life, and who share a variety of interests arising from similarities of training, experience, public duties, and way of life (Cohen 1981: xvi). Second, members of an elite are linked by a network of social or professional relations, performed in exclusive back-region spaces, and which may be used for recruitment, or for the transmission of influence or patronage. It is to note that many scholars who are predominantly focussing on formal networks with a high degree of visibility – due to high perceptibility data are easier accessible – fail to spot the importance of informal and other sources of networking (Camp 2003: 143, 149). Third, elites are socially and discursively constructed *as* an elite, either by themselves or by others. Woods suggests, though, that this model should not be adopted as a hard-and-fast definition of elites, but rather that by acknowledging that elites posses the above characteristics a new perspective can be opened on the study of elites (Woods 1998: 2108).

Next to the issues underlined in the definitions, an important pursuit of elites is to consolidate their position at the top of the social hierarchy over time. Elite groups therefore have to or tend to encourage the social cohesion of the group itself and its relation with, and acceptation by, the rest of society. These intra- en inter-group relations are often reinvented throughout history, in order to prolong the elite's position. Abner Cohen (1981: xiii) states the following:

> To carry out its universalistic functions, i.e., its services to the public, an elite is forced to organize itself particularistically, to keep itself in existence, and enhance its image. Conversely, an initially particularistic elite is forced to seek legitimacy for its high status by assuming universalistic functions. The same organization is thus evolved to serve both universalistic and particularistic ends, and elites can therefore be located on a continuum from the most particularistic, least universalistic, at one end, to the most universalistic, least particularistic, at the other. In time, an elite may move from one end of the continuum to the other, and history repeatedly records the rise and fall of elites.

In other words, "… the justice (or fairness) of an elite system affects its operation and stability over time" (Marcus 1983: 70). According to Cohen, the problem of finding a balance between universalistic and particularistic functions concerns not just elites but social groups generally. However, the contradiction between the universalistic and particularistic functions at the heart of group organizations is most evident at the higher levels of social hierarchy, notably among elite groups, Cohen (1981: xv, xvi) argues. Shore and Nugent state that in order to constitute itself as an elite in the first place, an elite group must develop its own particularistic set of interests, norms and practices to differentiate itself from the masses (Shore & Nugent 2002: 2, 3).

Vertical loyalties

Looking at it from a social pyramid point of view, as social hierarchy – and fairly similar to universalistic and particularistic functions, but more precisely focussed on the specific actions and existing social networks – elites have to maintain vertical and horizontal loyalties. An elite group, which by its very nature is only a small minority of society, needs support for its existence from wider parts of society. At least, the elite group needs consent of the non-elites, subordinate and/or lower classes, which is required for perpetuating its position over the long run. Meindert Fennema refers to this phenomenon as "vertical loyalties" (Fennema 2003: 29).[1]

Different elites often require different mechanisms to achieve vertical loyalty. A political elite, for instance, obtains loyalty from its supporters by backing their ideology and/or demands. Fennema argues that a political elite is in need of a morality, because the supporters can relate to morality along vertical lines and can control this morality, because they share it. Political elites which are inclined importantly towards professionalism instead of morality do have difficulties in gaining sufficient loyalty, because professionalism requires experts. Between experts (the elite) and the laymen (the elite's supporters) there are no vertical lines: the expert does not recognize the opinion of the layman and the layman does not share knowledge with the expert, like they can share morality (Fennema 2003: 29).

[1] Fennema refers to these loyalties in relation to democracy, or "matrix democracy" as he calls it, and its political elite, but it shows similarities with elites in general.

In the case of business elites, they can to a certain extent maintain their position by staying low-profile and avoiding too much attention. Thus vertical loyalty is less required, because unlike a political elite a business elite does not rely on the electorate. However, some sort of vertical loyalty is always required, and business elites have to look for other means to achieve it, because in contrast to a political elite they do not have a "natural" group of supporters. A business elite can obtain vertical loyalty by, for instance, financially supporting a community and/or social work.

A few things regarding vertical loyalties have to be taken into account, though. First, frequently no intentional strategies are behind obtaining vertical loyalties: supporting community work may just be a charitative gesture to the less fortunate and an element of a specific elite culture, which eventually may help to construct vertical loyalties. Second, elite groups need to have a sense of having something in common and/or awareness of the interdependence among social groups in order to perceive the functioning of vertical loyalties (Reis & Moore 2005: 5).

Horizontal loyalties

Elites have their own interests and need to further if not maximize their own material rewards and privileges. These "particular" interests are, often, secretly performed, because in liberal-democratic societies these are rather incompatible with the principle of equality of opportunity usually upheld by the formal constitution and ideology of society, and therefore cannot be advanced by a formal association. Cohen (1981) argued that in the West, elites are not recognized as such, i.e., as part of the recognized social structure. The members of the group are not acknowledged as a group, but only as a category of persons who have achieved their status by merit within a highly competitive system. However, Cohen continues, those who earn their way into elite status soon begin to coordinate their actions in an increasingly systematic and consistent way. They also seek to perpetuate their elite status and privileges by socializing and training their children to succeed them (Cohen 1981: xvi). These actions of elites are performed in the exclusive back-region spaces, in which a network of social or professional relations links the elite, held together by horizontal loyalties.

Especially the horizontal loyalties can be studied by examining the elites' social networks. The interests and functions that cannot be advanced by formal associations are usually articulated by kinship, friendship, and a host of other primary relationships (Cohen 1981: xvi-xvii). Studying how elites ensure their survival requires close attention to their kinship structures and networks (Shore & Nugent 2002: 13). Therefore, network analysis will provide an understanding what these primary relationships are; how elites operate and ensure their survival; whether its members share the same (economic) interests, or whether feelings of

belonging are sufficient to maintain horizontal loyalty; and what the tasks of important community members are.

At a horizontal level – and essential for understanding local power structures – there is also co-operation and/or rivalry between different elites. First, formal and informal networks linking elites with different adjectives (i.e. political and business elites) often necessitate some sort of inter-elite horizontal loyalty, because they share common interests and goals. However, sharing common interests and having inter-elite horizontal loyalties may, nonetheless, in many cases require a certain degree of secrecy, because different elites may have different vertical loyalties along, for instance, political and/or ethnic lines which do not correspond with inter-elite horizontal loyalties. Second, a significant element of the inter-elite horizontal level is rivalry and competition: different elite groupings often are more occupied with competing interests and defending elite statuses against other elites (Case 2003: 250) than with the interdependence with other social groups (Reis & Moore 2005: 161).

Ethnicity

The correlation between elite status and ethnicity and colour of skin is significant in many non-western states: South Africa and Brazil and their domination of "whites" in many elite segments (Reis & Moore 2005: 34: 157), Southeast Asian countries like the Philippines and Indonesia and their small Chinese business elites (Case 2003: 266), Nigeria and its aristocracy from the North (Daloz 2003: 275), and Mauritius with its powerful Franco-Mauritian business elite are cases in point.

Ethnic affiliation often bears a strong 'primordial' sense of belonging; and with ethnicity coming into play, vertical and horizontal loyalties of specific elite groups often have a strong overlap with their specific ethnic background. I shall illustrate this with the Mauritian case, where the overlap of ethnicity with vertical as well as horizontal loyalties is undoubtedly present. In the first place, business elites and political elites alike receive vertical loyalty along ethnic and religious lines. The political elites as the representatives of the different parties are aware of the ethnic composition of the twenty-one constituencies of Mauritius (one counts for the island of Rodrigues, part of the republic of Mauritius). The politicians make use of this information in their party's advantage by putting up candidates for elections with the same ethnic background as the largest ethnic group of the constituency. Slightly in contradiction with the strong relation between ethnic affiliation and politics, and really interesting regarding my study and unique for African sub-Saharan countries is the fact that the prime minister from 2003 till 2005 was a white, the Franco-Mauritian Paul Bérenger. Bérenger had been in Mauritian politics for over three decades and had no strong links

with the Franco-Mauritian business elites (often Bérenger was even in conflict with them), and could therefore establish trust among large numbers of the electorate, crossing the instituted ethnic boundaries.[2]

In certain cases, business elites establish vertical loyalties along ethnic lines by employing ethnic affiliates, and thus creating mono-ethnic workforces (Salverda 2002). Nevertheless the Franco-Mauritian community is considered an elite community *par excellence* because they lack members belonging to the working class. The Franco-Mauritians are socially stratified with a wealthy group of businessmen and landowners at the top, employing most middle-class Franco-Mauritians and, thus, creating a strong sense of vertical loyalty within the 'ethnic' group. However, the Franco-Mauritian case and their strong association with white minority rule in the colonial days and showing vertical loyalty along ethnic lines also bears a risk, as illustrated in the case of South Africa. During much of the twentieth century the white Afrikaner elite was concerned with the poor in their own segment, but with the end of the Apartheid regime the Afrikaner elite peacefully negotiated away its position of ethnic dominance. This eventually meant that the poorer Afrikaners were left to fend for themselves (Reis & Moore 2005: 171, 172). The Catholic Franco-Mauritians do obtain vertical loyalty along religious lines also from the predominantly Catholic Creole community. For instance, many Creoles held jobs in the administrative machinery during colonialism and in the wake of independence, and out of fear of Hindu dominance in general and losing their jobs to the Hindus in particular, they supported the anti-independence front, which was importantly controlled by Franco-Mauritians. Vertical loyalty was, thus, created by religious affiliation, with a strong component of fear – fear of the dominance of another religion (Simmons 1982: 98, 144).[3]

Moreover, multi-ethnic societies with a strong overlap of elite status and ethnicity may cause friction, rivalry and competition between different ethnicities. First, rivalry and competition with a strong emphasis on ethnic belonging may occur in societies with a variety of elites strongly identified with ethnic groups. Inter-elite horizontal loyalty may be weakened or even undermined by the lack of trust between one ethnic group and another (Daloz 2003: 277). Vertical loyalties of ethnic elites between them and the majority of their ethnic group may even further undermine any inter-elite horizontal loyalties, as shown in the tense relationship between the Franco-Mauritian business elite and the Hindu political elite. Second, particular ethnic minorities coinciding with a group of

[2] In 2005 Bérenger and his alliance lost the elections. The campaign preceding the elections was often fuelled by members of the opposition with ethnic arguments and references to the prime minister's white skin colour.

[3] Especially the vertical loyalty between the Franco-Mauritians and the Creoles (often put together by a shared Catholic faith), who had a master-slave relationship, is very interesting and needs further study.

power holders may cause frictions and explosive conditions. In particular frictions may be provoked because horizontal loyalty sustaining an elite position requires some secrecy, which interferes with the visibility of ethnic markers. The group of power holders is easily identified and distinguished from the others, which Amy Chua further illustrates by global similarities in clashes and practice when there is a strong correlation between elite status and ethnicity (Chua 2003: 7, 16, 17). The example of the Afrikaners is a clear case of circumventing too strong a correlation with an elite favouring their own ethnic community and, thus, prevailing elite position over ethnic affiliation.

The Franco-Mauritians

Mauritius was uninhabited before the European explorers set foot on the island in the latter half of the sixteenth century. The Dutch were the first Europeans to colonize it in 1598 and named it Mauritius, after *Stadhouder* Maurice of Nassau. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the Dutch abandoned Mauritius, and the island was left idle for some years. The French then took possession and called it *Île de France*. The French period was important for Mauritian history, because with the French the cultivation of the island really started: they planted large areas of the land with sugarcane; and to work the fields they brought in slaves from Madagascar, other parts of Africa and their Indian colonies. The descendants of these French colonizers, named after them, are the present Franco-Mauritians (Salverda 2002: 4, 5).

In 1810 the British conquered the island from the French, renaming it Mauritius. The British left the existing social order of Mauritius unchanged and never imposed their own culture upon the inhabitants. The Franco-Mauritians were, therefore, able to maintain their French culture and elite position during the more than 150 years of British colonial rule, until Mauritian independence in 1968. Nevertheless, the British period was important for Mauritian history: in 1835 slavery was abolished, causing their new status as free men, and also leadng to the move of slaves away from the plantations. A new chapter in Mauritian history started: in order to continue sugar production, large numbers of indentured labourers were shipped in from the British colony of India. Nowadays their descendants comprise the majority of Mauritians (MacMillan 2000: 9, 10; Eriksen 1998: 40-70).

The Franco-Mauritians formed the politico-economic elite of the island throughout most of Mauritian history, even, as noted above, during British occupation. Yet, at that time they were never the absolute top of Mauritian political power, because that was the small group of British colonizers. Other Mauritian social groups, however, undermined the Franco-Mauritians' elite position during the colonial days: from the 1930s onwards a group of highly educated

Hindus, in particular, started to challenge the secure position of the Franco-Mauritians – especially in the political sphere, with the introduction of mass politics. Politics along ethnic lines could eventually give Hindu politicians the majority of votes, with their community counting for more than fifty percent of the population (Simmons 1982: 50, 52). The Franco-Mauritians had seriously to fear for their role and position in society. The independence of Mauritius in 1968 was the final result of this process, with the Hindus as the most important supporters of independence and most Franco-Mauritians as vigorous opponents.

Today the composition of the Mauritian population is roughly as follows: Hindus (50%), Creoles[4] (30%), Muslims (16%), Sino-Mauritians (3%) and Franco-Mauritians (1%) (cf. Eriksen 1998: 15).[5] And although the independence of Mauritius stirred the social and political situation to a large extent, it did not significantly change the economic power of the Franco-Mauritians. They were, and remain to this day, the owners of the major sugar-cane plantations of the country – the backbone of the Mauritian economy in its colonial heydays – and are represented in all other important domains of the Mauritian economy (Eriksen 1998: 63). Conclusions drawn from studying elite change in East Central Europe, but also in other regions, state that political elites are more affected by sudden social and political change than economic elites (Bozoki 2003: 220, 221; Dogan 2003: 13). This is confirmed by the Franco-Mauritian case study.

The strong economic position of the Franco-Mauritians, however, does not imply a total absence of competition in the private sector with other ethnic elites: the situation of prosperity and newly emerged business opportunities brought growth and wealth to other ethnicities also, and thus increasing competition for Franco-Mauritians and their powerful economic position. In particular in the textile industry Sino-Mauritians challenged Franco-Mauritian economic power.[6]

We have to take the limited size of Mauritius into consideration too, because it implies that meetings and confrontations between different social groups are part of everyday life. An elite group like the Franco-Mauritians has to consider its relationship with the masses carefully in order to sustain its universalistic functions and vertical loyalty, because they are confronted with each other and

[4] The majority of Creoles are the descendants of slaves and importantly have African ancestors. However, the Creoles are also referred to as a 'rest group', which consequently makes them less ethnically homogenous than the other ethnic groups. The Creoles, although predominantly associated with African and Malagasy ancestry, can be considered a mixed group with a large variety of features, skin colours and ancestors originating from Europe, India and China.

[5] According to M. Dinan (pers. comm.; cf. Dinan 1986), there has been quite some conversion from Hindus to Christian churches, especially to Pentecostalism. Since Hindus converting to Christian churches will become part of the heterogeneous Creole rest group, I adjusted the percentages given by T.H. Eriksen to the present situation.

[6] The Sino-Mauritians are, apart from the Franco-Mauritians, the only ethnic community that have few or no members belonging to the working class (Eriksen 1998).

on a daily base. Compared to large nation-states like South Africa where despite the growing exposure of elites to other groups since the end of apartheid, there is still little close contact between these groups, and Bangladesh where there is a significant difference between national and local elites and their direct social interaction with the poor masses (Reis & Moore 2005: 111, 162), contact between the elites and the masses is most certainly of a different order in Mauritius.

History

In studying the Franco-Mauritians, and elites in general, we have to bear in mind the importance of the historical situation. History's relevance in the Franco-Mauritian case study is twofold. First, a historical approach is required for studying the balance between acquiring and maintaining vertical and horizontal loyalties. Second, we have to consider it as context: the white Franco-Mauritians came to power in an era of European colonialism, and until now they play an important role in Mauritian society. By studying the present situation we can, therefore, never leave out the past. Clear examples of the past impacting on the present situation are the historically embedded Franco-Mauritian transnational networks linking Mauritius with France and South Africa.

Many central figures in Mauritian history are related to the Franco-Mauritian community (MacMillan 2000). Consequently, the development of the country is also related to Franco-Mauritian forefathers, at least to the ones who were in control of development. It is surprising how Franco-Mauritians stress their historical contribution; because of the atrocities of slavery their history is one full of tensions – after all the perpetrators were in many cases the ancestors of the Franco-Mauritians. However, my impression is that slavery is just left aside in their historical (self-)representation, and the rest of history is used as an important tool of justifying their presence in Mauritius.

Today the Franco-Mauritians, as a small minority, often have the feeling of being squeezed by other communities and of being "somehow a vanishing species", as a description by the Franco-Mauritians by the French writer J.M.G. Le Clezio (of Franco-Mauritian descent himself) goes.[7] Thus history is appealed to justify the presence of the Franco-Mauritian ethnic community in a more general, universalistic sense. Referring to the input of Franco-Mauritian ancestors in the creation of Mauritian society – for instance, the development of different Mauritian towns, including the capital Port Louis – will demonstrate the historical importance of Franco-Mauritians to the other communities.

History also seems to be important in maintaining horizontal loyalty, within the elite of the community. Vertical loyalty between different social segments of the Franco-Mauritian community is also obtained through the use of history.

[7] Letter in possession of the author.

Uncertainty over what the future will bring is undesirable as a means to keep the community together. History seems better to function as a resource, because in the colonial period the Franco-Mauritian community had more political and economic power – nowadays, as a community, they lack direct political power. Many Franco-Mauritians had highly "civilized" manners and a culture of French orientation that clearly set them apart from other Mauritians, and even the middle-class segment of the community ranked far higher in the social hierarchy of the island than they do now. These aspects act upon the present Franco-Mauritians as (still) belonging to an elite culture. It may also be less problematic to relate to a culture that could more clearly make a distinction between itself and others in the past. Today the Franco-Mauritian community and its culture, which in a globalizing world – where Mauritians of all communities are most influenced by French television programmes – is less able to set itself strongly apart as being the only one with a "civilized" (French) culture and manners, and which has to compete with newly emerged elites.

A clear example of the functioning of history – and an ingredient for horizontal and vertical loyalty within the community – is the knowledge of families, their ties and genealogies. Tracing back family genealogies is a common characteristic in Franco-Mauritian circles anyhow, and many can even trace back their aristocratic ancestry to pre-French revolution nobility. Consequently, the boundaries of the Franco-Mauritian community are set by family names, which lack traces of non-white blood. Since the community numbers around 10,000 only, most Franco-Mauritians know which families are included in the community and which are excluded. Often, they even know which families, and branches of families, are aristocratic and/or rich, because the community has a stratification within itself. Many, but by no means all, of the upper segment of the Franco-Mauritians claim aristocratic descent, while the less well off middle class are considered "the commoners" (there are non-well off aristocratic Franco-Mauritians also). Until recently these two groups did not marry and socially mix (Eriksen 1998: 16). I would argue that social stratification is not as strict as it used to be, indeed. Nevertheless, parents will in certain cases still disapprove of children's marriage partners, because of the status of the partner's family.

Business

Nowadays in Mauritius the Franco-Mauritians should be qualified primarily as a "business" elite: they cannot be labelled with another adjective since they lost their elite position in other domains of Mauritian society. "Business elite" is a suitable term for the Franco-Mauritians since they are still today an extremely powerful economic factor in the country. Franco-Mauritians control a large number of the top 100 companies (Business 2004). They control the largest and

oldest bank of the country, the Mauritius Commercial Bank (MCB). Interestingly, in a globalizing world Franco-Mauritian and other Mauritian businesses have predominantly local competition. Mauritius counts only a few multi-nationals, because the Mauritian market is considered too small by most multi-nationals to begin a local branch. Multi-nationals are, nevertheless, represented on the island, yet primarily as a franchise or a joint venture with local (Franco-)Mauritian companies.

Globalizing trends, however, do influence the economic state of affairs in Mauritius importantly. During the colonial days the main economic product, sugar, was subject to the world market. The prosperous situation of independent Mauritius was largely due to increasing numbers of international tourists and Western markets for textile products. The last couple of years the Mauritian economy seems to be in a decline, especially in the textile industry, where global competition of China – outcompeting the whole world in this sector – is felt badly; the impressive economic growth rates of the 1980s and the 1990s proved impossible to sustain over the long run.

Due to the powerful economic position of the Franco-Mauritians the majority of them is relatively well off, and, although members of the community argue that there are also poor Franco-Mauritians, I have not come across extremely poor members – belonging to the community seems to correlate with a certain standard of living. The only unemployed Franco-Mauritian I met still has a maid. He does not own a car and has most certainly withdrawn largely out of public life and lives in an area of the island where there are hardly any other Franco-Mauritians living, a non-affluent area with a mixture of industrial and residential functions. By Franco-Mauritian standards he would be considered not well-off but with either his own savings, support from his family and/or an inheritance he is able to maintain a certain standard of living.

Apart from the example above the Franco-Mauritians have the ability to create jobs for the community; the majority of the Franco-Mauritians do easily find employment in the private sector. A Franco-Mauritian respondent, who pointed out the virtual absence of unemployment in his community, further illustrated this ability. Along the social, ethnic and family networks of the community job opportunities are enhanced, and an elite status is sustained in a society where there is poverty and unemployment. In the case of the Franco-Mauritians creating jobs seems to be an important feature for maintaining an elite status and, as mentioned before, creating vertical loyalty within the ethnic community.

Yet, in post-colonial Mauritius there is increasing pressure on Franco-Mauritian businesses to open up their ranks for other ethnicities and implement a competitive system. Implementing a competitive system is ideologically grounded upon liberal and capitalistic business principles in which merit prevails over

origin – ethnic origin in the Mauritian case. Influenced by pressure, many large Franco-Mauritian business groups have nowadays members of other ethnicities on their boards or at senior management level, in contrast to the largest Muslim and Sino-Mauritian business groups who only have high ranking employees of their own community (Business 2004). One Franco-Mauritian respondent stated that members of other ethnicities on the board are essentially puppets: They have no real voice in the decision-making process, because in the end the Franco-Mauritians own the bulk of the shares and are, essentially, in control of the company. A Franco-Mauritian CEO of an important Franco-Mauritian business group, nonetheless, in an interview underlined the change towards a competitive system by stating that he wanted a greater separation between the shareholders and the managers. Cousins and nephews used to be and often still are in management positions, but he wanted them to compete with others over the positions. In the eyes of the CEO the process of change is not proceeding fast enough, although he stated the father-son situation is definitely over since the end of the colonial days. In a sense, it is a defensive reaction to maintain vertical loyalty: The elite group needs acceptation of society at large and therefore grants the demands of society – vertical loyalty is reinvented under pressure.

The situation of cousins and nephews in management positions is a clear example of Mauritian life, which is still strongly family-orientated. Therefore, most businesses are family-run businesses. For instance, only a few Franco-Mauritian families – and not even all branches of these families – control the largest Franco-Mauritian businesses. One could argue that in a sense, the overwhelming presence of Franco-Mauritians in the private sector is nothing more than doing what every other business or company does in Mauritius: running a family business. In a reaction to opposition to the overwhelming presence – and simultaneously a plea for the universalistic function of the Franco-Mauritians – a member of a powerful Franco-Mauritian family made an interesting remark. He said that Franco-Mauritians are better equipped for running businesses, because apart from the Franco-Mauritians there are no other communities *reinvesting* in the country.

Franco-Mauritian businesses obtain vertical loyalty by financially supporting social and community work, although attaining this loyalty might not be the direct intention behind it. Interesting with regard to supporting social and community work is the following. A Franco-Mauritian woman involved in an alcohol and drug rehabilitation centre and raising funds for the centre argued that the same companies were always funding the centre, and they are predominantly Franco-Mauritian companies. According to her the richest Muslim business group never backed her financially, and with Sino-Mauritian companies it only works now that a Sino-Mauritian is on the board of the centre and is able to get

access to the upper-level of the companies along ethnic Sino-Mauritian networks. She finds it remarkable that almost exclusively Franco-Mauritian-owned companies support social work in general. Her receiving support is not about her shared Franco-Mauritian background, as the same companies also support (social) organizations and causes with different ethnic signatures. Interestingly, anonymity in these gifts is not considered an option, because the companies financially supporting community and social work always entail publicity over their gifts – spotlights are required for establishing vertical loyalty.

Social aspects

A trait of elites is their networks, social and/or professional, performed in exclusive back-region spaces, and which may be used for recruitment, or the transmission of influence or patronage. The Franco-Mauritians have a few exclusive social clubs that may function as back-region spaces. The most well known and traditional of these clubs is the Dodo Club in Curepipe, a residential area on the higher plateau of the island and populated by large numbers of the Franco-Mauritian community.

The Dodo Club was established during the colonial days, in the beginning of the twentieth century, when beliefs of ethnic superiority were widespread. At the time the Franco-Mauritians were the politico-economic elite of the island, and had virtually no competition from other elites. A respondent, and former chairman of the club, explained the club was initially founded as an exclusively Franco-Mauritian – white – sports clubs, but turned into a social club as well.

A club like the Dodo Club may function for recruitment, and/or the transmission of influence or patronage since many Franco-Mauritians meet in an exclusive Franco-Mauritian domain. It is a perfect location to 'work on' horizontal and vertical loyalties within and between different segments of the Franco-Mauritian community. However, one would assume from a universalistic point of view that the Dodo Club is an anachronism in present-day Mauritius. Membership of the Dodo Club is purely based on ethnic affiliation, skin colour and ancestry, while post-colonial Mauritius supposedly is a nation-state with a liberal constitution and universal rights. It can be argued, though, that Mauritius is a society strongly divided along ethnic lines and many other ethnic communities have social clubs with membership excluding other ethnic groups.

On the one hand, it has not become clear to me whether the members of the Dodo Club adhere to the idea of segregation along skin colour and/or are just not challenging the club's anachronistic rules for membership, because they are, for example, pleased with the good facilities. Franco-Mauritians opposing the club's rules and regulations may just not want to become a member, or discontinue their membership, instead of challenging the rules. For instance, a Franco-Mauritian

respondent and non-member of the club refers to the Dodo Club and other non-Franco-Mauritian single ethnicity clubs as "missed opportunities", instead of challenging their existence.

On the other hand, the Dodo Club is opening up its premises for tourists playing golf and for open-tournaments for all Mauritians in, for example, squash and tennis. At the club there is also discussion going on about opening up the membership to other ethnicities, be it either all ethnicities or the fair-skinned and elite part of the Creole community, who are considered culturally close to Franco-Mauritian culture. The discussion seems to be in the initial stages and it is also not clear whether the driving force is a change in the mindsets of (new generations of) Franco-Mauritians, challenging ideas of ethnic segregation. It may be a 'survival strategy' to sustain vertical loyalty with the rest of society, since Franco-Mauritians' perceived peculiarity as being of 'white blood' is under threat, or purely a defence mechanism of the Dodo Club caused by a decline in commitment. For instance, *Le Bal du Dodo*, the famous New Year's Eve party of the club was cancelled in 2004. It was argued by the manager of the club that the reason for cancellation was that the location was 'too far' for many Franco-Mauritians, because they moved from Curepipe and the surrounding areas on the higher plateau to the seaside – mainly to areas with already a substantial number of Franco-Mauritians: Grand Baie on the north coast and Rivière Noire on the west coast.

Ideology

Apart from sharing purely economic and/or political interests, the coordination, socializing and perpetuating of an elite status often comes with sharing a culture. Elites may easily draw boundaries along these lines and exclude others from their networks. By sharing cultural and ideological characteristics, differences with others can be emphasized and, consequently, references to particular economic interests can be avoided.

In Mauritius arguments linked to cultural difference often refer to ethnicity, which plays an important role in Mauritian everyday life, although not in a purely segregated manner, because many Mauritians live side by side with other ethnicities than their own and frequently meet in everyday life.[8] Social life, however, is mostly a family affair in Mauritius, and as a consequence an ethnic affair, because most communities in Mauritius are relatively endogamous. Interethnic marriages are on the rise, although they still constitute only a small percentage of all marriages. Effectively, the dual aspect of being an elite group and ethnic community is significant, too, and ethnic loyalty, vertical and horizontal, is often

[8] Apart from a few areas, most Mauritian towns, villages and neighbourhoods, as well as many work places, are ethnically mixed.

used to the advantage of the elite group (Eriksen 1998: 13, 49, 66). Studying the Franco-Mauritians therefore requires looking at the interaction between the purely financial interests and the safeguarding of the position at the top of the social hierarchy of a business elite on the one hand, and at the ideology of belonging and safeguarding the existence of an ethno-cultural group on the other. The interference of ethnicity and purely economic interests and elite status brings about ambiguity, because it may be hard to distinguish between horizontal and vertical loyalty solely referring to the elite position and sharing an ethnic identity.

For example, while the Franco-Mauritian community is socially stratified, it has virtually no members belonging to the working class. Are Franco-Mauritians protected from becoming impoverished by others in the community? A few respondents referred to financial support to poor members of the community, which seems to relate to the "ideology of belonging" more than to the "financial interests of a business elite". One respondent mentioned that you would not spot poor Franco-Mauritians in the streets, because more affluent Franco-Mauritians are ready to assist the unfortunate financially, hence they will not end up in the gutter. Another respondent, and wealthy CEO of a large Franco-Mauritian controlled business group, often supports members of his large extended family when they come to ask for it. He, however, states that once they misuse his helping hand, financial support is not given anymore.

Another feature related to interaction between the attributes of elite and ethnic groups is 'marriage politics'. Many ethnic groups are known for marrying endogamously, and often have penalties for disobeying the group's preferred marriage policy. Marriage politics of elites are more concentrated on the financial situation of the partner and her or his family's status. In Mauritius it is often difficult to make a distinction between the variables of the elite and the ethnic group, because the correlation between class and ethnicity is strong. In the case of the Franco-Mauritians, personal choice in choosing a partner is the practice, although the parents and community limit the choice morally and economically. Marrying 'down', class-wise, is considered problematic, and partner choice is preferably related to a white skin, ancestors without traces of non-white background and of good standing (Eriksen 1998: 60, 125). Given the size of the Franco-Mauritian community, many families are related, but also many Franco-Mauritians find their spouses abroad, mainly European and South African whites.

One Franco-Mauritian respondent married a Muslim girl. She comes from a wealthy established Mauritian Muslim family, which is traditionally strongly present in the private sector. Although an exception within the Franco-Mauritian community, their marriage did not cause exclusion from the community. Their marriage choice probably upset some members of the community, which the respondent actually liked, but it did not stir too much trouble. Most importantly,

the partners come from the same social class, and I would also argue that the opposition a Franco-Mauritian male marrying outside the community experiences may be less significant than a Franco-Mauritian female marrying outside the community.

The dual aspect of being an elite group and ethnic community can hinder sustaining an elite position also, as Amy Chua already showed. In the case of the Franco-Mauritians frictions with other segments of Mauritian society are predominantly engendered due to their visible ethnic markers and history and may interfere with sustaining their elite position. The Franco-Mauritians' easily distinguished feature of their white skin colour, their historical colonial role and its negative connotations, their disproportionate economic power and their virtual absence in the working class make them an elite group easily to target or condemn. The secrecy required for horizontal loyalty is, therefore, difficult to maintain for Franco-Mauritians and/or easily focused upon by other social groups.

Transnational networks

In the case of the Franco-Mauritians it is relevant to ask what the local influence and significance is of transnational networks and vertical and horizontal loyalties between the Franco-Mauritians in Mauritius, France and South Africa, because their networks and contacts crossing the borders of Mauritius go back a long time. In a globalizing world the relevance of these transnational networks can be significant, as is shown by Amy Chua: Asians in East Africa benefit extremely from globalization and market liberalization, partly because of their global connections (Chua 2003: 41, 42, 113). This might apply also to Mauritian ethnicities.

In the first half of the twentieth century many Franco-Mauritians migrated to South Africa, hoping to improve their lives. Success stories of Franco-Mauritians in South Africa were coming back into the Mauritian community, and many were tempted to leave also. The ones who migrated were often the relatively poor or, as one respondent remarked, Franco-Mauritians with the capacity and the urge to succeed in life but not belonging to families who owned the sugar plantations and could never reach the higher ranks of people controlling the plantations and related companies, because these positions were reserved for the families themselves. Many chose to try their luck in the Durban region, where sugarcane was one of the primary agricultural products. Especially in the wake of Mauritian independence a large number of Franco-Mauritians migrated, increasing the importance of transnational networks between the community in Mauritius and South Africa (Boudet 2001: 3).

Until the large influx of Franco-Mauritians into the Durban area in the 1960s – firmly establishing a Franco-Mauritian community in South Africa – and the end

of colonialism in Mauritius, the contacts were mainly one-way. Franco-Mauritians went from Mauritius to South Africa, probably maintaining some family contacts and doing some irregular business with Mauritius. From the 1960s to the end of the 1980s contacts were at their peak and were working both ways, also due to growing modern communication and air travel. The new government of independent Mauritius introduced the exchange control, which meant that Mauritian businesses could only invest locally and not export their money. Prior to implementation of the exchange control, networks between Franco-Mauritians in Mauritius and South Africa were used to export large sums of money and invest in South Africa. After the implementation of the law, money was illegally exported from Mauritius to South Africa. Horizontal loyalty was required because Franco-Mauritians investing outside Mauritius needed reliable persons with similar backgrounds in South Africa whom they considered trustworthy for supporting their (illegal) activities, investing their money and meanwhile keeping it a secret. A Franco-Mauritian respondent in South Africa (a retired chartered accountant) told me that he went back and forth between South Africa and Mauritius to meet his clients, because the sensitivity of the matter required personal contact and not letters and phone calls.

Transnational networks between the two countries were also used for studying opportunities. The high level of tertiary education in South Africa attracted many young Franco-Mauritians from Mauritius. In Durban, where most of the students went, they were taken care of by the local Franco-Mauritian community. Many of these students returned after their studies and today the influence of attending tertiary education in South Africa is still noticeable in Mauritius: Some Franco-Mauritian businessmen who studied in South Africa refer to similarities in business approach between them and South Africans, which increased the possibilities of business co-operation and joint ventures. Besides, Franco-Mauritians married South Africans, which further forged the links between Franco-Mauritians and white South Africa.

With the end of the apartheid era, however, the importance of the links between the Franco-Mauritian communities in Mauritius and South Africa declined. The stream of Franco-Mauritian students coming from Mauritius dried up, also due to the deterioration of security in South Africa – as a result a number of non-student Franco-Mauritians remigrated to Mauritius, too. The chairman of the Mauritian Association in Durban, which was predominantly a *Franco*-Mauritian affair, said that until the beginning of the 1990s there were a lot of Franco-Mauritian students in Durban, who were additionally involved in the Mauritian Association, and consequently bringing a lot more members to events organized. These days, he said, it is much more difficult to arrange events and raise money for organizing them.

Furthermore, the illegal export of money and subsequent investment in South Africa came to a halt, because almost simultaneously with the abolition of apartheid the Mauritian government abolished the exchange control. Franco-Mauritians could from that moment on officially invest their money outside Mauritius and a strong horizontal loyalty involving secrecy over the matter was less required. Much of the money invested was withdrawn from South Africa, out of fear for the political changes, and invested in Mauritius or elsewhere. A Franco-Mauritian respondent in Durban cynically mentioned that the Franco-Mauritians, who had exported their money to South Africa out of fear of the Hindus taking over in Mauritius, were now afraid of the black South Africans taking over in South Africa although they were living in the middle of the Mauritian success story. The respondent considers the chance for return of Franco-Mauritians investing large sums in South Africa slim, because the new generation of Franco-Mauritians who are in control of the business groups and the capital are less focused on South Africa.

Although most investments are withdrawn from South Africa, business contacts between the two countries are still important. Durban has several local Franco-Mauritian owned export firms trading with Mauritius and Franco-Mauritian businesses. Some of the transnational trading links have also adapted to the globalizing world: a Franco-Mauritian based in Johannesburg, South Africa, trades intensively with his Franco-Mauritian partner in Mauritius. When the South African Rand was strong, some products became too expensive for the Mauritian market, and the trade shifted towards China and Singapore as suppliers for their products.

France has always been a reference point for the community, and is still an important marker of Franco-Mauritian culture. The majority of Franco-Mauritians speak French as their mother tongue and many of my respondents feel culturally close to France. Similarly, the former Protestant elite of Curaçao, which strongly related to Dutch culture and language, shared close ties with their European place of origin (Hoetink & van Lier 1966: 51, 149).

Franco-Mauritian ties with French culture may have grown even stronger the last decade, because there has been a complete withdrawal of Franco-Mauritian pupils from the English curriculum public schools. Almost all Franco-Mauritians send their children to private French curriculum schools. There are two primarily Franco-Mauritian-run French curriculum schools – next to a French government sponsored lyceum, which attracts many expatriates' children – attended by the majority of Franco-Mauritian pupils. The schools attract members of all ethnic communities, but high school fees make it an elite affair, which furthermore underlines the image of transnational elite cultural links between Franco-Mauritians and France.

Important also is that nowadays many more Franco-Mauritian students attend tertiary education in France than a few decades ago, when South Africa was often a more logical destination. French tertiary education is free for Mauritians and attending French curriculum schools is therefore seen as better preparation than the English curriculum state schools. I would like to argue that the attraction of French curriculum schools might also be a way of tackling the pressure on Franco-Mauritian businesses to open up their ranks for other ethnicities and implement a competitive system. By attending the private schools the Franco-Mauritians have an above-average level of education, with which they can compete over jobs by merit and not affiliation, because, first, the French curriculum schools maintain higher standards than the average state school and second, studying abroad is certainly an asset, and Franco-Mauritians who lack the means for paying large college fees, may invest a bit more in the primary and secondary education of their children, which may then lead to a successful and easy admittance to the French tertiary educational system.

Nevertheless, transnational contacts with France, French culture, and the attraction of tertiary education and to a lesser extent the French curriculum schools in Mauritius are not exclusively Franco-Mauritian domains. The French language and popular culture are dominantly present in Mauritius and over the last decades influencing more and more all of the ethnic communities. Interestingly, the process that the Franco-Mauritians lose their monopoly on French culture seems two sided. On the one hand Franco-Mauritians lost their monopoly on French culture, because the French language dominates the mass media – the major newspapers have historically always been in French, and television and especially the radio is mainly a French affair, too. French culture has therefore become something of all Mauritians. Maybe this nation-wide attention for French culture and language even gives some credits to the Franco-Mauritians, as the original bearers of French culture. On the other hand the monopoly is supported, as shown previously: the Franco-Mauritians shifted in the last, say, fifteen years towards French curriculum education in Mauritius and as a consequence withdrew completely from the English curriculum state schools.

Conclusion

The transformation of Mauritius from a colonial society to an independent democratic society certainly impacted on the social hierarchy of the island and the position of the Franco-Mauritians. New elite groups emerged and are challenging the powerful dominance of the Franco-Mauritians; the Hindu political elite virtually controls national politics and the state apparatus, and the Sino-Mauritians have grown more strongly in the private sector. Consequently, the Franco-Mauritians have lost most of their political power and often have a tense

relationship with the Hindu elite. While competition with the Sino-Mauritians who are challenging the Franco-Mauritians in their last stronghold, the private sector, has certainly increased since the end of colonialism, the economic power of the Franco-Mauritians is still overwhelming.

Nevertheless, the preservation of the elite position of the Franco-Mauritians required maintenance over the years. History and information on genealogies are used to create vertical and horizontal loyalty within the Franco-Mauritian community, because they construct a sense of belonging. Whether the Franco-Mauritians' historical role obtains vertical loyalty from other social groups or whether it is only a signal for the other Mauritians to indicate the importance of the Franco-Mauritians in the making of the island's history remains the question. It is obvious that vertical loyalty between high-ranking and middle-class Franco-Mauritians is certainly obtained via employment opportunities.

However, the correspondence between elite status and Franco-Mauritian ethnic belonging is under threat. Negative associations that other social groups have about Franco-Mauritian colonial history and their "whiteness" may impact on obtaining vertical loyalty. In contrast to the clear-cut Afrikaner example of prevailing elite status over ethnic belonging, the Franco-Mauritian case study shows that the process is still ongoing. On the one hand, pressure on Franco-Mauritian companies to open up their ranks for other ethnicities is working, considering the presence of non-Franco-Mauritians on the board of directors or at senior management level. And the marriage between a Franco-Mauritian and a Muslim of wealthy families without inducing a major stir within the Franco-Mauritian community exemplifies a case in which elite status prevails over ethnic belonging and "whiteness".

On the other hand, non-Franco-Mauritian members of a board of directors and those at senior management level are considered puppets, because the Franco-Mauritians still own the majority of shares. The existence of the exclusive Franco-Mauritian Dodo Club – an interesting club for obtaining and sustaining horizontal and vertical loyalties 'out of sight' of the rest of society – clearly exemplifies the importance that ethnicity, in correlation with elite status, plays in for Franco-Mauritians. The private French curriculum schools are a clear-cut example of Franco-Mauritians even intensifying the relationship between ethnicity and elite status. The complete withdrawal of Franco-Mauritian children from the public school system obviously leads to decreasing encounters between Franco-Mauritians and other, especially lower-ranking social groups. Frictions between Franco-Mauritians and other segments of the Mauritian population, in effect, may easily be increased by their visible exclusion from the masses.

Further study is required to really establish the impact of *formative* elements at play here. This is a general challenge to the anthropological research of elites.

For instance, how can other social groups accept the small group of Franco-Mauritians who visually stand out due to their "white skin"? This is especially interesting because for a business elite a strategy of staying low-profile may function well, in contrast to the case of a political elite. Are vertical and horizontal loyalties reinvented over time by conscious strategies? What is the impact of transnational networks in the maintenance of an elite position? And are the different Mauritian elites more occupied by inter-elite competition than by vertical loyalty with the masses? These questions indicate some of the importance the Franco-Mauritian case for the general study of elites.

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7

"These dread-locked gangsters". The Mungiki as dramatic actors in Kenya's public arena: From protest to political participation?

Anna Betsy Kanneworff

Introduction: Mungiki as dramatic actors in Kenya's public space

> My name is Kihara Kihanja. I am 23 years old and I live in Kangemi, one of the ghettos of Nairobi. In 1990 I heard Maina Njenga preaching for the first time. He told us about his visions and the message of Mungiki and that we should return to our real God. Not the one of Christianity, but of our ancestors.
>
> You know, the real Mungiki philosophy is a radical one. A radical change of life. A total change away from the western way of life. How can you believe you go up into the clouds after you die? Christian churches don't solve our problems. The church even dominates our lives after our death. I want to be buried in the traditional way, under a fig tree or a tree planted at my grave. I have that written in my will. I don't want the church to confiscate my body when I die.
>
> Today the leaders of this country don't profess that philosophy. The youth of Kenya have lost contact with their history, their traditions and their ancestors. One of our prophets told us that after the white man came and dismantled Kikuyu traditions and cultural practices, the fourth and fifth generation would rise and redeem itself.[1]

The Mungiki in Kenya, once heralded as a "Robin Hood" arising (Turner & Brownhill 2001), a grassroots social movement fighting for justice for the dispossessed and disenfranchised Kikuyu youth, a resistance movement fighting against the Christianized, Westernized and capitalist society, "outcasts" in the era of

[1] Personal accounts of the author with Mungiki members, published in Kanneworff (2004).

globalization, modern day cultural revivalists sidelined by modernity, "criminal subversives" and "dread-locked gangsters" playing a "barbaric" game, have been marring Kenya's public arena for more than a decade.

No other social movement, religious sect, cult or political player has touched upon Kenya's subversive consciousness and national phobia as deep as the Mungiki. Indeed, no other group has managed to play such a dramatic, provoking and diverse role in Kenya's public arena. Ever since Mungiki's upsurge in the early 1990s, the radical Kenyan youth movement managed to play different roles in Kenya's religious, cultural and political spheres of society. And, as if these diverse characters played by the Mungiki were not abundant enough, the Mungiki recently introduced another *new* role – as political player – as it vied for parliamentary seats and supported the presidential candidate for the government's party KANU in the run up to the 2002 national elections. This ultimate step was followed up by a recent move by one of Mungiki's leaders, Maina Njenga, who stated that the Mungiki movement was "dead", yet replaced by a "well-structured" political party whose membership was the youth and the unemployed. Maina Njenga made this statement on the phone to a news reporter while taking cover from a fresh attempt by the government to hunt them down.[2]

Mungiki's recent construction of "well-structured" political party stands in line with the immense proliferation of political parties in Kenya ever since its formal multi-party era. In 1997, 28 political parties were registered in Kenya and in 2002, 52 political parties were duly registered of which 34 fielded parliamentary candidates.[3]

The Mungiki as a religious sect or cult, or as political party, never took on any formal position. Their registration as a religious or social movement was always refused, thus resulting in the Mungiki being an illegal society or outlawed movement until the present day. However, without any formal registration, the movement managed to get itself involved in almost all of Kenya's problems: Religious and ethnic frictions, political struggles, poverty, property rights and security.[4]

Mungiki in the context of Africa's postcolonial failed states

Mungiki's hybrid development from a neo-ethnic, religious and cultural revivalist protest movement into a "wannabe" political player, its constant efforts to define and redefine its identity and by so doing its eager waiting for a share of Kenya's political "cake", are remarkable, yet very African. It shows in great

[2] *East African Standard*, 8 October 2005, 'Police hunt down banned sect's leader'.

[3] See Institute for Education in Democracy (1998) and European Union Election Observation Mission Kenya (2002).

[4] J-C. Servant, "Kenya's righteous youth militia." *Le Monde Diplomatique*, January 2005.

variety the dynamics of African informal, transitional and neo-patrimonial politics in contemporary society. The process of democratization and transition politics in Kenya's postcolonial state parades a social reality wherein identities in public space are under constant construction.

Mungiki's pragmatic use of various and mixed identities, and its constant shifts and dramatic performance in Kenya's public arena can be explained by an interplay of conditions standing in close relation to Africa's failed or postcolonial state in crisis (Joseph 1991). Mungiki's metamorphosis though is not unique. Throughout the continent similar developments take place as the African post-colonial reality exposes an immense gap between the elite, the political leaders and the great masses of young Africans, idle, but eager: Struggling for survival and recognition in the prime of their life. In the authoritarian federal democracy Nigeria for instance, the Bakassi Boys, a young militant movement, set an example in training, coordinating and mobilizing hundreds of Nigerian urban youth left powerless and frustrated in the face of the unable state. Starting as a local vigilante group taking the law into their own hands, the Bakassi Boys set up operation areas in several states, developing semi-professional urban military training centres and jobs for the youth as the movement finally was co-opted by the state, performing extended operations in large parts of the country as a state security force. Contrary to these Bakassi Boys, who fought without an explicit ethnic or political agenda, the O'odua People's Congress (OPC) in Nigeria started as an ethnic militia, advocating for the independence of Yoruba land, as they extended their activities over time into fighting alleged criminals in urban areas – thus evolving into a vigilante militia with a political agenda (Smith 2004, Gore & Pratten 2003, Akinyele 2001, Human Rights Watch & CLEEN 2002).

It is this African postcolonial reality – with its blurred field between the public and the private domain and its constant shifting between them – that makes relations in the African political domain so unpredictable and often dangerous. Dynamics alter constantly as *new* groups are making inroads in traditional domains of the state like security and public order. Whether those *new* groups can be defined as *new* forms of "African fundamentalism" abiding the rules of the "instrumentalization of disorder" in Africa (Chabal & Daloz 1999), or just growing pains of an every day reality of a continent under construction, it makes future scenarios on the development of the African youth far from optimistic or easy to anticipate on.

Contrary to the world's expectation, Africa's "third wave of democratization" (Huntington 1996, Young 1999) did not fulfil its prophecies of good governance and economic reforms to repair the arrears of its underdevelopment. Even with the apparent edifice of a "democratic" state – as most African nations during the 1980s and 1990s transformed their one-party systems into multi-party systems –

the dynamics of neo-patrimonialism, clienteles and "belly" politics prevailed. Adaptation to the dominant western template of democracy did not prevent most African leaders from remaining "predators", humiliating their population with a symbolic repressive regime of abuse (Abbink 2001), leaving the majority of their population in gross poverty and negligence.

The youth in Africa is particularly vulnerable to these occurrences and practices. African youth, while forming a numerical majority, often feel excluded from power and are marginalized in socio-economic terms. In neo-patrimonial countries in particular, emerging generations are often confronted with "blocked mobility" and are therefore excluded from employment and access to political power. The issue of "blocked mobility" forms the background to the rise of various opposition groups and resistance movements among youth in Africa (Abbink & van Kessel 2005).

Despite these pessimistic and chequered developments the postcolonial neo-patrimonial state in Africa has been able to function, in its own way, for more then twenty years, to the "useful Africa" (Mbembe 2001). Inherent to this "useful" Africa is the eminent battle for resources, mostly solely accessible through the patrimonial elite, the State and its cabinet holders, popularly coined "the family". This competition in most parts of Africa is still contested by *means* and *use* of violence. As elsewhere in Africa, organized violence regulates large parts of society in Kenya and is being marshalled for the pursuit of well-defined economic or other goals. While government resources are economically limited and mismanaged by a small elite, resources of parallel organizations are growing and violent ways to get them are increasingly common (Chabal & Daloz 1999).

A final remark needs to be made on the special role of the revivalism of African norms and values that flourish greatly in Africa's public arena. Often, these traditional cultural mentalities are declared irrelevant, harmful or subversive in line with a long history of alienating African discourse by both Islamic and Western hegemonies (Abbink & van Kessel 2005). The African elite and its leaders often adapt these processes. Nonetheless, these traditional African practices also play a very blurred and pragmatic role as they also become subject of negotiation, pragmatism and the "lure of power" as the Mungiki story powerfully demonstrates.

These dread-locked gangsters: From political protest to political participation?

The rise of Mungiki: Violence, contestation and the "coming of age" of democracy

Mungiki's early foundation was established at the dawn of Kenya's "coming of age" of "democracy". The early 1990s were marked by political unrest, initiated

by the national churches, the judiciary and several opposition leaders out of discontent with Moi's repressive regime. The international community added extra pressure by demanding more transparent rules of governance, if donor funding was to be continued. Weeks of mass protests and public arrests led to a final decision by president Moi late in 1991 to prescribe "free" elections. Thus Kenya's multi-party era could begin (Throup & Hornsby 1998: 55-58).

After Moi's enactment of a multi-party system, three general elections were held – in 1992, 1997 and 2002. While these elections proclaimed loyalty to democratic principles on a national and more symbolic level, restrictive rules of a one-party system were still forced on people at the local level – especially during the 1992 and 1997 elections – as these two elections were marred by ethnic violence also named ethnic clashes.[5]

One night in October 1991, youthful Maasai and Kalenjin militias raided hundreds of houses and *shambas* (cultivated land), killing approx. 1,500 people, and leaving more than 300,000 people landless.[6] Among these victims were many Kikuyus from marginalized areas in the Rift Valley. Just before the elections President Moi had declared the area of the Rift Valley the traditional home of pastoral groups, where his own ethnic loyalty was based. The 1997 elections showed roughly the same pattern. Again hundreds of Kikuyus and other ethnic rivalry groups were evicted from their homes, forced to flee, left wounded and killed.[7]

Thus the origin of the Mungiki is being legitimized by prophecies[8] standing in close relation to these political events. Maina Njenga, known to be the "spiritual" leader of the movement, recalls to have had a personal revelation from his traditional God Ngai when he was sixteen years old. Maina Njenga states he saw a dove coming back to him three times, when he heard a voice, saying: "*This is the voice of the Almighty God. I have heard the cries of my people. I am going to liberate them. Be ready for a great mission.*" Not long after, the entire family, including the brother and father of Maina Njenga and his cousin, Ndura Waruinge, became actively involved in the movement.[9]

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[5] The phenomenon of ethnic clashes wherein state-sponsored ethnic militias were employed to attack areas of critical voting, is well known all over Africa. It is also known under the name of "informal" repression. "Informal" repression occurred in countries like Zimbabwe, South Africa, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Nigeria and Cameroon, Article 19 (1997); Kirschke (2000).

[6] See various reports on the clashes: Human Rights Watch (1993, 1994, 2002); KHRC (1998).

[7] Besides this direct ethnic violence, manipulations with the district borders, fraud with the voting boxes and dividing the opposition, were also "innocent" moves of the president trying to uphold his powerful position.

[8] Prophetism has roots that reach deep into Kikuyu society. Kikuyu prophetism started as a form of protest against British domination in the 1920s and 1930s. The response to crisis by the social phenomenon of divine intervention prevails all over Kenya, among all ethnic groups; see Yvan Droz (1999).

[9] Personal interviews with Mungiki leadership, Nairobi 2002.

Maina Njenga thereafter started preaching in the many poor and disenfranchised urban areas of Kenya, where he drew substantial support from the young Kikuyu victims of the ethnic clashes – unemployed or working at the "*jua khali*".[10] As life was criminalized and impoverished in these shantytowns, Mungiki offered them a new structure, and moral order. Mungiki preached an alternative life style that touched the broken-hearted Kikuyu youngsters, reviving and revitalizing their Kikuyu pride and honour.

Mungiki is a Kikuyu word which stems from the root word *muingi*, meaning "masses" or "people", derived from *nguki*, meaning *irindi*, i.e. "crowds" (Wamue 2001). For Mungiki members this term expresses a feeling of community and sharing, claiming "we are the people". In a more intellectual sense, the term is acclaimed to reflect upon the notion "we are the public" and the inherent belief that "people are entitled to a particular place of their own in the ontological order" or "seeking for recognition in society while being marginalized".[11]

Mungiki members are organized into local *cells* of ten members. Each of these *cells* makes up a local and regional group – with an appointed leader, who reports to the leadership council and the council of elders. The council of elders notably takes an important authorizing task, and rules the movement from *behind the scenes*. Several religious leaders or prophets take up the role of foreseeing and strategizing future developments, advising the leadership council and communicating these developments to the members.

Mungiki revived new sets of cultural and religious practices, related to an idealized and re-traditionalized Kikuyu culture before colonialism and western education entered the community. These practices included initiation rituals into adulthood like circumcision, ritual cleansing, baptism ceremonies, praying facing Mount Kenya twice a day and oathing. Oathing is part of the process of inauguration into the movement, which is said to take part in different stages. Oaths were taken during the Mau Mau struggle and are known to be very secretive and paramount to life wherein oaths are believed to be stronger than a person's individual life. Thus, if you betray the oath or do not live according to the rules of the oath – death is upon you. Although the Mungiki leadership constantly denies allegations of administering oaths, it is widely believed that oathing takes place within the Mungiki.

Contrary to the imagined re-traditionalized Kikuyu life and culture to which Mungiki successfully mobilized its members (Wamue 2001), Mungiki developed itself during the 1990s as an urban militia and vigilante movement – forcefully providing *new* services such as security (night patrols), garbage collection, and

[10] "*Jua Khali*" is "hot sun" in Kiswahili, signifying work that is done "open-air", for instance hawking (street vending), and work of mechanics, artisans and *matatu* touts.

[11] Wamue (2001); Kagwanja (2003); *The East African*, November 6, 2000.

public transport as the Mungiki successfully monopolized several of the many *matatu* (mini-bus) routes in and around the city centre of Nairobi. These *new* services became an important yet unlawful economic resource of the Mungiki (Anderson 2002).

Mungiki's shifting agenda: Contradictions, controversies and a pragmatic stand

At first during the early years of multi-partyism the Mungiki called out a strong revolting ethnic agenda, claiming a *new* form of Kikuyu revivalism and its own "Intifadah" – as they threatened the government with land re-claims after the ethnic clashes.[12] Mungiki's ideological stand at that point originated from other Kenyan social revolutionary movements, like the December Twelfth Movement (DTM) and Mwa Kenya, who aimed for a revolt against Moi's oppressive regime in the eighties (KHRC 2002). Mungiki's Kikuyu revivalism was rooted in the history of other Kikuyu "renaissance" movements – like the Tent of the Living God of the Kikuyu prophet Ngonya wa Gakonya – who proclaimed a return to traditional Kikuyu values while the position of many Kikuyus under Moi's political regime was sorely devaluated. Mungiki took over a lot of luggage from these movements, and became the more youthful, vibrant and militant outlet. Mungiki was the most rebellious brother of them all, belonging to the generation of the *iregi* (Kagwanja 2006) – of the revolters, prepared to go for combat.[13]

The state's reaction to Mungiki's rebellious nature was characterized by intense counter-violence. Throughout the 1990s, meetings of the movement were constantly dispersed and hundreds of members were arrested, jailed and tortured. Mungiki's history was labelled "a litany of state persecution, intimidation, jailing of its followers and gross human rights abuse. The Moi state has constantly treated Mungiki as a clandestine movement comprising of 'anti-Christian criminals' and sworn to destabilize the government" (KHRC 2002).

As the opposition against Moi's minority rule grew stronger, informal ways to mobilize support against the state increased. Therefore, Mungiki gained interest from various Kikuyu opposition politicians and patrons, interested in the mobilizing force of Mungiki – as a youth militia for hire. With these *new* financial injections the Mungiki mayhem reached a new height by 2000. Every week riots broke out between Mungiki members and the Kenyan police. Again, hundreds of members were arrested and imprisoned. Some were killed. The local newspapers wrote: "*Nearly 3000 Mungiki men staged a daring morning raid on Nyahururu police station to free three of their colleagues.*" A local police officer declared: "*They just chased us. Don't joke with them. They are fearless and are well organized just like the police or the army.*"[14]

[12] Informal interview with Willy Mutunga, Kenyan Human Rights Commission, Nairobi 2003.
[13] Informal interview, Mungiki members, Nairobi 2002.
[14] *Daily Nation,* September 26; October 23, 2000.

This hard-hit anti-state approach of the Mungiki was alternated with more cultural and religious performances and public provocations. In 1998 Mungiki organized a "congress" at the historic *Mukurwe-wa-Gathanga* shrine[15] – and declared its own "Kirinyaga Kingdom"[16]. Mungiki's public spokesman Ndura Waruinge declared to the press: "*Kirinyaga Kingdom is the first of community-based kingdoms that will be established in this country. Like other tribal kingdoms it will rely on the traditional gods for guidance and sustenance*." One other morning, a few Mungiki members organized a raid at the Freemasons building in Nairobi, claiming it promoted 'evil worship'.[17]

Then, almost six years later, six women in clear daylight were attacked by three Mungiki-members at a public bus stand. The Mungiki stripped the women from their trousers, aggressively attacking them in clear daylight. Huge public outrage followed and the Mungiki leaders claimed the scene was *stage managed* by a pseudo-Mungiki gang, set-up by the government to demonize the movement. Rumours of this nature continued to spread as the movement actively played a role in Kenya's public arena.

One-and-a-half years later the Mungiki were again lime-lighted due to public aggression against women as they were accused of circulating pamphlets in two divisions of Central Province. They had issued a three-month ultimatum to all women between 13 and 65 years who had not undergone circumcision, to do so. The group alleged that they were sent by God in a dream to "cleanse" the Kikuyu-community from the social evils that had invaded the community.[18]

Shortly afterwards, the Mungiki staged another protest meeting at a politically sensitive place: The mausoleum of Jomo Kenyatta in the city centre of Nairobi. Hundreds of Mungiki-members stood in front of the mausoleum, protesting against the appointment of Uhuru Kenyatta, as Minister of Local Governance in the Moi administration. Kenyatta, being a representative of the Kikuyu elite from Central Province and the son of Kenya's first president Jomo Kenyatta, was blamed by many ex Mau Mau veterans and sympathizers for treating their national freedom fighters disrespectfully, never rehabilitating them nor rewarding them financially. Thus at the Nairobi scene, Mungiki-members burned an effigy pop, representing Uhuru Kenyatta, accusing him of being a "traitor".

A *new* shift into another direction represented the move of 13 Mungiki leaders on September 2, 2000, as they declared in front of the press to have been converted to Islam. Mungiki's "national coordinator", publicly known as Ndura

[15] The *Mukurwe-wa-Gathanga* is a holy shrine for the Kikuyus. It is at this spot that the Kikuyus believe their spiritual fore-fathers created by God, Mumbi and Gikuyu – the Adam and Eve of the Kikuyus – set up their homes and delivered nine daugthers, who carried the nine clannames of the Kikuyus.

[16] *Kirinyaga* is the Kikuyu word for Mount Kenya.

[17] *Daily Nation*, October 23, 2000.

[18] *East African Standard*, April 23, 2002.

Waruinge – a grandson of former Mau Mau general Waruinge, now announced to be named *Ibrahim* Ndura Waruinge as he was converted into Islam. Maina Njenga, the traditional "spiritual" leader transformed into *Mohammed* Maina Njenga. In a statement the leaders declared that the government should stop harassing the movement as they converted into Islam. The action provoked strong resistance from moderate Muslims and the ruling Muslim elite from the Kenya Swahili Coast. Within a few weeks, the attempted alignment was over.

Following Mungiki's incidents and public actions at close scrutiny, it becomes clear how hybrid Mungiki's identity is and how pragmatic its ideological stand is being used and manipulated in public space. Indeed Mungiki's identity was manipulated and used in the public arena by a small faction within the movement, who were triggered by the upcoming patrimonial relations with Kenya's political elite. Yet as the forthcoming case on the 2002 national elections and its aftermath shows, Mungiki's political choice was chosen as pragmatic as ever – not without serious consequences. It called into question the "true" mission of the movement and its leadership and its future course.

Mungiki & the 2002 elections: Into the "lure of power"

On August 20, 2002, as the stakes were running high for the next general elections, a "full Mungiki force" marched the streets of Nairobi, chanting Mau Mau war songs, holding sticks, tree-leaves and pamphlets stating "We support Uhuru" or "Uhuru na Kazi".[19] Mungiki announced its support to president Moi's government party KANU for the general elections and his appointed successive heir: The presidential candidate Uhuru Kenyatta. A remarkable choice, considering Mungiki's accusation some years ago of Uhuru Kenyatta being a "traitor".

The self acclaimed leaders Maina Njenga and Ndura Waruinge held speeches that day at Nairobi's Uhuru Park. "*This is the time,*" stated Maina Njenga in front of his following, "*the time has come, to remove old leaders and replace them with young people. From now on it is your responsibility to defend yourself and the nation. We do not want politics of empty rhetorics, we want practical politics, politics of development.*" Ndura Waruinge heralded: "*We have heard others saying they will hire us as mercenaries. But we are not hired crowds. Lift your hands to say that you are not for hire!*" Even Nairobi's mayor Dick Waweru, a KANU member, was present on stage that day, claiming: "*We do not want leaders into darkness. There is no discrimination against other tribes. This is not a Kikuyu affair. Tribalism is the problem, but we are a testimony that we can conquer it. This is the day*."

On the eve of the 2002 Kenyan general elections, a *new* Mungiki strategy came to the limelight: An attempt to openly co-opt themselves in the realm of

[19] "Uhuru na kazi" means "Uhuru [freedom] and work".

mainstream politics. As president Moi had ruled for two consecutive terms, he was forced now to leave the political stage. But the self-proclaimed "master of politics" did not plan to leave the stage, without a well-masterminded succession strategy. Instead of playing the ethnic card as usually prevalent in African post-colonial patrimonial politics, and as used by the Kenyan opposition appointing the senior Kikuyu politician Mwai Kibaki as their flag-bearer, Moi introduced a *new* discourse: The discourse of generational change of guard. Thus president Moi appointed *new* leaders or so-called "Young Turks", to whom he would hand over power. These "Young Turks" were children of the leaders who ruled during *Uhuru* or Independence, like Raila Odinga, Musalia Mudavadi and Uhuru Kenyatta. It was Uhuru Kenyatta, a young and politically inexperienced Kikuyu leader who was finally appointed as Moi's successive heir – to the discontent of his competitors who strategized themselves in a more ethnically inclusive opposition-coalition.

This discourse of generational change won the support of the Mungiki as their support for "project Uhuru" could be legitimized by the re-traditionalized idiom of *itwika* – the Kikuyu practice of changing the ruling age group once every forty years. Mungiki members argued their revolt to be part of their generational heritage, as they categorized themselves as the generation of the revolters or *iregi.* The Mungiki ideology of resistance and revolt was connected to this *iregi* heritage. The language of Mungiki and the *iregi* generation alike was that of a warrior, of combat. "*We carry peace at the front, but war at the back*" as a member claims.

Thus, the concept of *itwika* was re-emphasized during the 2002 general elections by the Mungiki leadership as they grasped their change to step on board. Not all Mungiki members were convinced of this step – and indeed most of them figured Uhuru Kenyatta still to be a "sell-out", someone not to be trusted and who does not represent their true spirit of revolt. Uhuru Kenyatta was in their eyes just a spoiled man, a representative of the rich Kikuyu elite, who neglected the Mau Mau heritage and the class of poor Kikuyus and victims of land evictions.

As the Mungiki leadership continued with their *new* political crusade, playing with double poker faces, they were rewarded with financial injections by the Moi and Uhuru Kenyatta's patrimonial elite, thus hoping to finance themselves into political office: With a parliamentary seat.

"Chief" and "spiritual" leader Maina Njenga and "national coordinator" Ndura Waruinge both campaigned for a parliamentary seat in their regional constituencies: Laikipia West District and Molo District in the Rift Valley. Ndura Waruinge was forced to withdraw himself before the nomination procedure had commenced, notably because of continuous woes from women activists. Maina

Njenga managed to take a few more herds into the realm of local Kenyan neo-patronage politics, as he was finally refused as well.

Maina Njenga stated while on the campaign trail: "The party of Moi has changed. As Moi has declared KANU has its owners. The owners are Mau Mau, and we are the ones. We have to take over. And just like Moi said it is time for young men to take over leadership. And you know Uhuru cannot do the work alone. He needs the support of other young commanders. If we refuse to take the party, our community is at risk. Look at the people in jail, the unemployed and the dying: They are all Kikuyus. If we don't think carefully, we will loose." Beside the generational change, Maina Njenga legitimized his choice to his following by the traditional ethnic element intertwined with a strong notion of class awareness, as he speaks on behalf of the poor and disenfranchised Kikuyus.

The evening before the local nomination began, Maina Njenga tried convincing some local Kikuyu councillors of the region to cooperate with him. "*I always said I would fight the government forever. I was ready to fight them with anything, clubs, weapons, but let me tell you a secret I saw politicians come and go, I saw planes crushing down, I saw women and children dying and now I know I should try the ballot. The army, the police, the GSU* [General Service Unit]*, they are here to combat violence. I joined the government to fight these thugs. I have military titles and you see these young boys are my soldiers*." Njenga then asked the men and women present in the room. "*How many goats can you eat? If you do not let me contest, give me back my money.*"

Maina Njenga mobilized a full "battalion" of Nairobi members[20] into Laikipia District, assisting him to put up Mungiki "patrols" at the different polling stations in the region, "monitoring" the voting. Later that evening, when the votes were collected for central counting, the Mungiki leaders sabotaged the whole process, causing chaos, running off with the results, and accusing the opposition candidate of "stealing the election results". Shops in the area were closed the next day out of fear for new violent outbursts.

The next day a recount of the nomination was held in the area. The Mungiki candidacy held Laikipia in its grip as not many people dared to vote that day. The final counting took place under special supervision of two KANU Nairobi officers and behind closed doors. Njenga's intimidation tactics had worked, as he was personally announced the winner of the race. However, the next day the results were withdrawn by the Electoral Commission of Kenya and KANU's Head of Elections. Maina Njenga had invested a great deal of money in his local campaign, but was taken out by the higher party *echelon* before the official race started. Without further interference, Maina Njenga's candidature was rejected from higher office.

[20] At least 20 *matatu* buses were mobilized into Laikipia West for the local election of Maina Njenga.

This instance signified Mungiki's last public involvement in the 2002 National Elections. The general elections resulted in a tremendous defeat for the ruling party. Uhuru Kenyatta had publicly distanced himself from the movement and Mungiki was left on its own again. In early January 2002, the united opposition parties or "Rainbow Alliance" took over power – a historic occurrence in Kenya. President Moi peacefully stepped down and Uhuru Kenyatta – the inexperienced Kikuyu leader of KANU – became the official leader of the opposition.

Post-political trauma: Mungiki's last dramatic act?

Not long after the "Rainbow" opposition took over power, a severe backlash over Mungiki's failed political strategy occurred as acts of terror broke out in various parts of the country. Mungiki members were locked in a series of fights for control over *matatu* (mini-bus) stands. By February 2003, nearly two months after the election outcome, more then 50 people had died in clashes, involving the Mungiki and owners of the *matatus*, drivers and other youth supporters.[21]

The new NARC government took a tough stand on the Mungiki mayhem and called out a "shoot to kill on sight" order for all Mungiki members. At the same time, it announced a 30-day amnesty for members who surrendered to the police. Over the course of two months, the government declared to have arrested and charged 957 members in total.[22] In October 2003, the transport Minister announced reforms on the *matatu* industry, which further decreased Mungiki's control over these income resources.[23]

Mungiki's attempt to enter Kenya's national political arena had miserably failed. Not only were the leaders sidelined by the political establishment, the move closer to the political centre had also cost a serious split among the "rank-and-file" of the movement. Mungiki's financial injections resulting from its temporary political adventure corrupted the leadership relations and increased competition over its internal resources. Pressure among its members to define a new position after the election outcome increased as members had to look for new survival strategies. The ideological *new* stand of the Mungiki connected to the ruling KANU elite, Uhuru Kenyatta and its legitimization of the *itwika* as idiom of generational change was not backed by most of the Mungiki following. Most of them felt betrayed by the elite even of the same ethnic affiliate. Uhuru Kenyatta was the ultimate representation of the wealthy Kikuyu elite who disinherited and abandoned the Mau Mau history. Mwai Kibaki's election, a 71-year-old Kikuyu, was a total failure in terms of awaiting generational change. Thus, its leadership strategy had failed completely.

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[21] BBC, 11 February 2003, "Kenya's secretive Mungiki sect."

[22] *Daily Nation*, 13 February 2003, "957 Mungiki members charged as state amnesty ends."

[23] Mungiki is said to have collected at least KSh 10,000 (USD 125) a day per route at the peak of its influence as stated by Kagwanja (2006).

As Mungiki had manoeuvred itself into a severe crisis, reports on a new so-called "bagation" squad entered the Kenyan media. Public claims on a *new* Mungiki cell were made who notably were assigned with special missions of "no bargain over death". It was reported that this squad coordinated high-level criminal activities ranging from robbery and car-jacking to secure new income revenues for the movement. Also the squad was used to ensure the cohesion of the movement by protecting its leaders and dealing ruthlessly with defectors. It was estimated that by mid-2004, 75% of former Mungiki followers had abandoned the movement.[24] Mungiki started an underground war on their former priests and other well-known defectors, for instance by severing off the head of a defector priest, leaving the head in a paper-bag, dumping it on a Nairobi bus stand – apparently as a sign of public terror and warning.[25]

Maina Njenga, together with several other Mungiki leaders, was arrested in April 2003 on the accusation of murder. After two years in jail, the leader was released without proof of guilt, end of 2005.[26] Just at this instance after years of severe backlash, terror and imprisonment, did Maina Njenga announce the Mungiki movement "dead". However a *new* phoenix to rise from its ashes was instantly announced: "*Mungiki has shed off its religious cloak and replaced it with a well-structured political party, whose membership was the youth and the unemployed. We do not fight. We are now brothers working for a common purpose as we have joined forces to form the Kenya National Youth Alliance which is not a domain of one ethnic group.*"

> With this effort, Maina introduced yet another – perhaps *final* – phase of the Mungiki: Its final fall. Ndura Waruinge, once the daring "national coordinator", had already chosen another path. He converted himself into Christianity, founded the Universal Miracle Centre and Youth for Christ movement, and established himself as a very successful evangelical priest, organizing ceremonies all over the country.

Conclusion: Politics as ultimate dramatic performance?

Mungiki pursued a theatrical and moral crusade in Kenya's public arena, opposing the "imaginative" hegemonic system: the state, the churches, the political, economic and religious elite of the country – as well as the West with its allegedly "symbolic suppressive" institutions like the World Bank and the IMF and the Freemasons.. Mungiki drew attention to its acts with its constant shifting agenda, advocating for a strange mix of *new* tribalism, traditionalism and cultural revivalism, pushed by *violent* means. Whether it was claiming to be the "sons

[24] *Daily Nation*, June 21, 2004, War on Mungiki sect "still on".

[25] *Daily Nation*, June 16, 2004, Mungiki sect members hack girl, 13, to death, *Daily Nation*, April 5, 2004, Mungiki's revenge.

[26] Supplementary note from the author: on February 2, 2006, Maina Njenga was again arrested and sentenced on June 21, 2007, to five years in jail.

and daughters of Mau Mau", stripping women naked, revolting against the Kenyan police, converting into Islam, praying *en masse* facing Mount Kenya, growing provoking dreadlocks, baptizing hundreds of members at sacred public places or *last but not least* administering oaths and circumcising women, the Mungiki successfully employed an agenda full of controversial and fearsome items, provoking, terrorizing and shocking *all*, Kikuyu and non-Kikuyu, communities in Kenya.

In this public arena, a group of self-acclaimed leaders came to the limelight, as they seemed to perform a special act directed by the financial injections of political patrons. First, there was Maina Njenga, alias *John* Maina Njenga, alias *Mohammed* Maina Njenga alias "chief leader", "bishop", "doctor", "spiritual leader" and "national chairman"; second best was Ndura Waruinge, alias *Ezekiel* Waruinge, alias *Ibrahim* Waruinge – alias "national co-ordinator". These self-acclaimed leaders piloted the movement into another stage-managed phase: The realm of *mainstream* patronage politics. With this next phase, Mungiki's neo-ethnic, religious and cultural identities were politicized and manipulated into another direction. The story of Mungiki's cultural revival transformed into a political gimmick of wheeling and dealing with the political elite of the country: first the Kikuyu oppositional politicians and patrons, later president Daniel arap Moi and his designated heir-successor Uhuru Kenyatta.

These unpredictable and pragmatic performances with their constantly shifting identities were desperate attempts to come out of a crisis. Perhaps this crisis can be analysed as a more permanent state, thus coping, surviving, and acting upon the constant "instrumentalization of disorder" in Africa's public domain. In this process, the Mungiki became very successful in drawing attention from the media, which were used in a very instrumental way to portray their various provoking acts and identities. From 1998 onwards, media coverage of the Mungiki exponentially increased and stories on the movement were featured on a weekly basis. Then after years of reporting by the local media, the international media started drawing attention to "Kenya's dreadlocked gangsters" as they politically manifested themselves in 2002,[27] thus setting the movement onto the global stage.

[27] Since 2002 the BBC reported many times on Kenya's dangerous militia or its "dread-locked gangsters", contining up to the phase of severe repression under Kibaki's second government after the controversial 2007 elections. There were many reports on Mungiki violence (e.g. on "beheadings"). The 2007 elections ushered in a time of lethal violence in Kenyan politics. On 28 April 2008, Charles Ndungu, the leader of the Mungiki-affiliated Kenya National Youth Alliance, was killed by police. See BBC, 28 April 2008, "Mungiki sect leader is shot dead".

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8

The role of the informal sector to spread development beyond Dar es Salaam: Flows of people, goods and money

Meine Pieter van Dijk

Introduction

Tanzania has witnessed a fairly good macroeconomic performance during the last three years (on an average 6.2% economic growth per year), but the impact on poverty reduction has been limited. Only in Dar es Salaam there was a clearly observable poverty reduction (World Bank 2005). The issue addressed in this study is: Why did poverty alleviation happen in Dar es Salaam and hardly in the rest of the country? What are the transmission mechanisms distributing the positive effects of economic growth across different cities and regions? How does this economic growth affect the poor in other cities and rural areas? We will put this issue in the framework of being a global city (London for example) or a peripheral node (Dakar for example). We will look to what extent Dar es Salaam is a global city or a peripheral node with growth potential.

Global cities and peripheral nodes

Cities are important in the development process. They are competing with each other and globalization is increasing this process. According to Sassen (1991), globalization exposes cities to ideas, goods and services from elsewhere, which

challenges the local production of industrial goods and services, creating global cities. The old model of global integration was based on increased exports of goods and services. Developing countries were considered the periphery of a dominant capitalist system residing in Europe, North America and Japan. The dominant metropolitan core controlled the process from within. The original meaning of "metropolitan zone of influence" meant "forming part of the mother-land" as distinct from its colonies. The term is now used for an ever expanding urban area with some supra-regional role in trade or providing services to a larger area.[1] Besides global cities there are peripheral nodes, which may have important regional functions.

In Sassen's book global cities go beyond a region or metropolitan area. She points to the role of knowledge, information and business services in the longer existing process of concentration of global production chains in the global cities or metropolitan areas. The characteristics of global cities are presented in Box 8.1. A critique of Sassen's definition of global cities could be that she focuses on one particular type of city, namely the global service centre. However, there are lots of cities in e.g. China and India that are centres of manufacturing activities and export an important part of their production to other countries, being part of all kinds of global value chains.

Box 8.1 Global cities

1. Global cities like New York, London and Tokyo are the production sites of global control over the lengthening production chains of which even the industrial home workers in remote rural areas are now part.
2. Globalization is not just about networks and resulting flows, it is also about places for concentration of these flows.
3. This concentration is the result of globalization and can be explained by:
   a. financial service providers concentrating around important financial centres;
   b. the need to have an innovative milieu requires networking among specialized business services to produce new managerial technological solutions;
   c. a high-tech infrastructure is required to assure permanent connectivity;
   d. a specific logistical infrastructure based on the previously mentioned functions.
4. Professional business services are the managers of the decentralization and globalization process.

Source: Sassen (1991)

In terms of van Dijk (2005a) the governance structure of such value chains (commanding what is happening in the chain) tend to be concentrated in such global manufacturing or services cities. These cities can compete with other

[1] "Cosmopolitan" refers to the life style that tends to come with such metropolitan areas.

aspiring global cities if they are fed by knowledge activities such as research and development, finance, marketing and design activities.[2] However, the dynamics of the current world economic system (Wallerstein 1989) is that other cities than the traditional metropoles are trying to take over the role of leader of production chains and try to become centres of knowledge and innovation as well. This process of competition offers chances to cities as far apart as Nanjing (van Dijk 2005a) and Dar es Salaam (van Dijk 2005b). If they do not succeed in becoming global cities in Sassen's sense, they may still be global manufacturing cities (say Shenzhen in China) or become peripheral nodes in the world capitalist system with a potentially important role to play in the future for the national or supra-regional area surrounding them. The question remains, how do such nodes transmit development to the rest of the country and what is the role of the informal sector in this respect?

The context of economic restructuring and urban and regional growth

After years of structural adjustment, liberalization, poverty eradication policies and programs and donor support, Tanzania has created a healthy macro-economic context in which growth can take place. An overview of the liberalization policies in Tanzania will not be given here (but see World Bank 2005). The Tanzania Private Sector Foundation (TPSF) believes that the investments in reforms in Tanzania are now starting to pay off (van Dijk 2005b).

The government of Tanzania nationalized and placed under state ownership and management all enterprises up to the mid-1980s. This movement had a negative impact on private sector development in the country. In 1992 the government launched the Parastatal Sector Reform Program (PSRP) to privatize public enterprises. Privatization sought to give the private sector a frontline role as the engine of economic growth. Following that, the participation of the private sector has increased and management of the restructured economic activities in the country has improved, particularly in the city of Dar es Salaam. In order to strengthen the business and investment environment, consultative dialogue meetings took place involving the government and private sectors under the auspices of the Tanzania National Business Council (TNBC). Moreover, the government continued to implement the Business Environment Strengthening for Tanzania (BEST) Program.

[2] The movement of the headquarters of Philips electronic company from Eindhoven where the company started to Amsterdam in the 1990s perfectly illustrates this trend to be where knowledge activities such as research and development, finance, marketing and design activities are concentrated.

As an example of the economic success of the reform policies, the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) collected 25 million US$ per month in 1995. Ten years later this is 160 million! With about 200 million the government could cover its budget instead of being dependent on foreign donors, who currently finance about a quarter.[3]

Local governments have also done better (Heymans & Kumar 2002). They collect the development levy, land tax and a cess levy on the value added tax (0.3%), while for the national government the income, consumption (VAT of 20%) and import duties are very important. The Ministry of Finance is responsible for tax reform. The tax system has also been made slightly easier, by abolishing a number of taxes or taking them away from local government and by providing an income transfer to local governments instead. The authorities also removed the stamp duty, but it came back under the income tax. The value added tax is a hot issue for business people and entrepreneuring professors because the rate is considered too high. However, people do not realize that it is deductible.

The shocking figure about taxes is that 82% is collected in Dar es Salaam and only 18% in the rest of the country! The challenge is to strengthen revenue collection and not to exclude too many cases. The 2005/06 budget estimates that the government will collect Tanzanian Shilling (TSh.) 2.067 trillion (± € 1.414 billion) from domestic sources, an equivalent of 14.3% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP; *Citizen* 12-7-2005).

The World Population report (UNFPA 2003) notes that urban areas have become engines for growth in the global economy as centres for diversity and change. Is this happening in Tanzania as well? Dar es Salaam is certainly very different from the rest of the country, since most of the industries of Tanzania are concentrated there. The city has the biggest population and is the biggest market. The port also plays an important role in the concentration process. The creation and development of secondary towns is a strategy to spread development, but does it really work in Tanzania?

How does growth affect the poor?

Good macro-economic information is available in Tanzania since some ten years. However, little is known about the micro-level implications of economic growth for the poor living in different cities and regions in the interior. The existing inequalities come out very clearly in the Household budget survey 2000/01 (NBS 2002b). The question is what can be done to spread welfare, rather than trying to stop it from coming into the capital.

[3] In general import duties have gone down as a consequence of the Uruguay round of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Currently the Tanzanian customs uses only two rates (25% and 10%) and are moving to a single rate.

The World Bank (2005) Country Economic Memorandum provides an in-depth analysis of the Tanzanian economy. However, it deals mainly with what can be measured in Tanzania. A number of the interesting issues in the development process of a country, region or city are difficult to measure. For example:

(1) What explains the dynamics of cities like Dar es Salaam and Arusha?
(2) Which factors contribute to poverty reduction?
(3) Why did poverty alleviation happen in Dar es Salaam and hardly seemed to happen in the rest of the country?
(4) What is the role of migration, the urban informal sector, remittances and smuggling with respect to redistributing the positive effects of growth?
(5) To what extent has decentralization contributed to urban dynamics and how does it affect poverty?

It is difficult to say whether poverty did or did not decline in the rural areas. There are no figures except two household surveys. The most recent one may have measured poverty in 2000/1 at the wrong moment (during a small dip in the economy) and hence poverty eradication efforts do not show (NBS 2002a). One can also argue on methodological grounds (concerning the "one dollar a day" criterion, or the level of the poverty line) against the current picture. However, one can also say that rural and urban poverty are different and fixed at too low a level.[4] The valuation of subsistence is the biggest problem. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) currently uses existing prices, but should use opportunity cost. There are also big differences between different rural areas. Finally, a poverty line analysis may neglect the dynamics of poverty, as was the case in China and India (van Dijk 2005a), where research has shown that it is often different people who are poor over time. Poverty is then related to a phase in people's life (transitory poverty), or people are growing out of poverty by undertaking certain economic activities, often originally in the urban informal sector.

On the basis of figures of the Ministry of Finance, URT (2005: 66) decides that the disparities between the rural and urban population have increased, like in many other fast growing countries. Although basic needs poverty has declined, the absolute number of poor keeps increasing every year. The trends are analysed for the period 1991/92 until 2000/01. However, the Economic Survey 2004 does not mention the role of the urban informal sector, nor does it give the differences between different regions (URT 2005).

In Tanzania statistics are often limited to the formal manufacturing and agricultural sectors, but an important part of what is happening does not show in the figures because it happens in the informal sector or "informally". There are estimates of the share of the informal sector going up to 90% (if non-estate agriculture would also be included). A more realistic figure of 58% is mentioned

[4] We should stress the limitations of the "poverty is below one dollar a day" concept.

in several World Bank publications. It means that labour is allocated, investments are made and raw materials are used without really being measured for half of the economy. It involves flows of people, goods and money, not shown directly in the statistics, but known to many people. We have concentrated during this research on getting whatever data are available and on the stories about the urban informal economy and how it affects other Tanzanian cities and regions. These mechanisms are described in more detail below.

Role of urban informal sector in spreading development and alleviating poverty

While in other countries the informal sector is residual, in Tanzania it seems to be the contrary. Some say 90% of the economy is informal (Tripp 1997: 5), while the remaining 10% concerns employment in the formal sector including the government and public co-operation. With such a definition 50% would then be in traditional farming. Other authors go as far as stating that the informal sector employs two thirds of the population in Tanzania (ILO 2005). It does not seem useful to put traditional agricultural activities in the category "informal sector". In this paper the term will be reserved for informal income opportunities in cities and non-agricultural activities in the rural areas. They are considered informal since the units involved have no legal status and hence the people working there do not receive the legal minimum wage or benefits from the social security system (van Dijk 1987).

The difference between the urban informal sector in West Africa in the 1970s (van Dijk 1987) and the current informal sector in East Africa seems to be that this urban informal sector has become part of the global economy. For example informal tailors no longer compete with modern textile and garment industries in Tanzania, but they have to produce at lower prices than Chinese textile and garment industries and have to come up with more attractive products than the second-hand clothing from Europe, which is almost everywhere available nowadays.

ILO (1991) makes an effort to estimate employment in the informal sector. The report suggests 2 million people are involved, which would be 2.5 times the number of people with formal wage employment. According to the ILO employment in the informal sector would be growing at 3.5% per year. The integrated labour force survey 2000/1 (NBS 2002d) measured informal sector activities by the number of households involved. It turns out that in Dar es Salaam 62 percent of the households are involved in informal sector activities. The percentage is 61 for other urban centres (used to be 42). In the rural areas 27% of the households have informal sector activities (used to be 21%; URT 2002). In terms of number of people the labour force survey found it would be

1,439,847 people doing informal sector activities as main activities and 1,363,010 having them as secondary activities. This suggests that currently a much larger number of people are involved in this sector than according to ILO (1991).

Tripp (1997) stresses the importance of women in the urban informal sector. NBS (2002d) provides the figures. In Dar es Salaam and in the rural areas there are slightly more males than females in both the main and secondary activities. In the other urban areas, more females were employed than males in both the main and secondary activities.

According to different World Bank sources more than 50% of the urban population work in the urban informal sector in Tanzania. However, their activities are not covered in detail in the statistics (what kind of activities and how much does it earn a person). More importantly this sector has become a mechanism to generate and redistribute growth. Hence we should understand better how it functions. The informal sector is the result of and results in flows of people, money and goods. These mechanisms of the urban informal sector like migration, remittances and smuggling will be discussed in the following sections.

If more than 50% of the Tanzanian economy is informal, the current dynamics should also be reflected in the informal sector. The six percent economic growth will also apply to this sector, because a lot of money is spent in the sector and most of the money generated in the sector will be spent informally and bring about multiplier effects. Hence, the question is: What determines the further development of the informal sector?

Where do the people come from? How do they finance their activities? What is the role of the government in their development? A first impression of some relevant factors is given in Table 8.1. For each flow we try to indicate how it works out in Dar es Salaam and the Arusha and Kilimanjaro regions.

Tripp (1997), ILO (1978, 1991 and 2004), Wuyts (1998), Bagachwa (1995 and 1997) and others help to get a picture of this sector and in particular of the investments made and income derived from working in the sector to understand its re-distributive function.[5] A number of studies deal with rural-urban linkages (Bryceson & Jamal 1997, ESRF 2001). Finally some studies are very much policy oriented (ILO 2004, Mitullah 2005). ILO (2004) focuses in particular on the restrictive regulation and how to deregulate to allow more informal sector development.

[5] Data on small enterprises in Tanzania were generated under the World Bank initiated REP studies. Later the University of Oxford collected additional data.

Table 8.1 How flows are affected in different locations in Tanzania

Factor	Dar es Salaam	Arusha	Kilimanjaro
Flows of people			
Migration	Strong inward migration	In as well as out of the region	Mainly out of the region
Lifetime migrants 2004	1,319,360	249,971	113,743
Flows of money			
Local tax revenues	Increasing	Increasing	Declining
Remittances, investments and government expenditure	In and out but constantly increasing	Coming in for the in-, and going out for the out-migration. Totals increase	Coming into the region to support those left behind, amounts decrease
Flow of goods and services			
Local products and small scale services	In and out, including from abroad	In and out, from abroad, partially illegal	Flows are not as important as before

Source for migration: Mbonile (2004)

Rural informal sector activities

Rural households with non-agricultural activities (see Table 8.2) suffer less from poverty (Rutasitara 2002). Rutasitara gives characteristics of these activities, which can be considered the origin of many urban informal sector activities and hence we will draw on this study. The importance of non-farm activities is very much linked to the possibility of markets for these products. These products can be marketed more easily than agricultural products, which all come on the market at the same time and require the farmers to deal with only one party, who has a much better understanding of the price. Plus agricultural products face transport and storage cost; it requires more information and more capital. However, it is more difficult to get the message to the rural population that non-farm activities are more rewarding. It also requires knowledge and technologies and some small investments. Microfinance schemes can be very useful (see Gallardo *et al.* 2005).

Table 8.2 Most important rural informal sector activities in Tanzania

Small businesses in rural areas: Trade and services	Manufacturing activities
Trade of:	Agro processing activities
- agriculture related products, such as grain, vegetables, fish and meat	Blacksmithing
- industrial products	Carpentry
- construction related products	Construction material: Mud bricks, stone bricks, wooden planks, etc.
- wood for cooking	Farm implements
Hawking and street vending	Tailoring
Repair:	Handicrafts and other crafts
- bicycles	Pottery
- cars	

Major food crops grown in the Dar es Salaam region are: Cassava, sorghum, maize, rice, sweet potatoes, bananas, and varieties of legume. Cash crops include: Cashew nut, coconuts, oranges, pineapples, and mangoes. Farming of these crops is done on small scale plots and land tilling is mainly done by using hand equipments. Very few people are using tractors and traditional upgraded technology.

Rutasitara (2002: 85-86) mentions as characteristics of the non agricultural activities that these are typical sole proprietorship activities, mostly managed by family members. The activities tend to be intertwined with the agricultural calendar and usually use local inputs. Income may be unstable and hired labour is limited. However, there are low capital requirements to enter into the rural non-agricultural activities and the technology tends to be simple. These activities are easily differentiated by gender, offering employment (and hence income) to the disadvantaged.

A lot of these products and services end up in cities and towns. The rural informal sector and these non-agricultural activities are important examples of rural-urban linkages (Bagachwa 1997). He notes that a dynamic rural informal sector not only employs 21% of the nation's labour force, and also provides estimates of the value added by the sector. He mentions that the sector (including the urban informal sector) contributes one-third of the total official economy's value added.

Different activities in the urban informal sector

Table 8.3 gives an impression of the activities in the informal sector of Dar es Salaam. It should be noted that very different activities in this sector have very different problems. This suggests there is also not a "one size fits all" solution. The ILO (2005) perspective is getting the informal sector out of the margin into the mainstream. This requires removing a number of bottlenecks and introducing some specific facilities. For example, the ILO considers it very important that there will be a plastic recycling plant in the country soon with the help of

Table 8.3 Most important informal sector activities in Dar es Salaam

Small business license holders in Dar es Salaam: Trade	Manufacturing activities
Operating a stall for assorted items	Tailors
Selling firewood	Making buns, rice cakes and pastries
Selling buns, rice cakes and pastries	Working as a carpenter
Vending fruit	Working as a cobbler
Selling fried chips, chicken, eggs and or barbecued meat	Repairing watches
Vending fish	Slaughtering animals
	Welding

Source: Trip (1997)

UNIDO. Scrap metal has already become valuable, and the hope is that people will recover plastic as well. Currently most of the plastic bottles are compressed and exported to China!

The informal sector may help families out of poverty, but it is also very much a subsistence sector in the rural areas. The question is how to get these people to invest in and to expand their businesses. A push from outside may mean much more for the local economy than efforts to develop policies for the informal sector in the capital. Such a push could be the training received, a trip to another city or country or financial support from a family member living elsewhere. The informal sector may have its own dynamics, but currently lack of credit facilities or fear for taxation does restrain it (Kweka *et al.* 2004).

Mechanisms in the urban informal sector: Flows of people

Because of its high population growth Tanzania has a relatively young population. According to the 1988 census 46% of the population was under 15 years of age. The total population increased from 7.5 million in 1948 to 34.5 million in 2002 (URT 2003b). Migration is common in Tanzania. People are moving from high density areas to less populated areas and people are opting for living in the cities. An important transmission mechanism for skills and income is the labour market and its functioning is influenced by good urban management (van Dijk 2006). One could look at these migrants as physical capital, in the form of human bodies, being brought to the regions with more potential or to urban areas, where the capital will generate a higher rate of return than in the rural areas.

There are also international flows of people. The number of people leaving Tanzania is not known, but Mbonile (2004) estimates international migration towards Tanzania to be 236,775 in 2002, based on the 2002 population census. 12% of these migrants settle in Dar es Salaam, 2.1% in Arusha and 2.3% in Kilimanjaro. In total the census reveals 4,671,641 lifetime migrants, or even twice as much if in and out-migration movements are counted separately. He also notes big differences per region.

Rural to urban migration played a big role in the urbanization process in Tanzania in the first two decades of the country's independence. The major factor for rural youths to move to urban areas has been the search of a better life, especially aspiration for salaried jobs, access to services and social facilities (URT 2005). A lot of people seem to go directly to Dar es Salaam (Mlingi & Asey 2005: 71). There is less this two-step approach of going to regional capitals first in Tanzania. For Dar es Salaam City, the number of people born outside the Dar es Salaam region was 56.3% in 2004. This means that more than half of the city's population were migrants. In the same year Arusha had slightly more than half of the population being migrants, i.e. 50.7% were not born in the localities of

the Arusha region. This shows that immigration has had a big impact on the population growth of major urban centres in the country. However, since the 1980s, natural population increase has also become a major component of urban population growth.

Towns like Dar es Salaam, Mwanza and Tanga, which each had a population of less than 100,000 people in the 1940s and early 1950s had already a big population by 1988. Dar es Salaam, for instance, as a region accounted for 5.9% of the country's total population in 1988. Tanzania's urban population has increased from 6.4% in 1967 to 23.1% in 2002 (Table 8.4). Tanzania has also shown high urban population growth rates for the last three decades compared to other developing countries.

Table 8.4 Urbanization trend in Tanzania over 1967-2002

	1967		1978		1988		2002	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Tanzania	786,567	6.4	2,412,900	13.8	4,247,497	18.3	7,943,561	23.1
Mainland	685,092	5.8	2,257,921	13.3	4,043,684	17.9	7,554,838	22.6
Zanzibar	101,475	28.6	154,979	32.6	203,813	31.8	388,723	39.6

Source: URT (2005)

Based on the 2002 Population and Housing Census, Dar es Salaam had 2,487,288 people of whom 1,254,853 were males and the rest females. The city's population grew from 25,000 in 1919, 45,000 in 1945, 128,742 in 1957, 272,821 in 1967 to 843,000 in 1978. The 1988 census recorded the city's population to be 1,360,850 and in 2002 the city population was 2,487,288 million.

The growth of the informal sector has contributed to rural-urban migration. The major pull factor has been the search for a better life especially aspiration for employment opportunities, access to better services and social facilities. This in turn has put pressure on the utilization of undeveloped and developed facilities in Tanzania's cities. Rapid growth of squatter settlements, peri-urban shantytowns and unsanitary environmental conditions are some of the common problems. There are also growing health and social problems in these cities.

Informal flows of money

Components of the flows of money, one of the mechanisms of the urban informal sector, which can be traced, are remittances, loans and savings. Remittances are a tricky concept, but the amounts involved are substantial. Conceptually remittances are transfers without an exchange, while otherwise goods are exchanged for barter or money. The NBS (2002a: 155) registers the net remittances (received minus provided) but does not give a clue as to how the money is used.

Remittances and social networks are the key to survival strategies in the rural and urban areas. It turns out that net remittances make up 3.5% of the monthly income per household in Dar es Salaam. In the rural areas the percentage is 2.1 and in other urban centres 3.2. The average for Mainland Tanzania is 2.4%.

The urban informal sector mobilizes a lot of funds and generates income opportunities for the poor. The current policy trend is formalization, where poor people are given titles for land and other assets (their enterprise), which may make it easier for them to obtain loans. Loans will be discussed below, while savings in the informal sector are unknown because they do not pass through the formal banking system. Again microfinance and saving schemes could make these amounts visible.

Flows of goods and services

Tripp (1997: 164) distinguishes different informal marketing arrangements. Firstly, between members of one village or of a nearby village. Secondly, shuttle markets, where the products are taken by bus or truck to a nearby town and then to interregional trade where they are sold elsewhere and other goods are brought back. Finally, there are open urban markets and export markets, where goods can arrive formally or informally.

The Quarterly report of industrial commodities (NBS 2002b) provides data on industrial production in 1985, 2000 and 2003. However, the location of the production and the destination of the products are not indicated. If this is the case for formal sector products it can hardly be expected that such data are available for the informal sector. However, we have learned form several sources that the two sectors compete.

The Confederation of Tanzanian Industries (CTI) does not consider the competition from the informal sector as very damaging for its members. In fact they want the informal entrepreneurs to become members of CTI. For that reason they have diminished the membership fees for these smaller companies. However, they note that the bigger enterprises can also gain access to external finance, which is difficult for the small ones.

The flows of goods are sustained through small-scale transportation and would often be called smuggling because the formal requirements are not met. These informal movements of goods and services in Tanzania are not always covered in the official statistics. However, although large quantities of goods and services "exported" are not covered, the information is well known, for example concerning:

(1) the type of food going from Tanzania to Kenya;
(2) the cattle going on hoof, even to Uganda;
(3) other raw material: Coffee, tea and cashew nuts going out of Tanzania, often illegally;
(4) sugar coming in from Malawi;[6]
(5) hides and precious stones (Tripp 1997: 87);
(6) textiles, possibly through under invoicing or through Mombasa;
(7) chickens from Zambia;
(8) prawns to Botswana;
(9) Makonde carvings and other crafts to the west (Tripp 1997: 96);
(10) all kinds of industrial products from Kenya usually essential goods;
(11) from Zanzibar they smuggle everything, using small boats (if one looks at the statistics of the island, the inhabitants import much more than they could possibly absorb).

The government claims it contains smuggling. That is true for certain products (dry batteries and electrical products from South-East Asia), but in other areas there are problems. Smuggling is not very important according to some officials we talked to. They opine that they manage to control it. Nobody likes to see it growing. One way to reduce it was reducing the duties in the framework of different trade agreements. The Regional Commissioner in Arusha district also coordinates with partners on the other side of the border. The main category subject to smuggling is industrial products produced cheaply in Kenya according to government officials.

The attitude of officials towards smuggling is that they do not think Tanzanians smuggle so much. These are usually small producers and people on the other side of the border. However, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) published a study showing that 50 billion of Tanzanian shillings per year is lost as government revenue in Tanzania, because of smuggling along the Indian Ocean coastline, according to a newspaper article (*Citizen* 12-7-2005).

Promoting the role of the informal sector

An alternative model of development is suggested for example by the ILO (1972) and by De Soto (1989). The emphasis would be on developing the informal sector further. The units thereof are not always registered, do not pay all the different taxes or the legal minimum wage, but they certainly make up a local sector, creating a lot of employment and with a lot of entrepreneurial capacity. We should be tapping into it.

Most small-scale activities are still producing for the domestic market and some for informal exports. New exceptions are the flowers and certain fish from Lake Victoria such as the Nile Birch and the Tilalupa, which can be exported. The availability of finance is in general not considered the bottleneck in Tanzania. It is available; the issue is to design mechanisms (microfinance and guaran-

[6] *The Guardian* (16-7-2005) reported that the TRA impounded sugar worth 6 million TSh. coming from Malawi in July 2005.

tee arrangements) to get it into the rural areas and small towns and to reach the farmers and the small entrepreneurs. Different levels of government can also mobilize more money through partnerships with the commercial and non-commercial private sector and with other levels of government.

The informal sector plays an important role and has a tremendous potential to spread development. We have to look for those activities that can grow out of the sector when they reach a certain level. Typically the gem stones trade (these stones are bought and sold in certain streets of Arusha) is in the informal sector. There is no viable formal industry and the government should not do it. It happens in this way as well, but could develop further. The growth of the informal sector could be quantified in terms of number of people involved. However, it is more difficult to get estimates of their turnover, income, investments and exports. There are certainly a number of indications that these variables are growing at the same speed or faster than the overall economy.

If asked, many small entrepreneurs claim a lack of finance is their major problem. The question is whether loans are the real bottleneck. Other problems for micro and small entrepreneurs are a lack of (a) space, (b) infrastructure, (c) market outlets, (d) skills, and (e) innovative capacity.

Current policies of the government for the informal sector and SMEs

Policies for of the government for the informal sector and SMEs in Tanzania are very much based on what Altenburg (2005) calls “the minimalist approach to private sector development”. De Soto (1989) is an important thinker behind this approach, which according to Altenburg fails to point to the complementary factors, which are important for micro and small enterprise promotion. We will now discuss some current policies and indicate what does not get sufficient attention in Tanzania. Current policies of the government for the informal sector and SMEs in Tanzania include: (a) formalization policies, (b) credit or loans, (c) export promotion, and (d) other SME policies.

President Kikwete showed in his campaign in 2005 that he is very much in favour of developing local small businesses, so SME development became a political issue. From 2004 small entrepreneurs can get a license without paying. Also the taxation system is more smooth and predictable. There have also been lots of policy reforms for the better.

Formalization process

In order to empower the informal sector, the government has prepared the Property and Business Formalization Program (PBFP). The Program seeks to

facilitate the transformation of informal (extralegal) properties and businesses into formal legal entities. Its aim is to enable Tanzanians to use the formalized resources as collateral in accessing credit from financial institutions and thereby enhance economic growth and ultimately reduce poverty. This requires according to De Soto (1989) title deeds. However, the question is what would be the value of such deeds in a village? Does Tanzania have the legal system to allow financial institutions to sell such property in case of non-repayment of loans?

The formalization work has already started in Dar es Salaam. The Business Registration and Licensing Agency (BRELA) has been created. It was established in 1997 and launched at the end of 1999. It provides eight reasons to register as a business (see Box 8.2). The Agency is responsible under the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MIT) for business facilitation and regulation. Its mission is to regulate and facilitate business operation in conjunction with other partner institutions in Tanzania, to ensure that they are in accordance with sound business and commercial principles. Their slogan is that BRELA provides business legality in Tanzania. Besides registration they are also granting patents, overseeing copyrights and involved in business and industrial licensing.

Box 8.2 BRELA reasons to register your business

1. Giving your business undertaking its legal life.
2. Giving you the exclusive right to personally use your company and business name.
3. Enabling you to enjoy the pride of being an honest Tanzanian or foreign business undertaker.
4. Giving you the right to enter with confidence into the competitive business arena using your company name and business corporate identity.
5. Granting you exclusive legal right to enjoy the product of your invention or innovation.
6. Protecting your intellectual property rights, thereby stimulating the urge for further inventive, innovative and creative activities.
7. Enjoying protection of your literary and artistic works against infringement and of your privacy.
8. Affording you the chance to contribute to national economic prosperity.

Mainstreaming informal enterprises into the formal sector faces some challenges, which include: Inadequate knowledge of the dynamics of the informal sector, and strategically inadequate location of areas for allocating space to informal sector operators. The PBFP program is currently limited to the first two phases, one of Diagnosis. The first phase has been completed. The second phase of Reform design will start when the evaluation of the first phase is completed.

In Tanzania there is a lot of talking about formalization of the informal sector. In practice this does not mean much more than abolishing the license fee if your

revenue is below TSh. 20 million. Secondly, small entrepreneurs do not have to renew the license, like in the past. If the revenue is over 20 million, they pay TSh. 20,000, but only once. For tax purposes, if an enterprise does not have records, it pays a lump sum. If it keeps records, it pays a percentage.

Credit or loans

Financial experts estimate that in total there is only one billion US dollar in loans in Tanzania. Four commercial banks probably provide 70% of that. Four international banks, are good for approximately 50%: $ 200 million from Standard and Chartered; $150 mln. from Barclay, $100 mln. from Stanbic and $50 mln. from the City Bank. Then local banks provide: NBC $200 mln.; Cooperative and Rural Development Bank (CRDB) $150 mln. and Exim $80 mln.; and another $80 mln. However, these loans do not go to SMEs, let alone the informal sector.

The sectoral composition of loans is: Large local, 55%; multinational firms (without mining, which is self supporting) 20%; SMEs 10%; and consumer loans 15%.[7] Agriculture gets only 10% of this; the rest going to trading and manufacturing. The most revealing figure is the growth of the loan portfolio. With an economic growth of 6 percent, credit is growing at 25% per year. There is no mechanism in place to provide agricultural credit. This is a reason for some people to argue in favour of an agricultural bank, but the bankers we talked to opine this is too interventionist and the World Bank would be against it.

Microfinance is not very much developed in Tanzania (Gallardo *et al.* 2005). Microcredit can play an important role for micro and small enterprise development in the future. This is not the way the formal sector banks will go, but there is scope for alternative microfinance institutions in Tanzania to expand their business.

Despite its name, the National Micro-finance Bank (NMB) is not very much into lending to small and micro entrepreneurs. Even now that the Dutch cooperative RABO Bank has taken a major share in the NMB, microfinance for micro and small enterprises will not increase substantially in the near future. The NMB actually requires a regular income of 100 dollar per month to be eligible for loans.

Investing by Tanzanian banks in risky business is not encouraged because of the high rate of interest paid on treasury bills (9 to 10% and risk free, while inflation is only 4%). Microloans are currently not interesting for the formal sector banks, because the cost involved in lending to one entrepreneur would be a few hundred dollars. With a saving component it may become interesting in the future.

[7] There is a loan guarantee project, which the banks use, but the amount for SMEs in the project is only 2 million dollar, which bankers consider a joke. 200 to 300 million would be needed!

Export promotion

Several efforts are made to promote exports by small and medium enterprises in Tanzania. The Ministry of Industry and Trade with support from Denmark (DANIDA) focuses on a limited number of medium scale companies, which are willing and able to export and consider new markets (outside the region or Africa). The project helps these enterprises to overcome the barriers to export and to focus on quality requirements, helping them to satisfy international standards. For practical reasons the project focuses on a limited number of cities. The project does provide grants to help Tanzanian companies to export.

The Danish consultant to the Ministry of Industry and Trade claims that they do not deal with the informal sector, but she agrees that there is some kind of continuum between informal micro and formal SME. They consider the main bottlenecks in the sector to be regulatory and administrative constraints, taxes and compliance cost. Although the administrative system is decentralized, entrepreneurs often have to go to Dar es Salaam for tax purposes or to obtain an import license.

Other SME policies

Innovation is not a big thing in the small enterprise sector in Tanzania. A lot of entrepreneurs are mainly copying what is happening elsewhere. Also incubator centres do not exist yet. Still there are many Tanzanian producers in sectors like cloth, vegetable oil, soap, etc., which could benefit from innovation or incubation centres (Bongenaar & Szirmai 2002). Van Dijk & Sandee (2002) suggest using the term innovation in the broad sense of introducing new ideas, new products and ways of working or financing or selling the production of micro and small enterprises. The Technology Development and Transfer Centre (TDTC) at the university of Dar es Salaam now produces for example sieving machines for small scale mining (*Sunday Observer* 7-7-2005) and could be used for developing or adapting technologies for other activities as well.

Although most of these informal sector enterprises are small, they trigger local economic development. However, there are export associations in Tanzania, even if these sectoral institutions are not always called export associations. For coffee, horticulture, sisal and mining such associations do exist and could be used. Also Trade Fair sales can help SMEs. The *Sunday Observer* (17-7-2005) reported that sales during the Dar es Salaam International Trade Fair (DITF) have been twice the record sales of 2004 (TSh. 78 million versus 38.9 million in 2004).

The ILO promotes developing the urban informal sector in East Africa by promoting subcontracting of solid waste collection and treatment to small enterprises (Mitullah 2005). Preparing training manuals is part of their approach to the

issue. Local organizations develop the material. Other ideas mentioned in ILO (2004) to promote the informal sector are: (a) a new pact between central government and small businesses, (b) improving their access to public procurement, (c) development of entrepreneurship, and (d) more efficient institutional arrangements.

Conclusions on promotion policies

The process of formalizing the informal sector, which has started in Tanzania under the influence of De Soto (1989), has some dangers. One is that it will kill the sector, whose secret is that they are not paying all the taxes and satisfying all the rules and regulations developed for the formal sector. Secondly, it is noted that the large number of activities currently undertaken for this sector may stimulate people to actually go to the cities and try to benefit from these programs. Hence it could increase rural-urban migration. Finally there will always be an informal sector, even if you make registration easier and paying taxes more transparent and justifiable. New people will start economic activities without bothering to register or to pay taxes.

Most informal sector activities do not believe in formalization and hence they want to stay out of the tax and credit web. However, the dynamic part of the informal sector will eventually make the shift. The approach of De Soto, giving everybody titles, is not a sufficient condition for successful small enterprise development. A lot more (education, training, markets, innovation) is necessary to turn the small and micro entrepreneurs into dynamic business(wo)men.

Another point of departure for the promotion of the informal sector would be to take the real problems of these small entrepreneurs as the point of departure. In Trip (1997) one finds a number of positive and negative factors, summarized in Table 8.5.

Table 8.5 Positive and negative factors for the urban informal sector

Positive	Negative
Rotating credit societies (117)	Licensing restrictions (103)
Networking strategies (122-24)	Oppressive laws (103)
Women taking control over their own lives (117)	Harassment (124)
The moral economy model (127)	Battle over grounds (158)
Ending enforcement policies (193)	One can add: Taxes, lack of space, lack of credit, etc.

Source: Tripp (1997, with page numbers in the table).

A positive policy environment largely determines the further development of informal sector activities. If its contribution to the economy is recognized and promoted the sector can really help to spread development over the country.

Micro and small businesses face a lot of competition and they need a friendly environment to be able to survive and to develop their businesses. The authorities have at least put in place a lot more positive regulatory framework. The previous president from Tanzania was very pro-private sector and CTI hopes that this approach will continue with president Kikwete, after the elections in 2005. As one of the CTI officials phrased it: "These small guys also help our members to sell their products for example in the interior." Hopefully in due course a real businesses development support system (BDS) will develop.

Conclusions on global city or local node

Combining Sassen's perspective and Kanbur (2001), who argues that an economy needs to be understood from below, Dar es Salaam is a node in the periphery of the global economy. However, it is a well connected node and it does use its position to help to spread development in that region, although possibly not enough. With its growth potential and in particular through informal flows of people, money, goods and services some development is already spreading to the interior of the country and probably more than the official statistics show! The challenge is to serve a larger hinterland as well.

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9

Mocking the state: Comic strips in the Zimbabwean press

Wendy Willems

In the last decade, the concept of the everyday has come to feature prominently within the arts and humanities, and particularly also in the fields of media and cultural studies (Silverstone 1994, Scannell 1996, Mackay 1997, Gauntlett & Hill 1999, Storey 1999, Moores 2000). The consolidation of this theoretical framework can also be highlighted with the recent publication of an everyday theory textbook and reader (Highmore 2001, 2002). The emphasis in most of the work done within media and cultural studies has been on the role of media in people's everyday lives, e.g. how new communication technologies change relationships between people, the manner in which media make available types of identity to audiences, and the way in which media structure everyday routines.

This paper turns the relation between the everyday and the media around, and will instead look at how notions of "everydayness" and "ordinariness" have been constructed in the media, and particularly in comic strips in Zimbabwe. I attribute a key role to popular culture in this regard, as that is where "issues central to the everyday life of the majority of population are being articulated and debated, and new modes of life are made visible, audible, thinkable" (Folke Frederiksen 1997: 94).

The comic strip "Chikwama" which appeared in the Zimbabwean private newspaper *The Daily News* provided a powerful but subtle commentary on the change of everyday lives that came with the increasing economic, political and social crisis. Whereas mainstream media reports highlighted the passivity of Zimbabweans in the face of increasing repression, this paper will argue that

comic strips provided a different and more diffuse conceptualization of power and subjectivity. Chikwama showed the more ambiguous ways in which Zimbabweans negotiated changes in their everyday lives.

Representing the rulers and the ruled

In an article entitled "Dictator's grip is tightened by weak protest" in the British newspaper *The Daily Telegraph*, journalist David Blair (2005) suggests that the "docile nature" of Zimbabweans has enabled President Mugabe to strengthen his rule:

> In fairness, there has been little spontaneous discontent. A few stones were thrown at police during the urban demolitions and street battles briefly erupted in towns such as Chitungwiza. But many Zimbabweans meekly submitted to the destruction of their homes and livelihoods.
>
> Any outsider with goodwill towards this beautiful country is led towards some profoundly disturbing conclusions. The entire Zimbabwean nation seems to have given up opposing Mr Mugabe. Put bluntly, they are waiting for God to remove him. The MDC's [*main opposition party Movement for Democratic Change – WW*] failure to offer any protest or resistance reflects the popular mood.
>
> But if 12 million Zimbabweans have no will to rid themselves of a dictator, why should anyone else help? Perhaps Zimbabweans deserve the most damning verdict of all – that they have the leader they deserve.
>
> I hasten to add that I do not believe this. But looking at the country's recent history, I find it hard to listen to Zimbabweans who blame the outside world for failing to help. They have done precious little to help themselves and Mr Tsvangirai [*MDC president – WW*] seems most adept at machine-gunning himself in both feet.

In other words, Zimbabweans had themselves to blame for the deteriorating situation in their country. Put bluntly, because of their passivity, they got the regime they deserved. Or as Richard Dowden (2005), the previous Africa Editor of *The Economist*, wrote in an article in *The Times,* "The opposition Movement for Democratic Change has missed its chance to follow the example of the citizens of Ukraine**,** Georgia and Madagascar and take to the streets to force out a tyrannical ruler". Especially, in the run-up to the Presidential Elections in April 2005, the comparison with the Orange Revolution in Ukraine was often made. The international media were waiting for Zimbabweans to rise up and stand against the Mugabe regime, just like people had done in Ukraine, Georgia and Madagascar. When it did not happen, they were disappointed and interest in Zimbabwe dropped.

Apart from media representations of Zimbabweans as passive subjects to an all-powerful government, there has been a similar discourse on the influence of the media, and particularly government media. This discourse of what I would call "passive audiences" is expressed for example in a public opinion survey part of a series known as Afrobarometer. The survey concluded that the government media in Zimbabwe have been successful in their efforts to win the hearts and

minds of Zimbabweans (Chikwanha *et al.* 2004, Bratton *et al.* 2005). Afrobarometer measures "the social, political and economic atmosphere in Africa".[1] The project compares "trends in public attitudes" in various African countries and shares results with "decision makers, policy advocates, civic educators, journalists, researchers, donors and investors, as well as *average Africans who wish to become more informed and active citizens*" (emphasis added by author).[2] The researchers of the Zimbabwean survey were confronted with an outcome that they could not quite explain. Although Zimbabweans seemed to blame the government for the deteriorating economic conditions, the results of the survey concluded that many Zimbabweans still respected and supported President Mugabe.

The research team attempted to explain this "paradox" through three factors: Economic patronage, political fear and persuasion by the mass media. They did not find a significant relation between the first two factors and continued support to the government but did find a statistical significant relation between factor three and a positive evaluation of the government. Because readers attached a significant amount of trust in the government media, they concluded that this confidence must have motivated and convinced readers to continue to support the ruling regime. The research team here implies a straightforward, causal relation or "hypodermic needle effect" between trust in the media and support for the regime. This relation could be turned around as well. Would readers who are inclined to support the regime at all costs not also support the type of media in which their leaders are portrayed in a favourable way? In other words, could people's support not precede their preference for certain media?

The research team argued the other way to enable them to give their final report a catchy title "The power of propaganda" or as David Moore (2005) cynically noted in a response to the report, "we can guarantee continued donor funding for the science of surveying democratic progress across the Dark Continent". Both the Bratton research team and Blair and Dowden expect a particular kind of resistance that Zimbabweans apparently have not demonstrated. However, these accounts have ignored both the repressive nature of the state and the different, perhaps less visible ways in which Zimbabweans have responded to their regime in their everyday lives.

In a climate where efforts are being made to stifle flows of information, I will argue, other forms of media gain importance. With reference of Africa, Ellis (1989: 321) has noted the central role of what has become know as "radio trottoir" in Francophone Africa or "pavement radio" in Anglophone Africa, which he defines as "the popular and unofficial discussion of current affairs in

[1] See the Afrobarometer website: www.afrobarometer.org.
[2] Ibid.

Africa, particularly in town". Bourgault (1995: 201) identifies "parallel discourse" as a means through which Africans have managed to "deform, through deconstruction and reconstruction, the praises they are forced to sing and perform". She refers hereby to the work of Comi Toulabor (1986) who has written on how official party slogans and songs are subverted by people during official visits of government officials. Mbembe (2001: 106), drawing on De Certeau (1984), speaks of "poaching of meanings" by Togolese who identified the Togolese party acronym RPT with "the sound of faecal matter dropping into a sceptic tank" or "the sound of a fart emitted by quivering buttocks which can only smell disgusting".

In the numerous queues that rapidly appeared and have grown in length in the past five years, Zimbabweans have been actively debating politics irrespective of their fears. In commuter omnibuses, people have been sharing jokes mocking the regime although not always without consequences. Naming and re-naming has been a powerful strategy that has long been used in Zimbabwe in order to comment upon political affairs. For example the acronym ESAP which stood for the "Economic Structural Adjustment Programme" in the early 1990s came to be known as "Even *Sadza* is a Problem", to denote the rising prices of food after the abolishment of food subsidies as a result of the implementation of neoliberal policies.[3] The recent attempts by the Zimbabwean government to "clean up" the urban areas in "Operation Murambatsvina" ("Operation Drive Out Trash" in Shona) came to be known as "Tsunami" or Zimbabwe's "Hurricane Katrina".

In order to understand how Zimbabweans relate to their rulers and have positioned themselves, it is probably more useful to look at these various ways of public speech and commentary instead of conducting surveys on public opinion and attitudes in a climate where fear and intimidation is rife. Comic strips have been important forms of commentary and I would agree with Francis Nyamnjoh (2005: 84) that "it is necessary to look beyond meta-narratives of euphoria and victimhood to understand how marginalized individuals and communities are responding to state repression …".

In an important article on popular culture in Africa, Johannes Fabian (1997: 25) argues that "cultural expressions … are not evidence for how culture 'works' (or 'functions' or 'determines action'); but they demonstrate how perceptions, experiences and problems are being 'worked out' in an open, never-ending process". According to Fabian, cultural expressions should not be seen as "reflections" of an already-constituted "world view". Rather, they are part of the work of cultural production. In a similar way, Mbembe (2001: 142) describes the cartoon as "a figure of speech" that is "never an exact copy of reality" but "always a conventional comment, the transcription of reality, a word, a vision".

[3] *Sadza* is a porridge made out of white maize flour which is Zimbabwe's staple food.

In this paper, I would like to show how a study of comic strips in a private, critical daily Zimbabwean newspaper can tell us more about the way in which Zimbabweans have worked out the changes in their everyday life as a result of the crisis.

Comic strips in Zimbabwe

Until recently, newspaper editors in Zimbabwe often used syndicated international comic strips from outside the country such as *Hagar the Horrible*, *Andy Capp* and *Fred Basset* for publication in their newspapers. As McLoughlin (1989: 217) has argued, the Zimbabwean comic strip has "long been on the fringe of popular culture, neglected as much by artists as by editors and their financiers". Although magazines such as *Parade*, *Moto* and *Prize* had local comic strips, the main daily national newspaper *The Herald* relied on imports. However, with the launch of the private newspaper *The Daily News* in March 1999, Zimbabwean cartoonists were offered a full page to publish their work in a new paper that rapidly gained popularity among Zimbabweans. This can to a large extent be attributed to the enthusiasm for cartoons and comic strips on the part of Geoff Nyarota, *The Daily News*'s editor. Together with Boyd Maliki, Nyarota had been involved in a strip called *Nyati* in the 1980s.

The Daily News made a deliberate attempt to provide an alternative to the pro-government daily newspaper *The Herald* that had been publishing since independence in 1980, and was known as *The Rhodesia Herald* before Independence. Whereas both government print and electronic media relied to a large extent on the official voice of government elites, *The Daily News* sought to be a paper for "the common man in the streets". Instead of relying on expert views, *The Daily News* felt ordinary Zimbabweans also had opinions which were worth recording. Especially in the run-up to the 2000 parliamentary elections, the paper rapidly increased its popularity. This, however, was also noted by the government, which in the past has tried through various means to prevent the paper from publishing. Ultimately, in September 2003, the paper was forced to close down 4.5 years after it started publishing.

Cartoons and comic strips are generally seen as a marginal genre within newspapers. I consider a cartoon an image in a singular frame with no narrative. By contrast, a comic strip comprises a sequence of images which tell a particular story. Governments do not consider these to be of any importance. They assume that readers are more influenced by news articles. In Zimbabwe, numerous journalists from *The Daily News* have been arrested but cartoonists have generally been left alone. The indirect, ambiguous and polysemic character of comic strips and cartoons makes them less explicit in their meaning and therefore particularly suitable as forms of political critique. Cartoons and comic strips can be read and

interpreted in various ways which makes it more difficult and less straightforward for governments to target them with legal measures. In spite of government disregard, cartoons and comic strips are very popular with newspaper readers in Zimbabwe. Readers often turn to the cartoon section before reading other parts of the newspaper. Cartoons are stuck to walls in homes, internet cafes, hair salons and copy shops, and they often provoke conversations among people.

Although in Zimbabwe comic strips in newspapers generally used to deal with social issues, such as infidelity, relationships, gender, they gradually came to address more political topics such as the economic crisis with which Zimbabweans were increasingly confronted. The new generation of comic strips in *The Daily News* started to focus on the hours and hours that Zimbabweans had to spend in queues in order to obtain basic commodities, the way in which watching television programmes on the monopoly state broadcaster Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation became a very boring exercise when messages praising and commending the regime were repeated constantly.

In *The Daily News*, cartoons were positioned on a page which also included the paper's editorial, opinion pieces and preceding a page with Letters to the Editor. On the other hand, comic strips were placed towards the end of the paper. Initially, *The Daily News* had three comic strips but from March 2002, the paper carried four: C*hikwama* by Tony Namate, *Nyati* by Watson Mukutirwa, *Samson* by Noah Pomo and *City Life* by Boyd Maliki (see Figure 9.1).

These cartoons are targeting an educated, literate audience, e.g. office workers, rural teachers, secretaries, civil servants. Although they combine images with text in English, they are in fact not that visual, in the sense that the images do not always tell a story on their own. The strips mainly represent talk or dialogues between people, and involve them doing little other activities. Perhaps only City Life sometimes expresses something else than talk. I would therefore argue that the text is crucial to these comic strips and the image is secondary. This means that one needs to be literate (in English) in order to understand these cartoons.

The comic strip Chikwama

The focus in this paper is on the comic strip Chikwama which appeared at the top of the comic page in *The Daily News*. Chikwama is drawn by Tony Namate, who is currently probably the most well-known cartoonist in Zimbabwe, and who has received several awards for his work. Chikwama is a strip about an "ordinary" Zimbabwean man struggling with all the economic and political changes around him. The word Chikwama has several meanings in Zimbabwe's major local

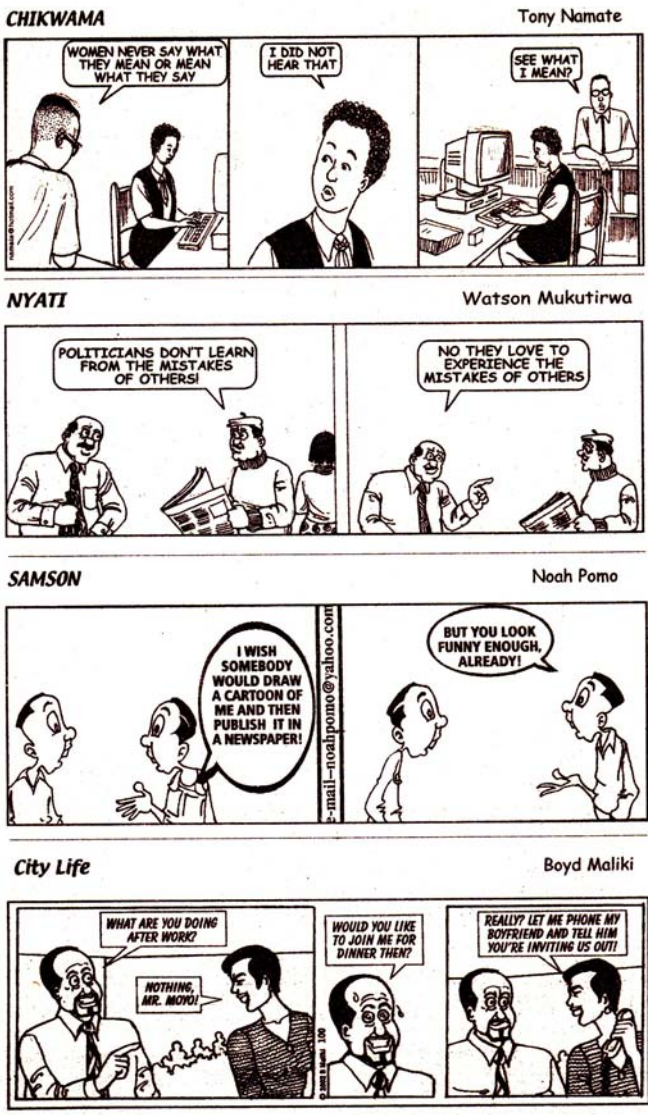

Figure 9.1 Comics by T. Namate, W. Mukutirwa, N. Pomo and B. Maliki
From: *The Daily News*, 22 July 2002, p. 29.

language Shona. It literally means wallet or purse, an object that is probably no longer very useful in Zimbabwe because of the hyperinflation. The stacks and stacks of notes that Zimbabweans carry around as a result of high inflation need to be kept in something that is bigger than a wallet, a small bag perhaps. The word Chikwama also refers more generally to money in the urban slang that is spoken in the capital Harare. Furthermore, it can also in an informal sense mean someone who is difficult to shrug off, someone who always sticks with you, wherever you go.

In the strip in *The Daily News*, we see Chikwama, or Chiki as he is known to his friends, socializing with a variety of people, frequenting beer halls, hanging out drinking and joking with his friends. Chikwama is positioned as not a

particularly wealthy man. For example, in the following strip we see Chikwama talking to his more upper-class auntie (Figure 9.2):

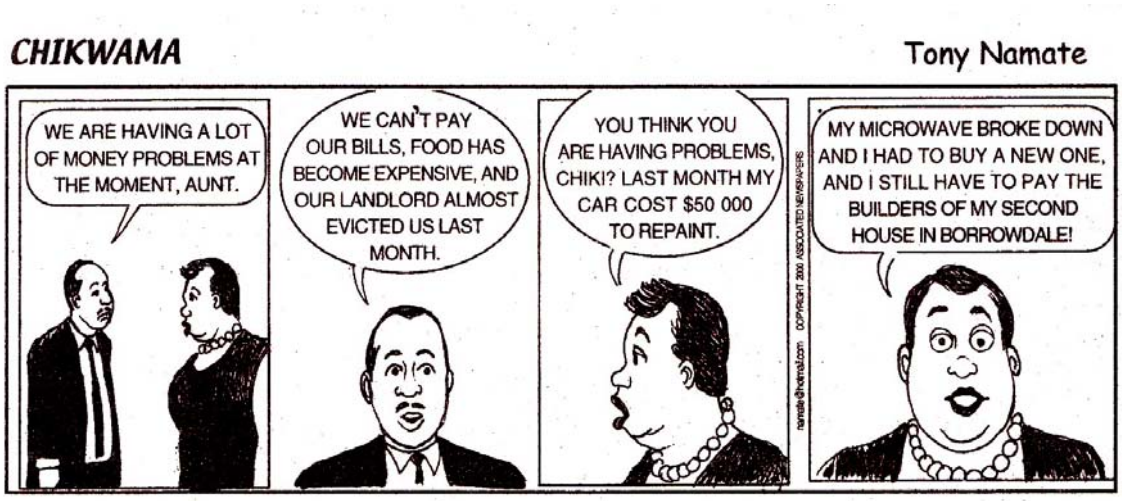

Figure 9.2 Chikwama and his aunt
From: T*he Daily News*, 18 November 2001, p. 22.

Chikwama's auntie complains about the problems that are affecting her as an upper class Zimbabwean woman. She has to repaint her car, buy a new microwave and on top of that, she needs to pay off the mortgage of her second house in Borrowdale, which is an affluent suburb in Harare where a lot of cabinet ministers live. As reader, our sympathy is drawn to Chikwama who is struggling to pay his bills. Cartoonist Namate expects the reader to go through similar problems as Chikwama and addresses through Chikwama the struggles Zimbabweans go through on a daily basis.

Another issue that Chikwama and his friends are struggling with are the food shortages. They are trying hard to find food in the shops, spending hours and hours queuing, which again means we are mainly dealing with urbanites here, not people who are growing their food themselves, as in the rural areas. The following comic (Figure 9.3) shows Chikwama talking to his future wife about *lobola* (bride price):

Whereas *lobola* these days is normally paid in cash, Chikwama is shocked to hear that his future in-laws are demanding payment in maize-meal! How is he going to take care of that? In this instance, maize becomes even more precious than money. One can have money, but that does not mean that one can buy maize. Maize therefore becomes an extremely valuable commodity that can almost replace money as a means of exchange.

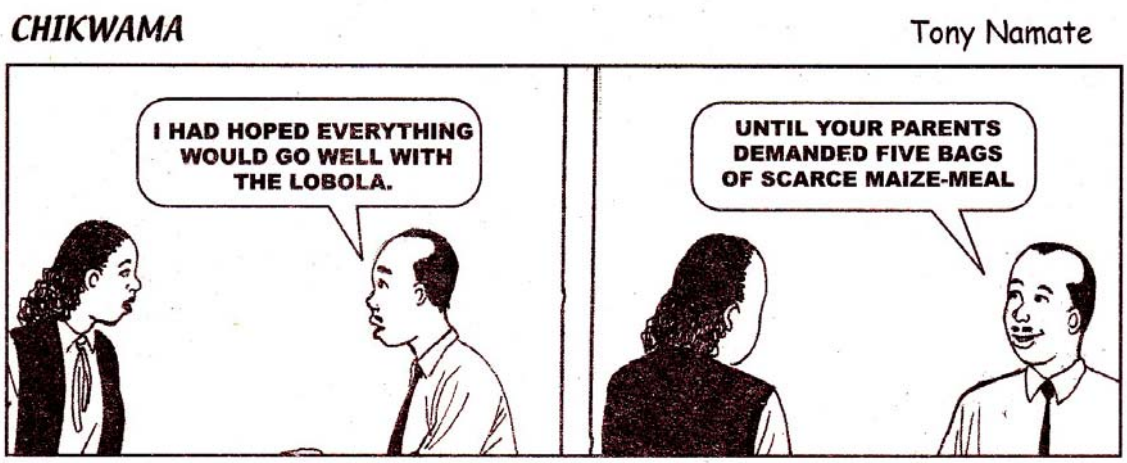

Figure 9.3 Marriage and *lobola*
From: T*he Daily News*, 12 April 2002, p. 30.

In another strip we see one of Chiki's friends who has found a solution to the food shortages: He has started to attend funerals in order to get a decent meal (see Figure 9.4). Funerals in Zimbabwe are generally accompanied with large quantities of food, sadza and meat. This strip shows how these sad occasions suddenly became events to indulge in.

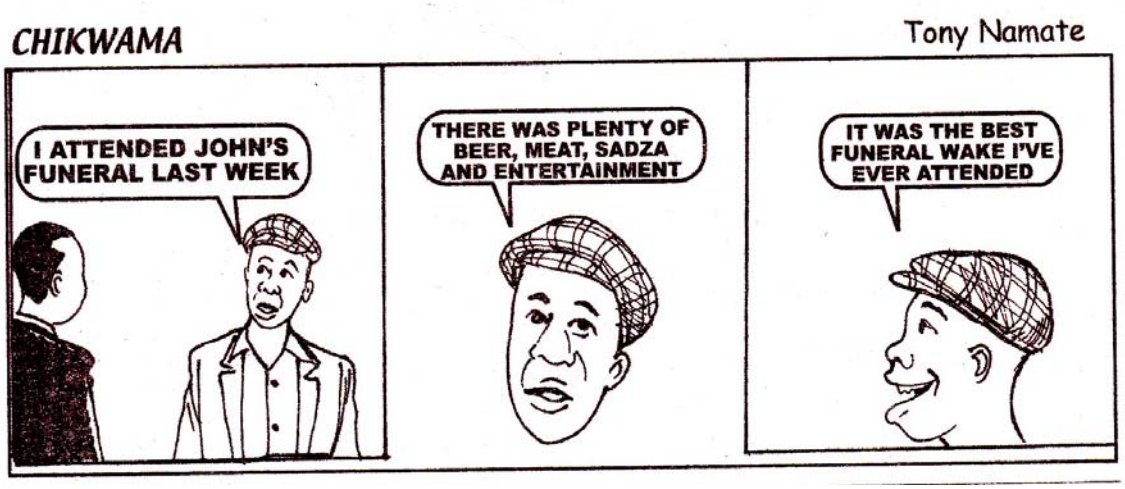

Figure 9.4 Assessing a funeral
From: T*he Daily News*, 29 May 2002, p. 29.

In the examples I have shown we see how Chiki and his friends are making attempts to cope with the deteriorating economic and social conditions in Zimbabwe but we do not learn why the situation has changed, we do not get to know the cause of the problems. There is no agent, there are victims. However, they are

not trapped in their victimhood, they have found creative ways to deal with the situation, and have therefore been attributed agency again.

The same holds for the changing political situation. The emergence of the Movement for Democratic Change on the Zimbabwean political scene in 1999 came to pose a serious threat to the ruling party ZANU PF. Political violence against the opposition became common, especially in the run-up to parliamentary and presidential elections. The following strip (Figure 9.5) shows how Chiki has been dealing with these political tensions:

Figure 9.5 Two membership cards
From: T*he Daily News*, 15 November 2001, p. 26.

Chikwama has bought not only a MDC card but also a ZANU PF card in case of emergencies. Namate here suggests that the implied reader of the strip is probably more sympathetic to the MDC than to ZANU PF. It is self-evident that Chiki would have a MDC card but perhaps at first sight not so clear why he would also have a ZANU PF card. However, he just wishes to protect himself in case he would come across representatives of the ruling party who would ask him for his card.

This ambivalence between on the one hand resisting the regime but at the same time participating in its rituals in order to survive, is perhaps what Mbembe (2001: 110, 128) would refer to as "the intimacy of tyranny" which according to him inscribes "the dominant and the dominated within the same episteme". It shows how the ruled are unable to resist and therefore are forced to join in the rituals of the state. Ultimately though, they are fooling the state by pretending to be ruling party supporters. But when it comes to voting day, they will express their true vote which will be for the opposition party. A similar situation is shown in the following strip (Figure 9.6).

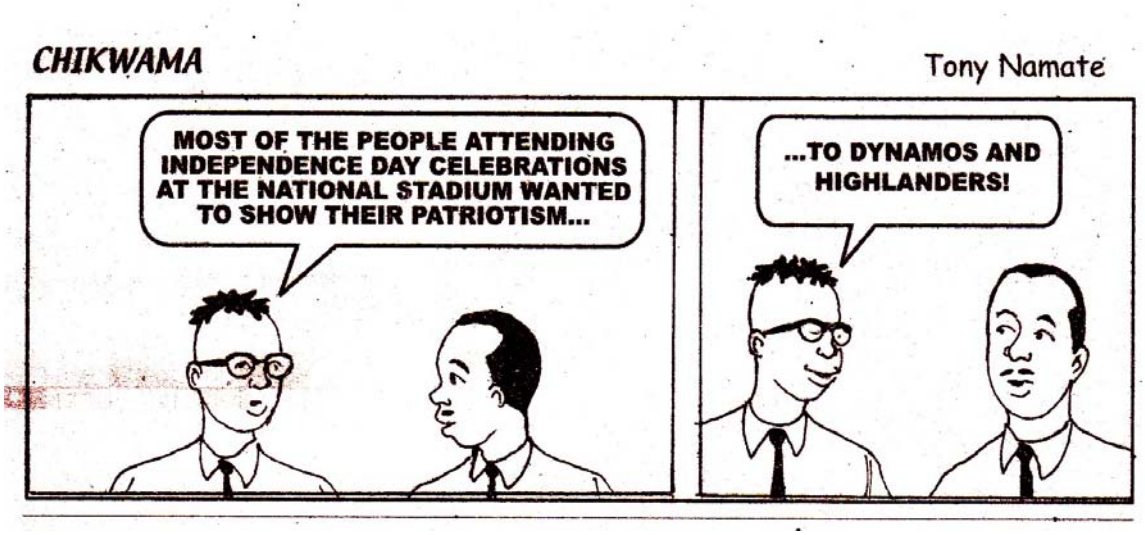

Figure 9.6 Independence day celebrations
From: T*he Daily News*, 2 May 2002, p. 27.

We see Chikwama's friend talking about the annual Independence celebrations, always held on 18 April in Rufaro Stadium in Mbare which is one of the oldest high-density suburbs in Harare. Chikwama's friend suggests that most people attending are not really doing so because they want to show their patriotism to the nation. As a result of the crisis in Zimbabwe, people are no longer interested to celebrate their Independence. Some may even argue the country needs a second liberation struggle. However, the Independence celebrations are always followed by a soccer match between Zimbabwe's most popular clubs, in this case the Dynamos from Harare and Highlanders from Bulawayo. There is a catch though, in order to attend the match, people are required to be in the stadium in the morning which means they are forced to attend the official Independence celebrations as well. No one will be admitted to the stadium after the start of the Independence celebrations. Entertainment therefore comes at a price. However, at a time when Zimbabweans are deprived of leisure options, it is a price Chikwama and his friends are willing to pay.

Conclusion

These examples show how comic strips have presented a powerful commentary upon the suffering of "ordinary" Zimbabweans. Without clearly naming the agent that caused Zimbabweans' deprivation, cartoonists left it to their audiences to interpret the reasons for their misery. Comic strips were what Spitulnik (2002: 179) calls "diffused dialogues, not direct dialogues, with the state".

At a time when people's everyday lives dramatically changed as a result of the economic and political crisis in the country, comic strips gave expression to the various ways in which these changes were "worked out" by Zimbabweans.

Comic strips provide alternative representations of ways in which Zimbabweans have dealt with their rulers to discourses in the mainstream media and some academic analyses. Comic strips show the complexity of relations between rulers and ruled in the postcolony. Their relation is never simply a dichotomy between resistance and passivity, autonomy and subjection. In order to survive in the postcolony, the ruled connive with the rulers, participate in their rituals but at the same time toy with their power and control in what Mbembe (2001) calls "the intimacy of tyranny".

Secondly, the examples which I have given have also demonstrated how Zimbabwe's lively informal and verbal culture in which jokes, gossip and rumour play important roles can be integrated into the perhaps more formal and written form of the comic strip. The way in which Chikwama engages, participates and listens to pavement radio makes this particular strip very much part of everyday talk in Zimbabwe. "Pavement radio" both feeds into comic strips and can also result into more talk when readers start discussing the comic strip they have seen in the newspapers.

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10

A tale of two wars: The militarization of Dinka and Nuer indentities in South Sudan[1]

Naglaa Elhag

Introduction

The war in Southern Sudan was complicated and prolonged, and has deep roots in the pre-state past. It is not the subject of this paper to trace the root causes of the conflict in Sudan. I will rather focus on a certain local conflict that existed (and may still exist) between the Dinka and the Nuer, the two largest peoples in Southern Sudan. Attention will be paid to the political elements that have contributed to the internal fighting that took place between the Dinka and the Nuer and that left behind a high level of tension and animosity, present under the surface until today. The question is why the Dinka and Nuer came into such massive conflict during the North-South war. The answer is that the "South" had always been divided - although Sudan is now witnessing an era which may bring peace and stability to the region. Coupled with good prospects for long-range investments and sustainable development, the peace situation may help the people of South Sudan to solve their problems: Being economically crippled, military devastated and politically alienated. Second, the currently developing debate about peace between the North and the South tends to overlook that the conflict in Sudan is not only between the North and the South as such, but

[1] My grateful thanks go to the Editors of this volume for their detailed comments and suggestions on an earlier draft of this chapter.

includes additionally various local conflicts with tribal militias that have taken deep roots in Sudan.

Because Nuer and Dinka are the two largest groups in South Sudan, peace in South Sudan is impossible if these two peoples continue fighting each other. Additionally, the people of Sudan may need ages to solve the problems that have been an outcome of ethnic tensions and tribal militias. It needs a strong commitment from the leaders and the local people themselves to sustain a long-term peace. Here I give a brief background analysis of the political elements that contributed to the split and to the fighting among the leaders of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA – with the Sudan People's Liberation Movement [SPLM] as its political wing), notably in 1991, at which point the result was a deep militarization of Dinka and Nuer societies and the politicization of their local ethnic identities. This paper is guided by the following questions:

- Why has a movement that is raising the slogans of unity and equality, equal rights and representation been questioned even by its close members and high rank leaders?
- How have SPLM leaders enhanced the tension that existed between the Nuer and Dinka peoples for their own personal benefits?
- What are the elements and factors that connected Dinka and Nuer and how can these elements be enhanced?
- Finally, what can be done to restore a real long-term peace between the two peoples and their civilian followers?

Background to the conflict in South Sudan

Context of conflict (I) – war

The political history of what is now called Sudan is rather complex. One of the most important events of recent history took place in 1982, when the Government of Sudan declared to apply *shari'a* law all over the country, which gave birth to the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement. The birth of the movement was a big shift in the policy of the struggle in South Sudan, as it turned from separation to liberation, hence characterizing the SPLM as a national liberation movement. Since that date the leader of the movement, Dr. John Garang - who ethnically belonged to the Dinka, the most numerous people in South Sudan - had been fighting the government of Sudan and managed to liberate to some extent several areas within South Sudan. Although all political leaders of the SPLM have raised slogans of unity, liberation and human rights, the reality, nevertheless, seems to be different.

The internal fighting that followed the Nasir-faction military coup in August 1991 by one of its political and military leaders, Dr. Riek Machar – who ethnically belongs to the Nuer people, the second largest in South Sudan – and other military officers has shown how the SPLM was internally devastated by the contradictions between its leaders. The main demand articulated by the Nasir

leaders was a need for a radical democratic reform. But the coup failed, as it proved to have hidden personal agendas that differed from the official declarations. These hidden agendas were entertained by the leaders of the Nasir faction. The split of the SPLM and the period that followed the Nasir declaration were characterized by tension and tribal animosity as a consequence of a number of negative events, among them the invasion of the Nasir leaders of areas like Bor, which is mainly inhabited by the Dinka. The invasion of Bor and Kongor areas caused huge destruction and a humanitarian crisis that affected mainly the civilian population. Apart from the Nuer, many civilians from other tribes also joined the Nasir faction, because they simply did not want SPLM and its leaders anymore, viewing it as a Dinka movement.

The Nasir faction, however, has proved to be a political and military disaster. The issue of the internal split among the SPLM political leaders had reached the state of being so personal that both leaders started using their ethnic affiliation as a card in their hands. Here I would like to quote one of the military officers who served both sides of the movement at that time, arguing about the struggle that followed the Nasir declaration:

> … this struggle, unfortunately, did not attain the ideological and political height that would have furthered the aims of the revolution, thus ensuring a fundamental impact on the political and military situation in the movement. It got frozen at the level of personal hackling, bickering and petty squabbles, leading to desertions and defections of the combatants to form their own splinter groups within or without military presence on the ground in South Sudan. (Nyaba 1997: 7)

Instead of working out the differences and solving the internal fighting among themselves, leaders of the SPLM - be it the mainstream or the Nasir faction – committed a grave mistake by ignoring their own people and by neglecting all those who did not take part in that split by supporting neither the mainstream nor the Nasir faction. Moreover, political and military leaders turned their guns against each other's entire civil populations. By such attitudes, leaders from both factions did not only enhance the oppression and the brutality that followed their split, but also created a good chance for the National Islamic government of Sudan in Khartoum to use this opportunity for its own benefit. The argument of some government members was: "Let the southerners fight each other and we will make peace with whomever remains."[2]

The main victims of the internal fighting were the unarmed civilians, as soldiers from both sides committed crimes against them, including murder, rape, torture, and other types of atrocities. Given their low level of political awareness and education, civilians found themselves trapped between what they called later a Dinka movement headed by Dr. Garang and a Nuer faction led by Dr. Riek

[2] An argument made by Dr. G.S. Eldeen, in a public speech in Khartoum in 1996 during the celebration of the Islamic revolution in Sudan.

Machar. All these events contributed to and enhanced various "tribal" conflicts in South Sudan, but mainly between the Dinka and the Nuer, which resulted in a high rate of killing, looting, abduction of women and children, and the burning of houses and villages (Jok & Hutchinson 1999).

On the one hand Riek Machar wanted to lead the SPLM in order to transform the unified Nuer into a powerful force that could dominate the whole of South Sudan, and on the other hand John Garang launched a war and continued with his authoritarian way of leadership, which made most of the civilians consider the SPLM a Dinka movement. Machar and his people played a very harsh game, using the tactic of blackmailing and ethnic loyalty. Officers from the Nasir faction claimed that they would get support against Garang either peacefully or by force, and consequently a state of terror and lawlessness in South Sudan began. Murder and executions of Dinka by Nuer militias took place, while the only justification for the killings was a refusal to follow the faction and its slogans. All Dinka areas bordering Nuer land were raided, people were killed, cattle were stolen, and women and children were abducted.

Machar and some of his military officers continued to play the card of ethnic loyalty. One of the main tactics that the leaders of the Nasir faction followed was to equip all its Nuer followers with heavy arms in order to invade Dinka areas. In order to gain legitimacy for this fight, Machar managed to convince the Nuer people on his side that there were in fact "two types of wars". As argued by Machar (see Hutchinson 2001: 314-16), the homicides within a "government war" were largely devoid of the social and political risks associated with deaths generated by a more localized "homeland war". One of the arguments adopted by Machar here was that a death that took place within a government war would mainly be personal and final, and that there would be no way of claiming blood money, as is the case in a homeland war, where the families of the dead usually claim compensation. Moreover, Machar emphasized that any Nuer fighter should not claim or shoulder responsibility for any death that occurred within their fight against the SPLM-Mainstream, and hence that no personal responsibility should be claimed. With this argument, his intention was to destroy any mediation structures that might stand between him and his followers and that still existed in the Nuer community.

Machar also managed to manipulate the Nuer people by claiming that he was destined to lead the people of South Sudan by misusing an old traditional belief about their prophet Ngundeng, who had prophesied that a leader of South Sudan would come from the descendants of Teny-Dhurgon. Continuing in manipulating the Nuer people and their legacy of the prophet Wurnyang, Machar managed to stage an attack with the aim of capturing the town of Malakal. As a result, many civilians fled their homes and had sought refuge in the town of Waat, where

severe starvation and famine took place. Many Nuer fighters joined the Nasir faction not because they believed in its declarations, but simply because they were Nuer. For instance, the earlier war of the Anya-nya (before 1972) took also place on a Nuer-Dinka base.

During the Nasir coup period, many Nuer officers in Equatoria escaped to Upper Nile, not for the sake of the faction and its leader, but because they were Nuer. For them, fighting against the SPLM meant fighting against the Dinka, and hence restoring the domination that had been promised by the leaders of the Nasir faction. Machar always sustained the argument that he was the leader of the united South Sudan, and he expected by playing the ethnicity tune he would be on top of the leadership of the Nuer. Anyone who opposed him or who constituted a threat to this view was killed. Riek Machar and his political followers within the Nasir faction justified these deeds of killing, raping and stealing of animal wealth to their people by arguing that Nuer people were only recovering their own animal wealth, which had been stolen by the Dinka before, and furthermore that they were ensuring their dominance over the Dinka who had always taken the lead over the Nuer people. Moreover, followers of the Nasir faction also practiced violations of daily norms in the region by denying certain population groups within their areas – such as the Uduk – access to any relief supplies, a fact that caused UN and other relief organizations to suspend their operations in the region.

On the other hand, Garang and his followers within the SPLM mainstream raided several Nuer areas in Western Upper Nile. These raids were done with very modern weapons supplied by political and military sources from outside. Additionally, Dinka people attacked Nuer land at night as a reaction to the actions of the Nasir faction, and that also resulted in the burning of villages and houses, rape, killing and murders. Furthermore, the counteroffensive by Garang's forces yielded widespread killings of innocent populations, for instance in Baliet village, where they committed brutal crimes against humanity by burning Toposa villages and killing hundreds of civilians, causing a disaster that resulted in high numbers of displaced people. Garang, who was supposed to act as an open-minded leader for all Southern Sudanese in their struggle for liberation, acted in a very dictatorial, violent way and many Southerners portrayed him as intolerant of any disagreement, trying to keep all power concentrated in his own hands. Under his command, many of the intellectuals and politicians in the South were marginalized as well.

Disagreements and different opinions in any political or military institution may be healthy and may bring reform and changes, if they are addressed in a constructive manner. In the case of the SPLM, however, disputes among its leaders were transformed into a serious armed conflict and into internal fighting

among military officers, which then spilled over to innocent civilians. As has been argued by many Southerners in Sudan and mainly by former officers of the SPLM, the SPLM split and the fighting that followed played havoc with the lives of the civilian populations and the future of the Southern Sudanese struggle.

Context of conflict (II) – linkages

Looking critically to the above-mentioned historical events, one could easily conclude that the relationship between the Nuer and the Dinka had always been characterized by hostility, tension and fighting. To some extent this is indeed it is usually described. Looking at the reports that have been published during the violent conflict between the two peoples, one could get the impression that the mass media played a major role in portraying the picture of constant mutual hostility. However, there has always been another side of the story: A close examination of the relationship between Dinka and Nuer reveals a different pattern of interaction that long existed between the two. During the fights that took place between them and among each group, there have always been elements that interconnected people. Not all Dinka were fighting against the Nuer, and the same applies to the Nuer people. There were many people within each group living their normal lives, trying to do what they used to do every day: Securing their livelihood, feeding their families, trading, exchanging, and finding their way out of the conflict via local initiatives.

In the following part, I would like to analyze some of the elements that are connecting both groups before and after the eruption of the fighting. Some people argue that Dinka and Nuer are "different people" having "different ways of life" – and that is how both leaders, Garang and Machar, managed to instigate a conflict between them by making use of their different ethnic identities.

Both groups lived together for centuries. There were various elements that contributed to strengthening the relationship between them, such as *intermarriage*, which was one of the factors that helped in extending the Nuer kinship ties into their Dinka neighbours communities. This system of intermarriage has drawn both groups together and was one of the driving forces into bringing both groups together. One could argue, for instance, that ties through intermarriage helped the Nuer communities in establishing closer relations with the Dinka than with related but more remote *other* Nuer. Intermarriages between the two groups also inhibited the usual raiding that took place between western Nuer and Dinka.

Additionally, such ties brought families together and helped them in communicating with each other during times of fighting. Some of them even helped in mitigating and ending the hostilities and the tensions between the two groups. Furthermore, Nuer and Dinka also share a considerable common vocabulary within their native languages. Both groups share the same high value and affec-

tion for children from such intermarriage ties, and in some cases such children have played a connecting element between the two groups, as they were free to move from one group to the other without being part of the existing tensions. It has been argued by some researchers in this respect that the Nuer son of a Dinka mother would refrain from participating in any fighting that occurred between the two communities:

> … intermarriage and the creation of maternal relatives inhibits fighting, and this is recognized by modern Western Dinka as the most effective way of ending a feud (Johnson 1982: 186).

Apart from intermarriage ties, there were some elements that led to the *absorption/assimilation* of some members of each group into one another. For instance, in the case of captives from wars by Nuer people, children and women were usually taken into individual Nuer families, with the women getting married to Nuer men and the children being adopted into Nuer families. Such ties also enhanced the communication among the two groups and had made it difficult for Dinka people to raid those communities. These Dinka women and children, who were living in a Nuer community, were free to travel between Nuerland – where they lived – and their own Dinka communities, a fact that brought both groups closer to each other. Furthermore, there were certain religious beliefs and symbols shared by the two communities. In both communities, religious/ritual leaders were very much respected and played a major role in bringing people together, making use of the peaceful era that followed any tension. One of those leaders was Ngundeng Bong, who was considered a prophet among the Nuer (Johnson 1982: 189). This prophet worked to bring both groups together and he tried to maintain peace and harmony among the Nuer, and between the Nuer and the Dinka. He prohibited the Nuer from raiding the Dinka, and he even created songs calling for peace, urging the Nuer to accept and to receive the Dinka. The community that was served by the prophet Ngundeng was a mixed community of both Dinka and Nuer. Ngundeng built a shrine to serve as a religious centre for both communities, considered as a holy place that symbolized their beliefs and bringing them together in order to share religious services. Another prophet was Deng Lakka, who also tried to bring the two groups together. Deng Lakka managed to establish peace between the two groups through peace-making occasions and ceremonies.

Analyzing the conflict and the tensions that existed between the two largest ethnic groups in South Sudan and that are likely to erupt again at some point given the present circumstances of the imposed peace proposals by the leaders, one cannot deny the existence of major external elements that enhanced the existing divisions between the two groups. One of these external elements was the work of international relief and humanitarian organizations. Most of the

international humanitarian and relief organizations that worked and that are still working in South Sudan unwittingly or not played a big role in enhancing the divisions between the Nuer and Dinka. Unfortunately, these organizations were misused by the warring parties in South Sudan for their own personal benefits. Examples are numerous, and I will try to limit myself by citing only those with direct effects.

Several organizations allowed themselves to be used as a cover and as messengers of a movement or of leaders. Means of relief transportation and the staff that was allowed to travel in and out of the region were trapped in becoming the "mailbox" for the political and military commanders. Information flow in certain areas would not have been possible without the relief planes and their staff. The marriage of Machar to a British relief worker, for instance (see Scroggins 2002) had helped him a lot in getting access to the relief community and hence access to information. South Sudan had been an open ground for competition among humanitarian and relief organizations. In South Sudan, dozens of international humanitarian organizations were operating, and each one of them was trying to gain the front seat, becoming trapped in the local dilemma and allowing themselves to be manipulated by the warring parties. To some extent, this could also be attributed to the lack of proper analysis of the conflict in South Sudan:

> Humanitarian and relief agencies in South Sudan are just doing their own program and they do not care about the local complexities.[3]

Moreover, cases have been cited where warring parties in South Sudan were easily managing to exploit and divert humanitarian resources. In one example the leaders of the Nasir faction managed to misuse relief agencies and their resources to help them in creating a forward garrison in Yuai to act as a buffer zone for their principal garrison in Waat.

It has been obvious from historical facts that Southern Sudanese civilians – be it Dinka or Nuer – were trapped in highly ethnicized military tensions, mainly due to the leadership struggle within the liberation movement. However, not all Dinka and neither all Nuer participated in the violence that erupted; some of them even refrained from any participation and started talking about the "*evils that are coming to destroy them*".[4]

Some people from the two groups argued that there had always been raids between them as part of their life, but never to the extent of what happened in 1991 and the following years. Dinka people remembered resource competition and how the different interests in the two communities had created tension and

[3] An argument by Mr. J. Abugo, (then) director of the Institute for the Promotion of Civil Society, Yei County, South Sudan. Two interviews, one in Rubeke, South Sudan, 20 February 2002, and one in Nairobi, Kenya, 17 October 2004.

[4] An argument that has been made by an anonymous Nuer intellectual during an informal meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, at the NSSC office, 20 January 2003.

disturbed their rhythms of life. But Dinka and Nuer had always lived close to each other, and within their traditions there had been no real major political or social differences. Realizing these facts, many Nuer and Dinka chiefs argued that what had happened after the failure of the Nasir faction was not part of their culture and was not the usual way the Dinka and Nuer had raided each other, as politicians in the South tried to make it look like.

Many interviews were done by the author with different civilians from the two groups, including chiefs, local administrators, and intellectuals, and most of the people interviewed confirmed that what had happened between the two groups had nothing to do with the way things used to be handled in the past. For example, some of the interviews were done with elders from the Dinka community, who argued that when raiding had taken place between them and the Nuer people, traditionally no-one thought of directly harming the women or the children. Raiders had usually cared most about livestock, and the same when Nuer had raided the Dinka areas. Both Dinka and Nuer believe that what had happened between them – and what might again happen in the future – was primarily a product of personal ambitions by the leaders of the factions within the SPLM, which then had led to the split in 1991.

As noted, historically both groups have common lifestyles; both are pastoralists and hence share the same values regarding their animals and for potential development activities addressing issues related to animal husbandry. As a result, both Dinka and Nuer are in need of a reliable supply of water, improvement of pastures, and of opportunities for health treatment and vaccination for their animals. Due to these similarities, the two ethnic groups understand each other's way of thinking perfectly, which has helped in connecting them in different ways. As has also been argued by Prendergast (1996b), the two groups had raided each other's livestock, had traded grain and ivory, and had intermarried and expanded kinship networks, and that is exactly what local people from both groups are still considering and believing in, and they are blaming the politicians for misusing them and disturbing their traditional way of life. Moreover, people from both sides are arguing that there is nothing in their heart such as hatred or any other negative feelings, but what had happened between them had been an outcome of external forces and pressure from their own political leaders. In addition, intellectuals from both sides are convinced that they have been misused and misled by their leaders and that their capacities have been undermined, not taken serious, and on many occasions completely rejected.

All this does not imply, however, that there were no supporters of what had happened between the two groups. Accusations and apportioning blame are now recurring features in the relationship between the two groups. For instance, the Nuer are blamed by the Dinka and other groups for "betraying the case of South

Sudan" as a result of their collaboration with the government, "*the enemy*". The Dinka themselves are perceived by Nuer as arrogant and trying to dominate the whole South Sudan. With all these internal dilemmas between the two groups, however, desires and prospects for peace were still taken seriously, and many local peace initiatives emerged, especially the peace and reconciliation efforts led by the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC).

Peace and reconciliation

Local peace initiatives

Based on their feeling that they had been trapped in the war dilemma and that their being tired of the fighting, traditional leaders from both groups took the initiative of communicating with some peace and church institutions and requested them to take a role in facilitating their peace initiatives. The New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC) was among the leading peace agencies which followed the initiative to facilitate peace talks between the two groups. The initiative within NSCC started in 1997, when the NSCC met with the SPLM in order to be given confirmation of its role as peace maker for South Sudan (NSCC 1998).[5]

In June 1998, thirty-five Dinka and Nuer border chiefs and church leaders from both the west and the east sides of the Nile River met in Lokichoggio, Kenya, under the facilitation of the New Sudan Council of Churches. They considered ways to bring peace and reconciliation to their peoples. They met for nine days to share the stories of the pain and suffering they had inflicted on one another for seven years. After coming to a consensus that they must help their people find a way to make peace, the chiefs and church leaders began planning for major Dinka-Nuer peace conferences. The Lokichoggio conference ended with the signing of the Nuer-Dinka Loki Accord. The West Bank conference was established as the next major step in the process.

NSCC established an organizing team and hired short-term staff to focus exclusively on the Dinka-Nuer peace process. During the following eight months the team included field mobilizers and organizers, women, chiefs, liaisons from the SPLM and the United Democratic Salvation Front (UDSF), intellectuals from the Sudanese Diaspora, and a consultant peacemaking facilitator.

The Dinka-Nuer West Bank Peace and Reconciliation Conference held in Bahr el Ghazal in Southern Sudan in 1999 resulted in a bold commitment for peace that could have national implications. The Conference yielded a peace agreement called the Wunlit Dinka-Nuer Covenant. More than 300 Dinka and

[5] Information about this process and about the involvement of NSCC has been gained during an interview with NSCC staff in Nairobi, Kenya, among others Dr. H.L. Ruun, (then) Executive Secretary of NSCC, 20 October 2001, and Mr. E. Lowilla, (then) Peace Desk Officer, 7 February 2003.

Nuer chiefs, community and church leaders, women and youth signed the Covenant and its resolutions. It boldly promised an end to seven-and-a-half years of conflict between the Dinka and Nuer people on the West Bank of the Nile and declared a permanent ceasefire with immediate effect. Amnesty was to be granted for offences prior to 1 January 1999, freedom of movement across the lines of conflict was affirmed, and resolutions with far-reaching effects were adopted in a consensus style of decision-making. Traditional spiritual leaders of both peoples called for an end to the conflict and Christian church leaders conducted daily prayers, while and the final Covenant was sealed both in Christian worship and in traditional sacrifices and festivities.

Following that meeting in Wunlit, another reconciliation meeting was organized in Akobo, Upper Nile, in August 1999, as part of the East Bank peace initiatives. Peace talks and meetings continued to be held, with some taking place in Yirol and in Waat.

During these meetings and the talks that followed, people from both groups were able to talk freely and to express their concerns. In addition, local people represented by their traditional leaders made it clear that they were not going to be used as pawns again in the internal South-South conflict. They also argued that as ordinary people they had to cope with the conflict and the resulting miserable situation within which they were living, including lack of education and health facilities, famine, malnutrition, insecurity and marginalization, while the real warlords had been enjoying access to all facilities when residing in Khartoum, Nairobi or other cities. Some people (not only the leaders) still refused to shoulder responsibility of what had happened, saying that the fights and tensions between the two peoples and factions were not of their own volition but had been imposed on them. Andrew Kuac Mayol, the commissioner of Tonj County, announced:

> … the Nuer and Dinka are one people given their social and cultural backgrounds, but in the course of time we have been divided by the enemies of the people to fight ourselves. However, it is okay because all of us are aware that sons quarrel with their father, and daughters with their mothers, but there comes a time when family sits together to resolve their differences …[6]

Although the above-mentioned argument seems to be valid from a local point of view, nevertheless it is demonstrating a feeling of powerlessness among the local people. By arguing that "it was our enemies who pushed us to engage in fighting among ourselves", local people may get the implicit message that they would not need to shoulder responsibility of what had happened to them and

[6] Part of the speech delivered by A.K. Mayol, Commissioner of Tonj County during the opening day of the Wunlit Dinka-Nuer conference, 1999.

what might happen in the future, contradicting what NSCC and some traditional chiefs were trying to articulate:

> We are all responsible for what happens among us. And we must all together accept the responsibility and work toward a solution.[7]

Another important point worth mentioning is the language used during the peace talks between the two groups. People tended to link themselves to the political party or to the military group to which they belonged, rather than addressing the gathering as being a "Southerner" and a child of both peoples. One example has been Joseph Juac Kon, the Commissioner of Ler, who started his speech by putting emphasis of being the person responsible in the government of Riek Machar, thus sending the message that there are two governments in the South. This emphasis contradicted the main goal of the mentioned peace talks. Nevertheless, most of the peace talks between the two groups ended with one agreement and one conclusion, demonstrating that historically, Nuer and Dinka have been sharing one bond and that many Nuer chiefs were originally Dinka.

Implications and observations of the local Sudanese peace initiatives

To sum up the intervention by the NSCC and its implications, one could come to the following conclusion. The primary goal of the intervention by NSCC was to reconcile the Dinka and the Nuer on the West Bank of the Nile. From my point of view, reconciliation as such could not be achieved by organizing a three-day conference, but rather by being connected and being tied to a real and serious development intervention that carries reconciliation as one of its main objectives. Otherwise, the initiative might die quickly – and this was practically the case in South Sudan. To some extent, NSCC and other peace agencies involved in this process managed to bring people together – like in the Wunlit conference and again in the Upper Nile Reconciliation conference, and finally in the Liliir conference, which has become officially known as the "people-to-people peace and reconciliation conference".

Among the local people themselves, it was obvious that the initiatives of NSCC to have a people-to-people dialogue had very positive results on community relations. The key evidence of that were the ceasing of the clashes and the tendency of the local people to overcome their previous tensions. Moreover, SPLM could not longer deny the vital role that NSCC was playing in the area of reconciliation, despite the problems raised by these initiatives. Additionally, all abducted children and women returned to their original families upon ending of these talks.

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[7] Part of the speech of Dr. H. Ruun, the (then) Executive Secretary of the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC).

The fighting and tensions that occurred among the people in South Sudan created a big economic gap and hindered the economic activities and exchanges. As a result, local markets which had been one of the main elements connecting people together through trading and other commercial interactions, had collapsed. The resumption of economic activities between the two groups was achieved as an immediate effect of the newly gained political stability.

Based on the given practical evidence, NSCC and other agencies involved could claim the success of the efforts they undertook to facilitate the people-to-people peace talks. They met most of the anticipated conditions for success, and without any reservation, the intervention within the local community was (and is) the backbone for any sustainable peace in South Sudan, and hence in Sudan as a whole. Nevertheless, there are some weak points within that intervention which should be overcome in future peace initiatives. For instance, it would be important that such peace initiatives and dialogues on the local community level continue as a request by the people involved to ensure the *sustainability* of such initiatives. Compared to that, the current debate about the peace process in Sudan is taking the shape of being imposed on the local people in Sudan by neglecting the local conflicts existing in the South and in other regions of Sudan. Moreover, all people involved in the current peace debate are the same political and military leaders who played an effective role in instigating many conflicts within Sudan and still continue to do so. Additionally, there seems to be a real danger facing the fate of the peace in Sudan, as the current peace mechanisms show that there is too much at stake in terms of funding and too much external pressure. This might have caused leaders in Sudan to sign a peace agreement largely for the sake of pleasing the international community and hence receiving the funds promised, but one upon which they cannot or will not deliver.

Most important, however, is the fact that the international community still tends to see the conflict in Sudan as only a South-North conflict; a view that overlooks other local conflicts such as the one between the Nuer and the Dinka, which constitutes a real threat to political stability and to sustainable peace not only in Sudan but also within the region as such. In order for any peace initiatives to be successful, all stakeholders ought to be involved from the beginning. This should be accompanied by activities raising the awareness of the local people themselves and by building their peace capacities through enhancing and strengthening the elements that connected them before or during the conflict, and through undermining and weakening the elements that divided them or may divide them in the future.

In a wider argument, the lesson that might have been learned from the people-to-people initiatives is that a one-shot mechanism usually does not work well if not accompanied by sufficient support. This support should come mainly from

the local people, who should be aware about their need for peace, but also from the political and military leaders, who should be serious about achieving peace, and from the international community, who should have the political will in attaining real peace and not only imposing it by putting funding conditions. It is also important to take into consideration the fact that the time frame for peace in a certain conflict setting has to reflect what the local people are prepared to do, rather than what the donors or international community want or push them to do. This, of course, does not imply that the international community should not assist in guiding the negotiations by offering advice about options for problem solving, especially when it comes to a very complicated context of conflict like the one in Sudan.

Following this line of argument and the involvement of the international community in achieving peace in Sudan, there are still other actors in this dilemma, namely the non-governmental organizations, which have been operating in South Sudan in the past and which are operating there at the moment. Attitudes towards such organizations always followed the assumption that they are neutral and that they play no role in the South-South conflicts. When analyzing the engagement of the NGOs in South Sudan in the light of the context of conflict in South Sudan, one could reach the conclusion that the development aid and the services delivered by development and relief organizations unintentionally played a great role in exacerbating some of the fighting that took place in South Sudan. The following is an analysis of ways through which services of development and relief organizations have been misused by the warring parties. Within the context of the conflict in South Sudan, development aid and resources fed into, worsened and prolonged the conflict in various ways.

Development assistance as an instrument of conflict

Diversion of resources, theft and manipulation of access

Very often in war and disaster zones, aid resources are stolen by warlords and used for their own purposes, including military. In the case of South Sudan the warring parties within the SPLM (the SPLM-Mainstream and the Nasir faction) denied and blocked access for relief organizations for the sake of serving their military strategies. Selling and trading of resources meant to assist vulnerable people who were trapped in the conflict were a principal method of the warring parties to obtain arms and extend power. During 1991-1992, both in Gambela refugee camp in Ethiopia and in Torit, which served as the main garrison for the SPLM-Mainstream at that time, aid resources such as food supplies were confiscated by the SPLM and exchanged for fuel and spare parts for cars. At that time, World Vision took the decision to suspend its activities in the refugee camps in Ethiopia, claiming the lack of accountability and abuse. Likewise in Torit,

Catholic Relief Services had tried to improve its monitoring policies but ultimately had also to take the decision to suspend its services in the area. In Southern Sudan Independence Army (SSIA)-controlled areas in 1993, relief resources were diverted by SSIA soldiers, who were going from house to house to impound humanitarian aid items such as food and medicine, regardless of the presence of the monitoring committees of the aid agencies.

Towards the end of the war, in the early 2000s and after the 2005 peace accord (Comprehensive Peace Agreement – CPA), warring factions in South Sudan tended to become more sophisticated: Instead of blocking aid resources, they more often attempted to directly control access to these resources. Following these methods, the SPLM issued a rule which obliges every relief or development organization working in South Sudan to pay a sort of tax to their humanitarian wing, the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Agency (SRRA).

Aid resources as a cover for military operations

Besides diverting and stealing aid resources, warring factions in South Sudan misused aid resources and the organizations involved as a cover for their own military and political actions. For instance, the leaders of the Nasir faction used international humanitarian organizations in creating a garrison in Yuai as a buffer zone for the principal garrison in Waat. In 1992, leaders of the same faction urged some of the humanitarian organizations to come to Yuai, based on the prospect of malnutrition due to the low water level of the river. The same leaders then organized their people to move from Waat to Yuai before any relief operation could have started. Upon arrival of those needy and hungry people, relief agencies had had no choice but to start distributing aid resources. At that time, leaders of the Nasir faction controlled all areas where relief operations started: Kongor, Ayod, Waat and Akobo. When SPLM-Mainstream attacked Yuai in 1993, the media and the international community described the attack as one against relief centres, and this was exactly what the leaders of the Nasir faction had intended, using relief resources as a cover for their own ends.

Such incidents happened until quite recently: There is one case where a military commander of the SPLM demanded the field co-ordinator of a development and relief organization working in South Sudan to participate in the diversion of relief resources by falsely signing papers that those relief resources had been delivered to a certain location, which was not true in reality. When the field co-ordinator from that organization refused, a decision was made to expel the project staff – a fact that has led to the closure of the project and to the suspension of activities in the area.[8]

[8] Information on this was gained by the author during an informal interview with the involved project staff, whose names cannot be released for reasons of confidentiality, 23 October 2003.

Aid and substitution effects

The dilemma of "substitution effects" occurs when the international community assumes responsibility for the survival of the population to such an extent that this allows local leaders and warlords to define their own roles solely in terms of warfare and control through violence. This usually happens when aid organizations are intervening without an appropriate mechanism. When development and relief organizations involved in any conflict setting are not demanding any sort of accountability from the local authority, this can have demanding effects on the local welfare mandates. As has been argued by Mary Anderson, aid providers who are or appear to be in solidarity with an authority's political or military goals can harden the position of that authority and make it less likely to negotiate.[9]

There are a number of ways through which development aid and relief resources may inadvertently feed into conflicts. As this is not the topic of this paper, however, I will not go in to detail here (but see Loane & Schümer 1999). The examples mentioned before are to underline the point that such organizations may also not be innocent in terms of feeding into the conflict, even though their impact may be unintentional. Development and relief organizations should be aware of the potential negative impacts of their services in conflict settings. Of course I do not intend here to put the blame on development and relief organizations, as in certain areas these organization may not be able to change the situation, but at least it should be expected that they minimize their involvement in that dilemma, especially within the on-going debates about peace in Sudan. Based on information obtained from people in the field and from some intellectuals and peace activists in the South, the following observations should be made.

Prospects for peace

First, it is obvious that the perception of the international community about the conflict in South Sudan portrayed it as a South-North conflict. This in many ways wrong perception constitutes a high risk for achieving a durable peace specifically in the South, as it implies that donors are reluctant to address certain root issues within the on-going peace and reconstruction process. Local civilians need to feel that they are taken serious and that their demands are accepted, first by their leaders and then by the international community and by the facilitators of any peace talks. Many people in South Sudan have considered the peace negotiations leading up to the CPA a discussion between elites, and as having (too) little to do with the people on the ground, and some said that they "… would carry on

[9] An informal discussion with Dr. M.B. Anderson, Collaborative for Development Action, Cambridge, Ma., USA, 2001.

fighting even if their leaders were forced to sign an unjust peace."[10] This argument shows the frustration of many civilians in South Sudan and the extent to which they have lost hope in attaining durable peace and reconstruction in South Sudan through their current political and military leaders.

Another observation is that there were no proper and concrete awareness raising programmes informing the local civilians about their rights, their duties and also enhancing their peace capacities through building on the elements that connect them and through bridging the divisions that existed or might emerge in the future. Without such initiatives and without attempts for a participatory democracy and for "good governance" in line with local ideas of decision-making and justice to be practiced in the liberated areas in South Sudan, there will be no future for a "sustainable peace" with a long-term perspective. Participatory democracy can only be achieved by bringing together the warring parties with their local leaders in South Sudan, primarily the Dinka and the Nuer, in a serious and open discussion as to the nature and heritage of the conflicts and to the future of their communities in the post-CPA era.

In order to attain this objective gradually, involvement of NGOs in the South, attempts were made to shift from relief to development. Such a shift requires serious discussions about the future of South Sudan, and this discussion should include local institutions from different regions. Indications are that this process was not very successful. Within such a mechanism, however, local civilians in South Sudan – through their representing institutions and organizations – could be provided with the ability and the space to re-engage in different economic activities, to promote the peace capacities of the civil society with its different sectors, and most important to create a responsible, accountable, transparent civil administration truly and comprehensively representing the civilian population. Bringing local leaders in South Sudan together would at least create more opportunity for bringing political stability into the region, which is one of the prime conditions for peace building in South Sudan. In addition, there were high expectations among the international and regional community that, after signing the present CPA peace agreement by the political leaders both of the Government of Sudan and the SPLM, everything would be restored to normal and that peace and reconciliation would be achieved immediately. Such a view was naïve. The reality within the Sudanese context of conflict is highly fluid, and defies easy characterization. Recognition should hence be paid to the intention of the local leaders and civilians themselves and to the fact that the conflict has a long and ever-present history full of complications and drama (cf. Omaar & de Waal 1993, Human Rights Watch 1994, Prendergast 1996a, Johnson 1999, Ryle 2002, ICG

[10] Information gained through interviews in South Sudan headed by Sudan Focal Point Africa, Mr. J. Ashworth, South Africa, 10 February 2003 (Yirol, Bahr Al-Gazal, South Sudan and Nairobi, Kenya).

2003; on aspects of cultural identity, see Deng 1994, 1995). It was a culmination of tragedies, and therefore, the peace dividend will not come overnight.

After the comprehensive peace agreement

The year 2005 was a year full of interesting and tragic events surrounding the peace process. In January 2005, the last scene of the longest and deadliest civil wars in Africa was played out with the signing the so-called Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the SPLM/A and the ruling party in Khartoum, the National Congress Party (NCP, formerly NIF or National Islamic Front). After the signing of this agreement, the establishment of a new interim constitution on 9 July 2005 formally marked the beginning of a six-year interim period. At the end of that phase, in 2011, a referendum will determine whether Southern Sudan will remain part of a united Sudan or become independent.

According to some analysts, the agreement itself presented a unique chance for the Sudanese people to grasp the last hope for a comprehensive peace in their country. I would like to reflect on the term "comprehensive", however. Looking at the development of events around this agreement, it has become quite clear that it was formulated and developed by the international community, who had lost the political will and the interest to engage in further talks and negotiations about peace in Sudan. Hence, it opted for the quickest option, which does not necessarily represent the will of the ordinary Sudanese people apart from the political leaders. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement is an agreement reached between only two political parties or movements, and accordingly lacks fair representation and support throughout the country. The last phases of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) negotiations were largely limited to Dr. John Garang and to the vice-president of Sudan's central government, Mr. Ali Osman Taha, excluding a large number of local groups and actors. I would like to argue that the agreement does not reflect the real wish for peace within the larger Sudanese civil society both in the North and the South. During informal talks with people in both parts of Sudan it became evident that there is a general lack of knowledge about the content of the peace agreement. To some extent, it has even met resistance from local groups because it represents peace with the declared "enemy", for which most of the Sudanese people were not ready yet.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement in general represented the wish of the political leaders for a solution, but this peace remains and will remain on the political level only. Unfortunately, this is due to the enormous pressure exerted by the international community. The way that the CPA was drafted – with exclusion of many other parties – made it much less than "comprehensive" and provided little prospects for the promises of a sustainable long-term peace. Many

critics of the CPA have attributed the failure to include other parties and armed groups to the fact that the government would only negotiate with the SPLM/A.

Since the signing of the CPA it has become more than clear that there are huge risks associated with the implementation of the agreement. This can mainly be attributed to the fact that the Khartoum government is not serious at all about the full implementation of the agreement and does not comply with all its terms, as some examples can prove. This includes, among others, the non-implementation of the Abyei Protocol, on the border of the North and the South in the Dinka Abyei area, and rejection of the careful and in principle binding report of the international experts that determined the borders of the Abyei area.[11] After almost three years into the interim period, the Abyei issue is still unresolved. Another problem is the demarcation of the entire North-South border. The border commission was supposed to convene during the interim period, but until now it has not started its work, delaying the implementation of the CPA. A third example is related to the oil-money transfers. The south is supposed to get a 50% share of the oil revenues, but the calculations are in doubt because nobody from the south is participating in the management of the oil industry. Accordingly, the south only receives what the National Congress Party decides. This has been recognized as a problem and needs to be corrected. Another violation of the CPA is the continuing support for other militia groups in southern Sudan, specifically to Joseph Kony's LRA troops in Jonglei, to Gordon Kong in Upper Nile, to Tom Al Nour in Western Bahr El Ghazal, and to other smaller groups in Eastern Equatoria, the remnants of the EDF (Equatoria Defence Force).

Many people in South Sudan are still reluctant about the idea of "Peace with the Enemy", not being prepared and not ready yet for a comprehensive peace with their fellow citizens in the North. The same applies for the Sudanese in the North, of course. This has been clearly shown by the events following the tragic death of John Garang, the leader and the father of the SPLM/A, as he was called by his followers. His death occurred in July 2005 following a plane crash and sparked off serious riots in Khartoum, coupled with looting. Thousands of Southern Sudanese, Darfurians and other groups were involved in looting property and clashed with police in the streets of Khartoum after learning of the death of their leader. From my perspective, the death of Garang and the violence that followed have raised serious doubts about the sustainability and the seriousness of the signed Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

The relation between the Dinka and the Nuer has been by and large free of violent clashes after the "People-to-People Peace Process" leading to the Wunlit

[11] The report can be downloaded from www.sudanarchive.net/cgi-bin/sudan?a=d&d=Dl1d18. See also the comment by one of the commission members: D. Johnson, "The Abyei Protocol demystified", *Sudan Tribune*, 11 December 2007 (online available at: www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article25125).

agreement. As has been argued by Young (2005), however, the tensions and the divisions that existed and continue to exist among different ethnic groups in the South have appeared again during the violence and the riots that erupted in Khartoum after the death of Garang. Some Dinka claimed that the Nuer did not show enough grief and sadness for the death of their leader. Nuer were not allowed to attend the funeral of Garang mainly because of fear of tensions and fighting, and this remains one of the decisive facts shaping the relation between the two groups. Since Salva Kiir has taken over the vacant position of SPLM leader, relations between the two ethnic groups have improved to some extent, as it seems that Salva Kiir is more of a listener and is more willing to accommodate differences. Under the surface, however, animosities between the Dinka and the Nuer still continue, with the competition about positions in the army as a recent example.

Apart from the tensions that exist between these two main ethnic groups in the South, the general environment and the atmosphere in Sudan remain to be characterized by tensions and by the potential for violent conflicts. Other ethnic groups in various parts of Sudan have also engaged in serious fighting and in clashes of war-like dimensions. Most prominent in the recent past have been the Murle, who are considered as enemies by both the Nuer and the Dinka. Above all, however, rises the tense situation in *Darfur*. The crisis around the marginalization of people in Darfur and the resulting war have developed into one of the biggest humanitarian crises in Africa. Mass killings, murder, rape, kidnapping and looting have occurred and are still occurring in that region mainly between various local ethnic groups, including the Fur, Masalit and the Zaghawa, and groups of Arab origin linked to the government in Khartoum. Darfur has become a dividing factor between the SPLM/A and the NCP. There have been – incorrect – allegations that the SPLM/A instigated the people of Darfur to take up arms. The bad history of the relationships between the South and the people in Darfur, however, has prevented strong feelings of solidarity. Nevertheless, the political demands are quite similar, with access to land and control over resources forming the main issues. From my own perspective, one of the main unanswered questions is the level of representation that the local militias in Darfur are claiming to have on behalf of the local communities.

Conclusion

Given the intensity and the sensitivity of the conflict in South Sudan, it has been a common attitude of the international community to overlook certain *local* conflict settings such as the case of the Dinka-Nuer conflict. One of the main points observed in this study is the tendency of most of the international donors to either suspend their activities or impose certain conditions on the local popu-

lations, hence making it more difficult for local people who depend on outside assistance due to the stubbornness and the problematic situation enhanced by their leaders.

Although it is quite clear that a long-term peace in Sudan essentially depends on the will and the intention of the civilian population, nevertheless this seems to be a forgotten element within the current peace debate, due to the fact that the international community is viewing the conflict in Sudan mainly as a North-South conflict. It has become obvious that grassroots interaction and dialogue are very effective factors in creating and maintaining peace, provided that they are done with serious intentions and comprehensive methods. The most important elements for any successful peace initiative and implementation within the context of South Sudan are:

- strong political will of the warring parties to take part in the on-going discussions;
- general understanding of the international and national facilitators that it is up to the people themselves in Sudan to sustain peace (including when and how);
- addressing the local issues and not focusing on the South-North fighting alone.

Generally speaking, peace initiatives on the local level should be expanded so as to prepare local people for the era of peace if it materializes. It is also quite important that the intervention by the international community should remain a response to a request from the local institutions representing the local population, rather than an imposed agenda by the international donors fuelled by impatience. Support for peace in Sudan should therefore be incremental, and local institutions such as the NSCC should be seen as being neutral. Working through them is critical at the moment. Most important, however, is the fact that in order for any peace initiative to be successful, all stakeholders should be involved from the beginning and a real representation of the civilians should be looked at seriously by external actors. It should not be left in the hands of the warring parties to decide who should represent civil society from both sides.

The timetable for additional peace initiatives has to reflect the needs and the desires of the local civilians. It should be based on what they are prepared for, and not on the needs and the desires of external facilitators. *Inclusion* as an over-arching principle for political participation should be looked at seriously. For Sudan as a whole and for South Sudan as a region in order to be recognized as a multi-ethnic state even by its own people, the element of inclusion must be consciously crafted and negotiated to permeate every facet of the functions of the Sudanese state.

As has been argued by Krennerich (2001), there are three dimensions or elements of inclusion. First, inclusion implies protection from exclusion and oppression for all individuals and groups. This aspect of inclusion connotes respect for the basic human rights, civil liberties, rule of law, separation of

powers and the judicial control of political power. The second element is political inclusion, which should be pursued through political participation and political representation so that it is perceived as justified by all groups. Democracy and its discourse should be designed to assure inclusion regardless of its form within the Sudanese society. Finally, inclusion has also a social dimension that should be expressed in the recognition of economic, social and cultural rights. Taking into consideration the above mentioned three fundamental preconditions for inclusion, participation will also be promoted, which in turn will play an effective role in promoting and satisfying the people's needs, which is a fact that in itself is a precondition for constructive peace building and political stability. This will be quite a challenge in conditions of underdevelopment, lack of educational and occupational infrastructure, and communal tensions. But, to sum up, I would like to quote a statement made by Mr. Annan, the former UN Secretary-General (2000), to the effect that democracy, human rights, good governance, justice and the rule of law are not rewards to be claimed at the end of the development process or when a stable state is achieved. They are the essential ingredients of development itself and the fundamental prerequisites to prevent conflict from degenerating into violence. Moreover, there have been certain negative lessons from previous peace and reconciliation efforts within other ethnic conflicts in Africa (cf. Ottaway 1999), which should be taken into consideration when looking at the South Sudan Case - or in other words, what not to do (see Nair 2002):

- Do not deny the salience of ethnicity within the context of the South Sudan conflict.
- Do not blame poverty for ethnic conflicts.
- Do not encourage the fortification of group boundaries.
- Do not disregard human rights.
- Do not copy solutions without reflection.

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Several informal meetings and interviews were conducted with the local population in South Sudan, particularly in Yei, Rumbek, Yirol and Southern Blue Nile.

PART III

INTERNATIONAL ISSUES IN AFRICA

11

Gold mining in Sanmatenga, Burkina Faso: Governing sites, appropriating wealth

Sabine Luning

Introduction

In Burkina Faso, the gold mining sector has expanded rapidly since the country's droughts of the 1980s. At present, between 100,000 and 200,000 artisanal miners are actively involved in gold mining in Burkina, dispersed at more than 200 sites across the country. The estimated value of gold produced by non-industrial means since 1986 is about US$ 95 m (CFA 50,000 m) (Gueye 2001a).

Gold production is seen as a means for reducing poverty in Burkina Faso, which, since 1997, has been a "Heavily Indebted Poor Country" (HIPC) (IMF 2002). Country officials have been involved in negotiations with the World Bank and the IMF in an attempt to relieve national debts. Since the early 1990s, Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) have largely shaped Burkina Faso's agendas for financial reorganization. "Structural adjustment" is the name given to a set of free market economic policy reforms imposed on developing countries as a condition for the receipt of loans. To ensure a continued inflow of funds, heavily indebted countries have to adhere to conditions mandated by the IMF and World Bank.

As in other African countries, in Burkina, SAP measures aim to roll back the state through privatization of state sectors and to encourage the spread of NGOs (Nugent 2004). In this context, the gold mining sector has been targeted, since

gold is, next to cotton, the country's chief export product. The country has witnessed a combination of privatization of government-held enterprises and liberalization of trade and investment to attract foreign investment.

In this paper I will start with a case study of a gold-rush in the province of Sanmatenga in Burkina Faso, and move on to situate this case in a wider field of relationships implicating state authorities, national and international gold companies, as well as international banking institutions and donor organizations. My goal is to discuss how we can cover the ground of these articulations without falling into the pitfalls of current models that take the distinction between state and society for granted. Foremost, I want to question the assumption that liberalization can be equated to a weakening of the state per se. As we will see, the position and tasks of the Burkinabe state have clearly changed with regard to the gold mining sector, but the state is still in a dominant position as singular authorizing instance to issue permits for research and exploitation of sites as well as for the rights to buy and sell gold. Liberalization implies that the state has become one of many players, but not necessarily a weak one. The mining sector in Burkina shows a very interesting configuration of institutional connections. The ideological climate in which the position of the state has been redefined is epitomized by the notion of governance, a term that comes from economic practice (corporate governance) as well as political science (State governance). It is the explicit attempt to implicate a whole set of actors in the field of governing. The UN website www.unece.org states:

> Government is one of the actors in governance. Other actors involved … may include influential land lords, associations of peasant farmers, cooperatives, NGOs, research institutes, religious leaders, finance institutions political parties, the military etc.[1]

Indeed, it is such a complex field of actors and the ideas that allow different authorities to pose as governors, that this paper seeks to portray and analyse.

A case study: The village of Liliga-Goren in the province of Sanmatenga

The artisanal mining site discussed in this paper is situated in the Province of Sanmatenga and is called Liliga-Goren. The site is situated in the *département* of Maane, and in comparison with other sites in Burkina it is small in several respects; the scale of the site does not surpass 1 km^2; the number of people working on the site never exceeded 300; the pits were no deeper than about three metres and worked by small groups or individuals without a rigid division of labour; the gold-dust was separated with simple techniques based on gravity, helped by wind and water; the site was close to agricultural fields and arrange-

[1] www.unece.org/trade/ctied/wp6/documents/wp6_05/wp6_05_09e.doc, accessed 17 August 2007.

ments concerning their incorporation were subject to debates. Various reasons led to this choice for a case study. First of all, the site is located in a village where, over the past fifteen years, I have regularly done anthropological research. I have been able to see the effects of the finding of gold on local village relationships. In addition, I could witness how the organization of this site depends on the interaction between legally authorized parties and specific local people. Moreover, it became clear how this organization is informed by local ideas about gold as a particular kind of wealth.

As will be described below, in Liliga-Goren the search for gold on a commercial scale commenced in the mid-1980s, and ever since several gold-rushes have occurred. Once more, at the beginning of the rainy season in June-July 2004 a frantic gold search started following the first rainfalls, which washed away topsoil and uncovered mineralized sediments. Many men and women from resident and adjacent villages immediately began searching for gold. At this point in the year, villagers debated the following two converging issues:

1) Should one work the fields or look for gold?
2) How to regulate the access to the gold area?

In this region, mining is often carried out over a particular period of time (i.e. a season), after which people resume their agricultural activities. With the rains starting, however, individuals had to decide either to focus their efforts solely upon finding gold, or to ignore the temptation and continue to work agricultural fields, or to combine these tasks during the course of the rainy season. This decision had moral implications. The choice not to sow at all – which at least 100 villagers opted for – was considered by many to be morally wrong. Generating income from selling gold or from cultivating crops is perceived as two different exercises. The latter is seen as a more sustainable practice, giving annual yields, whereas the former is viewed more as a short-term "stop gap" venture, which results in temporary wealth. A harvest may give new yields whereas gold once sold will not be replaced. Those who took up mining as an occupation and abandoned farm work did not – of course – hold this view. Nevertheless, the idea that the search for gold can only lead to short-lived wealth was expressed time and again by many villagers.

The second issue concerns land rights. As we will see, the maps and the files of the national authorities (notably the BUMIGEB, Bureau des Mines et Compagnie de la Géologie du Burkina) give a clear picture of the distribution of mining titles. GEP-MINES, a Burkinabe company owns the permit to search for gold in this area. However, on the ground the situation is more complicated. In 2004, gold was initially discovered in the middle of an agricultural zone that was the property of some villagers. The challenge, therefore, was how to take into account these rights, and override them so that the gold mining could expand.

This issue was handled by a man referred to in this paper as "Mahama", who resides in the village, is in his forties, and has extensive experience in gold mining both within and outside of Burkina. His authority in land issues was based on a combination of different factors, including his prestige as an extraordinary miner, his position as a "strong" local person with family ties, and his status as close collaborator with GEP-MINES. Mahama managed to negotiate the expansion of the gold site, arranging for the sale of farmland so that it could be mined. Many disapproved of his actions because again, the issue was morally loaded. Some people in the village who opposed mining altogether would sarcastically remark: "Look what gold does to us. Now we are even selling our lands." The intention was to convey the disapproval shared by many villagers over miners and Mahama's actions in particular. Others maintained, however, that farmland had not been sold; owners had only been given compensation for the loss of the year's harvest.

The agricultural fields that became available were immediately reallocated to mining villagers and outsiders. Mahama set out to demarcate "squares" of land, within which pits were dug. Per workplace 4,000 tot 5,000 CFA ($ 7.50 to 9.50) was paid. All of the men involved in allocating and mining these plots of land agreed that financial transactions for land "acquisition" should not be interpreted as the "selling" of places. What men – only men were involved in these transactions – paid for was not access to the plot, but their "freedom": These payments assured individuals that they would not be sent away, would not be robbed, and would be safely protected under Mahama. The money simply bought them this protection.

These first impressions on the site raise two lines of questioning:

1) How can we trace the claims in governance of GEP-MINES?
2) How can we trace the claims in governance of this particular personality, Mahama?

GEP-Mines claims in governance: Political economy of mining titles

Finding information on the mining companies and the formal mining titles in Burkina Faso is in fact very easy. Access to Internet and a visit to BUMIGEB suffice to obtain information on: Mining titles, geological potential and mining policies. Decisions and decrees of the government are neatly presented on formal websites:

www.legiburkina.bf;
www.primature.gov.bf.

In the course of the 1990s a lot has been done to make data on the mining sector available in an apparently transparent manner. In the 1980s, in particular in the period of Sankara's presidency (1983-1987), the state had a monopoly on mining, as well as on gold purchasing and selling rights (Gueye 2001a; Luning 2006). As part of the liberalization of the gold sector the International Development Association (IDA), the authority that decides over loans to "Heavily-Indebted Poor Countries", provided the Government of Burkina Faso with a loan for restructuring the Bureau des Mines et de la Géologie. Among other things these funds have been used to put in place an information system in which details on developments in mining titles and permits are updated on a very regular basis.

Moreover, very good formal maps and dossiers are available to determine the situation of the gold sector and its major formal players. These maps have been created with donor funding, e.g. from the European Community.[2] The French geological survey organization BRGM (Bureau de recherches géologiques et minières) was responsible for the research that resulted in the maps.

These efforts are part and parcel of an ideology stipulating that appropriation of natural resources requires appropriate regulation and transparency. This has led to a system, which emphasizes public announcements of mining titles and publicly accessible knowledge banks. Investments in media such as WebPages on the Internet and maps are crucial for these goals. In the performance of these tasks we see a mingling of national state institutions and international advice centres. Large internationally facilitated support systems help to create images of transparency and open access to knowledge about natural resources and appropriated terrains.

The central point of departure in the present allocation system of mining titles is the fact that the land and what lies beneath it are the property of the state, but specific laws regulate sites and quarries, depending on the nature and location of activities (Gueye 2001b: 12). The claim of the state as the sole owner of the lands stems from a law formulated in the 1970s (Zatu n° AN VIII-0039 bis/FP/PRES – cf. Gueye 2001b: 12) and was forcefully put into practice in the 1980s when Sankara was Burkina's president (Réforme Agraire et Foncière, 1984). During the four years of his regime, Sankara used the law to claim state monopoly on both gold production and marketing. The situation has changed drastically over the last 15 years (with the Réorganisation Agraire et Foncière in 1997, DECRET 97-54/PRES/PM/MEF), but the liberalization is still based on a law that stipulates that all lands belong to the state, even though an implicit tolerance towards existing land rights is expected (Lavigne Delville 1999).

[2] The EU supports so-called SYSMIN projects for ACP countries (African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States) with mining potential. Since 1993 Burkina Faso received SYSMIN funds, first for the rehabilitation of the industrial mine at Poura, and since 1999 (€ 15 Mio) for the programme of geological cartography 7ACP BK 074 (Rapport annuel conjoint 2002).

In January 2005 I obtained a CD Rom at the BUMIGEB with the up-to-date information on the "*titres miniers*". According to this data bank, the location Liliga-Goren is part of the Bissa research permit, which covers an area of 43 km^2 and is in the possession of the Burkinabe Company GEP-MINES. A research permit covering an area of 249 km^2 has also been awarded to GEP-MINES for the adjacent Zandkom region. In Burkina, holders of a research permit are required to report annually on research findings, are expected to spend a minimum amount of money per square kilometre, and during the second renewal, must reduce the surface area of their permit zone by 25%. Any deposit that is discovered must be reported to the government, and can only be worked if the request to transfer the "right of research" to a "mining permit" is granted. A permit for small-scale mining (*permis d'exploitation*) authorizes a holder to own, retain and transport extracted minerals and/or crude mineral-aggregated ore to storage or processing areas, and to market these products within or outside of the country (Gueye 2001a: 14). Permit holders are also required to adhere to strict rules regarding environmental issues and working conditions onsite. Mining titles are open to foreigners and Burkinabe alike.

The permits of GEP-MINES are research permits, but at present the company is not active in this area. Apparently, they do allow individual miners to look for gold, with Mahama as supervisor of their work. At Liliga-Goren, GEP-MINES uses its position to pose as sole purchaser of gold within the Bissa permit area. As we will see, Mahama is precisely a key player in this process of buying up gold and transmitting (part of) it to GEP-MINES. GEP-MINES is thus a major governing instance on the site, even though the company is hardly visible in the daily gold mining activities going on at Liliga-Goren.

However, anyone with access to Internet can obtain information that further complicates the picture. Using "Bissa permit" as a search entry to Google shows that GEP-MINES is not the only company with property claims in the locality of Liliga-Goren. A Canadian company named Jilbey Gold mentions the Bissa permit on its website. In January 2005 the webpage proudly announced that this Canadian Multinational recently forged an agreement with GEP-MINES, to acquire in the coming years a 90% interest in the Bissa and Zandkom projects. These plots are situated at the centre of the company's existing holding; combined, these three permits cover an area of approximately 800 km^2. Between 1993 and 2001, some $9 m was used to explore for gold on these adjacent concessions. According to the BUMIGEB CD Rom with mining titles, in January 2005 Jilbey had nine research permits in Burkina covering a combined area of 2,000 km^2, five of which are adjacent to the Bissa and Zandkom area (Namtenga 250 km^2, Tosse 250 km^2, Gargo 250 km^2, Raka 107 km^2, and Tema 186 km^2).

A search with Google in September 2005 led to information on new developments:

On Thursday September 1, 2005 High River Gold, another Canadian Multinational, announced that it had completed Acquisition of Jilbey. On its website www.hrg.ca/s/Home.asp High River Gold states:

> The Bissa Project exploration programme for the remainder of 2005 will be accelerated, with US$2,400,000 budgeted for the last three months of the year.[3] … The successful completion of the merger with Jilbey will establish High River as a dominant gold mining and exploration company in Burkina Faso. High River will have the first new gold mine in the country at Taparko-Bouroum, a promising advanced exploration project at Bissa, which has the potential to become High River's second mine, and a large (approximately 8,000 square kilometres) highly prospective property package. The Company intends to use Taparko-Bouroum and Bissa as a base to expand its activities within Burkina Faso and throughout the rest of West Africa. [//] In addition to its two development projects, High River intends to aggressively explore its Burkina Faso properties, with a focus on Bissa, and its Novophirsovskoye Ore Field property in Russia.[4]

The Bissa project mentioned on the website of High River Gold covers the whole area of the patchwork of permits mentioned by Jilbey Gold for this region. The Bissa project is carried out both in parts of the province of Sanmatenga, and in the adjacent Province of Bam.

The website of High River Gold provides reports on prospecting results, illustrated by maps. On the map reproduced here (Figure 11.1), the site dealt with in this paper, Liliga, is identified as gold prospect. However, present prospecting activities are limited to the site near the village of Bissa, marked as gold deposit.

In the field of private enterprise for this region, again we see a mingling of national and international players. In order to understand the articulation between national and international companies, further research has to be carried out. The arrangement between Jilbey Gold and GEP-MINES concerns a takeover in the course of the coming years. Eventually Jilbey Gold will become 90% owner, but that the Burkinabe Company is presently the visible partner in the system of formal titles and governance. Apparently, Jilbey Gold as well as High River Gold has chosen to focus on research within large permitted concession areas where individual miners are excluded. Simultaneously they sponsor a national company that seeks to organize exploitation in collaboration with miners-farmers.

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[3] www.hrg.ca/s/NewsReleases2005.asp?ReportID=116459&_Type=News-Releases-2005&_Title=High-River-Gold-Completes-Acquisition-Of-Jilbey, accessed 17 August 2007.

[4] www.hrg.ca/s/NewsReleases2005.asp?ReportID=115050&_Type=News-Releases-2005&_Title=High-River-Reports-Second-Quarter-2005-Results, accessed 17 August 2007.

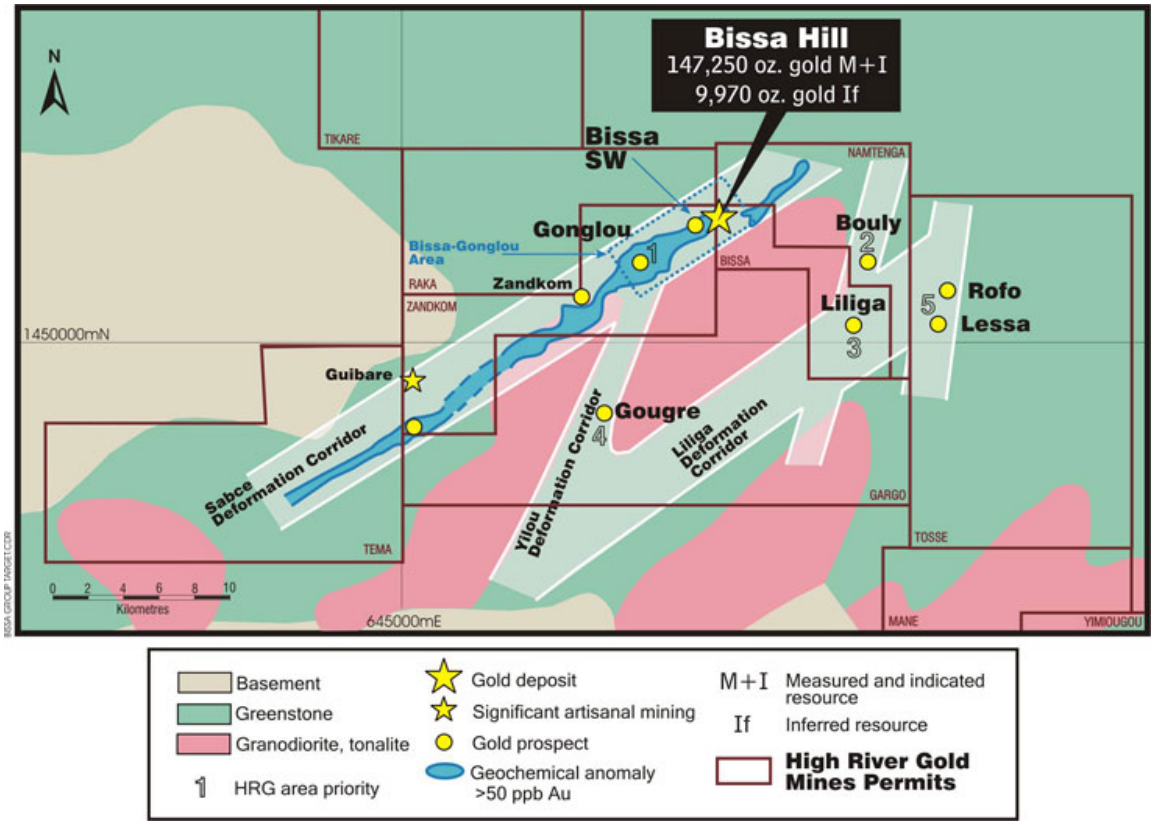

Figure 11.1 Location of Liliga within High River Gold's Bissa project
Source: www.hrg.ca/i/maps/BISSAGROUPTARGET.jpg, High River Gold website.

The question is, why do these multinational companies choose to operate in this manner? Perhaps from the perspective of the Canadian company, the actual individuals working at Liliga-Goren are the cheapest way to get prospecting done in this area. It may very well be that the company intends only to step in with research activities more actively when gold findings increase in the near future. And if that happens: What are they going to do? Will they take up the task of actual exploitation of the site and if so in what legal format will they do so, and how will the capital and the labour input be organized? How will they operate in the Canadian stock market? Will they try to attract capital for prospecting and exploration, from investors or will they choose to sell their permit with a good profit to a registered senior company? The latter option is open, since the Canadian stock market is characterized by limited ruling in this respect. In the Canadian context we clearly see that permits are objects of exchange and trade. Only the future and further research can provide answers to these questions. The articulation between national and international players should be looked at in terms of input of technological knowledge, capital requirements, social organization of labour, as well as legal arrangements for joint ventures between national (state as well as companies) and international partners.

For the moment, we see that the national and international players involved in governing the gold sector may intend to provide transparent information. However, a brief glance on the ground of a site and some Internet searching show a very complex field of connections, and partnerships based on divisions of tasks and competences.

Mahama's claims in governance: Moral geography of the gold site in Liliga-Goren

We have seen that Mahama is in a position to police the site at Liliga-Goren. He operates as a representative of GEP-MINES, and is in fact much more active than the two staff of the company who are present but virtually idle. Mahama is active in policing the site, helping with the washing of gold, and foremost buying gold. The staff of GEP-MINES claimed that GEP-MINES was in possession of an exploitation permit and that this title provides the company with a monopoly on buying gold in the permit area. Without exception they spoke of an exploitation permit, even though at the level of the BUMIGEB the permit is qualified as research permit. The confusion of titles serves the purpose of positioning the company to buy up the gold.

In the area of Liliga-Goren GEP- MINES primarily operates as a buyer of gold with Mahama acting as an intermediary. Mahama provides kinsmen and friends with money to purchase gold at different sites within the permit zone of GEP-MINES. All miners who owe their pit on the site to him are obliged to sell him their gold, which, in turn, he sells to GEP-MINES at a standard price of 36,000 CFA per unit of six grams, that is about $70.[5] There were strong indications at the time of research that daily earning for miners-farmers were in the range of 4,000-5,000 CFA ($7.50 to $9.50).

It was noted that illegal buyers potentially offer higher prices – as high as 45,000 CFA ($86) per unit of gold – although legal and clandestine buying often go hand-in-hand. Mahama himself was suspected of "mélange": For every four kilograms of gold produced, he would purchase three kg at 36,000 CFA per unit for legal resale to GEP-MINES. He would also buy one kg at a higher price, and sell it through illegal channels. Moreover, whenever he is offered gold for sale, Mahama subtracts a certain amount from the price for "services rendered" to the

[5] The weights used in the scales are coins and matchsticks. At the site, 1 matchstick of gold values 500 CFA ($1); an old franc coin (with the weight of 1 gram) in gold gives a price of 6,000 CFA ($11.50); 1 piece of 25 CFA provides the standard unit (6 gram) that equals 36,000 CFA ($70). For northern Bénin, Grätz describes a similar system of weighing gold dust in scales, with coins serving as weights. In most cases traders use whole 1 CFA franc coins, as well as 1 CFA coins that have been cut in halves or quarters. He states that the FCFA weighs 1.2 gram (Grätz 2004: 151-152).

miner. These services consist of the insurance that nobody will steal the gold that is mined, or the money that is earned.

Both on the level of attributing pits and the purchase of gold Mahama's position is strong and hardly contested. Why? Mahama himself explained his position in terms of his historical role in properly developing this gold site due to his experience in gold mining.

The first gold rushes at Liliga-Goren occurred in the 1980s during Thomas Sankara's tenure as Burkina's president. Mahama emphasized the excessive state control of mining and gold marketing that took place at the time. Initially, it was forbidden to seek gold altogether, forcing villagers to search for the mineral at night. After making a move to permit gold mining, the state attempted to regulate extractive and marketing activities. Representatives of the government at the time, the CDR (Comité de Défense de la Révolution), as well as policemen, were present on the sites. Individuals were required to purchase a ticket of 200 CFA ($0.40) per day to work on mine sites. A state cashier would arrive daily from the provincial capital of Kaya to purchase gold, issuing payments in the range of 2,300 CFA ($4.40) per gram (presently 6,000 CFA, $11.50) and travelling under police protection.

During personal interviews, Mahama elaborated extensively on his prominent role when gold was first found at Liliga-Goren. His stories show that in Burkina gold is seen as a thing of the earth that can only be obtained if ritual practices are respected (see Werthmann 2003). In the mid-1980s, Mahama explained, shortly after his return from Ivory Coast, youths discovered gold on a hill nearby the village. They wanted to take it home, but could not bring it into their houses. At the doorstep, the gold fell to the ground and disappeared. Mahama advised to invite the earth priest to make the necessary sacrifices, which would assure that the gold could be properly appropriated. This precipitated the gold boom in which Mahama actively participated; he was searching for gold whilst maintaining peace at Liliga-Goren.

At first the villagers did not know the real value of gold, but one of the men working for the *comptoir* (the state organization that bought up gold) instructed them. He told them: "Half a matchstick of gold values more than a human life." This remark had two meanings. First, it indicated that the price the state paid was less than the real value of gold. Secondly, and more importantly, it taught miners about the importance of policing the gold site; anyone caught stealing as much as the value of half a matchstick of gold ran the risk to be killed. This story was one of Mahama's favourites: It had taught him the lesson of how to "protect" the site from theft and other misconduct. It had also taught him to mistrust the state and other larger players in the gold sector. When I first started to ask questions about the gold rush in this village, Mahama and his close relatives thought that I had

taken an interest in gold itself. Actually they hoped that I would go into the gold business and connect them directly to European gold markets. This would allow them to dismiss other – unreliable – intermediaries.

Since the mid-1980s, gold has been discovered at different places around the village, giving rise to four separate gold rushes and initiating an influx of transient workers. Mahama declared having earned some 30 million CFA ($ 56,300) to date. His dominant role at this gold site seems uncontested, and was confirmed by other miners. Most of them link Mahama's role in policing the site to the personal qualities that allowed him to facilitate the appropriation of gold. Not everyone is capable of taking gold into possession. This quality is not simply a function of command over labour power and possession of technical knowledge. Rather, a person must be well connected to the real owners of gold, particular bush spirits, the so-called *djiins*. Mahama is very well connected to these beings; some people even indicated that his birth was facilitated by *djiins*. Such a connection does, however, have its downside: People who are closely associated with *djiins* do not have the temperate character of "normal" people. They behave excessively in most respects; they act too generous, too violent, and take too many risks. Mahama's life is filled with excessive events, including fights, road accidents, and mixing with unsavoury individuals. Stories of Mahama are told and retold on and off gold sites, and confirm his reputation rather than destroy it. They strengthen the awe with which people deal with and talk about him. The stories also explain why his wealth comes and goes. Time and again, to get him out of trouble or the hospital costs him a fortune. The stories provide keys to an understanding of the way a gold site may be policed, and how gold may be obtained but is hardly ever a potential source for sustainable wealth.

In the mid-1990s, South African scientists had come to Liliga-Goren to undertake geological research (the historic overview on the webpage of High River Gold learns that these must have been employees of Randgold Resources Ltd). At the time, so I was told, people lacked knowledge about these strangers: Where had they come from, what were their aims, and what were their land rights in relation to those of locals? Even today, with the continued presence of GEP-MINES, working relationships with outsiders are not clear-cut for many locals. Villagers are well aware that their land rights – when it comes to gold – are in the hands of the state. Strangers pay the state rather than local landowners to be allowed to explore or mine particular sites. Most people do not contest this since the spin-offs are sufficiently interesting: Additional (unofficial) compensations for loss of agricultural lands will be made, research provides jobs, the strangers are in need of services (house construction, water fetching, etc.) that bring in additional money, and villagers can often share in the finding of gold. However,

what constitutes the basis of the authority of these outsiders to govern the gold mining activities is far from clear for the local villagers and gold miners. Information about the issuing of permits and foreign investors may now be available at the Internet, but the locals most directly affected do normally not have access to these data. In particular the claim of companies to the monopoly of buying up gold is regarded with mistrust. We have seen that even Mahama, the closest partner of GEP-MINES at the site, suspects the company of cheating with the gold price that is offered to the miners. This mistrust is a standard attitude; intermediate buyers representing companies are expected to cheat. The real value of gold is thought to be much higher than suggested by intermediaries. Privatization of the gold sector has increased the distrust towards gold buyers. In the present situation miners are confronted with ever more intermediaries representing a vast field of enterprises. This situation is experienced as random (in Moore: Y*are yare*), intermediaries are thought to say and do as they please. Miners – at best only sellers of gold – experience the gold market as a chain of relationships between different buyers and sellers that is lacking in transparency. This social context of mistrust and uncertainty allows a personality like Mahama to step in and to "arrange things": For a certain period of time he is capable of creating an atmosphere of governance on the site. However, like the wealth that may stem from it, a gold rush is inherently a haphazard and temporary event. Both the beginning and the ending of a gold rush are unpredictable.

The rainy season in 2004 was disastrous. Local debates over mining and farming proved futile: Those who had been working the land were, for the most part, unable to harvest. The individuals who had discovered gold had at least earned some income which in many cases proved to be sufficient to purchase sorghum during the periods of food scarcity that lay ahead.

The response to the bad agricultural season was immediate: The locations at Liliga-Goren where gold could be extracted were always congested. Local people and outsiders from the north – among them many Fulbe[6] – desperately worked to compensate for lost incomes from the poor agricultural season. The social constituencies at the mine sites changed after the rainy season: A diminished local male workforce but greater participation from local women and children, and a high concentration of men from elsewhere. They did not have to pay to get access, since in most locations; gold reserves had nearly been exhausted. In response to enquiries about the results of extraction efforts, replies were mostly

[6] The Fulbe, also known as Fula, Fulani, Pulaar, and Tukolor, are spread from Senegal to the northern Cameroon and even into the Sudan. This dispersal is the result of migrations. The Fulbe consider themselves originally to be cattle-herders, but today they have also established sedentary populations across this region, and these are not necessarily cattle-herders, although cattle remain an important part of their identity.

negative: "Nothing found, nothing gained, but we will pursue, what else are we to do?"

Over the year, the local social situation had clearly become more tense; some people had been successful in finding gold, which caused jealousy and envy occasionally manifested as outbursts and verbal disagreements. The poor harvest increased local disparities in wealth. The daily availability of alcohol on the market of the gold site did not help the social situation. Even the people who had benefited from gold sales earlier in the year appeared to suffer from a sort of "post-rush-depression". Gold mining certainly served as a band-aid solution to the poor harvest, but could it provide long-term benefits to the farmers-miners of Burkina?

Some of Mahama's family members clearly benefited from the gold rush: During field visits in August 2004, many claimed to be affluent. During follow-up visits in December, however, it became evident that much of the money earned from gold mining had been spent. The elder brother of Mahama claimed that gold made them suffer. He described the calamities that had occurred with his close kin due to gold discoveries. Two of his children had found substantial amounts of gold at the beginning of the rainy season. This had frightened the elder brother, and in reaction he had given all sorts of alms to prevent calamity. Despite this, his mother had fallen ill and had to be taken to the local dispensary, and eventually, to the hospital in Kaya. Later, his wife and he himself had fallen ill. In due course, all of the money gained from gold had been spent on medical bills. Everyone is now recovering slowly, but there are insufficient funds remaining to purchase supplementary sorghum later on in the year. He was grateful that at least the alms had prevented death in the family.

Rapid wealth accumulation and rapid loss of earnings is a recurrent theme in discussing gold mining activities in this region of Burkina Faso. Gold hardly ever brings about lasting wealth: The money earned from gold mining is said to lack "*barka*" ("blessing" in Arabic). The revenues accrued are likely to fail to deliver long-term benefits. By the time this particular gold rush ended, Mahama had moved on. On occasion, he would come back to the village to relax, but his work has taken him north to the Province Bam. On a mining site near Sabce, he now engages in activities very similar to the ones described. Again, he is working within a permit zone of GEP-MINES.

Conclusion

In this paper I have looked at actors involved in governing a gold site in the Province of Sanmatenga. First I looked at the formal structure of the new permit system and the authorizing processes which involve the state and mining companies since the liberalization of the gold sector. The present mining title of GEP-

MINES finds its legitimation in an interesting interplay of international and national partners:

The state, by law, proclaims that it is the sole owner of the land and its resources. In the Sankara period this ownership was the point of departure for a monopoly of the state on the exploitation and appropriation of mineral resources. Even though the state is still the sole owner of the lands, IMF and World Bank policies have established that the state "rolled back" in the actual task of prospecting and exploitation. The state is owner but not any longer a dominant player in the economic exploitation of the mineral wealth nowadays. Is this position to be assessed as a weakening of the state? It is important to stress that international monitoring and banking institutions have forced the state into this position, a position that implies transference of political choices to multilateral organizations. The state in Burkina is still the owner of natural resources, but what should be done with these resources is co-determined by international organizations. As many authors have pointed out, in the context of structural adjustment programmes political decisions are taken by international organizations that are not politically accountable. At present, governance of African economies represents a kind of transfer of sovereignty away from African states and into the hands of the multilateral organizations. James Ferguson (1998) has rightly argued that African governments are forced to be accountable (elections) for policies that are to a large extent formulated by international organizations, which cannot be voted away. He shows that in ideological terms governance issues are ingrained with rigid distinctions between local, national and international levels, between politics and economics, as well as between state and civil society, whereas in the practices and interactions of different players we see a systematic blurring. In order to study these different representations, he proposes to investigate governing instances, and in particular the state, as bundles of social practices.

This paper is a first step to study mining practices in Burkina Faso along those lines. Hence I have discussed the formal system of mining regulations under the heading of "political economy of governance". Around specific practices of governance we see strong collaborations between both national and international partners, and economic and political partners. The present ideology of good governance allots the state with a limited task, but this task should be executed properly: The state should refrain from formal economic activities, it should follow the advice of international banking institutions, and it should proof transparency in procedures and vigilance in reinforcing laws and regulations. Paradoxically, the state obtains a lot of help to set up the institutional and information facilities to perform their "downsized" tasks. This paradox is particularly apparent with regard to the mining sector. Again an ideological axiom informs this paradox. Most parties involved in the mining sector agree (or are forced into

proclaiming that) that the sites with natural resources should be exploited in the present, but they should also be protected for the future. Mining these resources is seen as a means to alleviate debts and poverty, but exploitation should be done in an appropriate manner. Economic exploitation should be left to private enterprise, but this sector should be watched over in order to limit environmental damage. International donors and consultancy agencies provide the state with means and services to monitor the mining sector in this respect. But more is at stake. The mining sector in Burkina is considered to depend on foreign capital and technological knowledge. International companies are explicitly invited to invest in Burkina. Courting these companies is done both by the state and by junior mining companies. Attracting foreign investors depends on the state's capacity to guarantee stability and security in the country, whereas junior companies try to attract investors by promising prospects. It is in this light that we have to understand the overt efforts to put information on the mining sector in the public domain.

In the efforts to inform "the" public, both the state and mining companies are first of all addressing an international audience of potential donors and investors. In this context "keeping up appearances" (see Tsing 2000, 2005) is key, both for the state and for the companies. The information should proof to foreign donors and investors that both the state and operating companies are strong, stable, reliable and promising enough to bank on. Of course this cannot depend on window dressing alone. The state has to show its capacity to do its job in securing safety and stability. Moreover, attracting investors requires that results of prospecting activities are considered reliable. Companies should be careful in how they provide prospective investors with test results, and have to invite third parties to check the research at sites. The case presented here deserves to be compared to other sites where more active forms of policing by state officials occur, and where more knowledge about the actual prospecting practices of companies can be gathered.

For the present data we conclude that the state's and the companies' messages are passed on in media – internet, maps – which can be expected to attain the targeted audiences. However, these messages do not (aim to) reach the people who might actually be working in the pits. This particular case study shows that for these people the present situation, characterized by a large set of (private) players, has become less transparent. The coming and going of different prospectors and gold buying "authorities" are experienced as random and unregulated. In this particular case one contrast is rather extreme: The visibility of the state and the companies in the public high-tech media, contrasts very strongly with their virtual invisibility on the ground. When it comes to the governing of

the site itself, the state seems absent and the permit holder GEP-MINES is heavily dependent on local power holders.

This local power holder 1) advises on necessary sacrifices; 2) assures compensation for owners of agricultural fields; 3) allocates workspaces to miners; and 4) guarantees protection for people and their property. I have shown how the governing tasks of the key person at the site are reinforced by local ideas stating that gold is precious but perilous. This feature is connected to the idea that gold is owned by *djiins*, beings of the bush. Strength in gold mining depends on a close connection to these localized beings. This connection does affect the person's characteristics; excessive sides thereof inspire awe, which may help both in policing the site and in explaining haphazard turns of luck. Only a fortunate few are strong enough to take gold from the earth successfully. This discourse on governing gold sites refers to a particular moral geography.

However, Mahama's position is based on these ideas in combination with his connection to the permit holder, GEP-MINES. Mahama capitalizes on two ideologies of ownership of the resources of the earth: One stating that bush beings are ultimate owners; the other attributing this position to the state. Mahama can step in as representative of the "formal" owners due to his close links to the other type of owners. I have started out by tracing two claims in governance, one by GEP-MINES, one by a local person, Mahama. It is in the way that these two are articulated that we are to understand the interplay of actors involved in appropriating wealth at this particular gold site. In this articulation we see a complex bundle of practices based on a variety of cultural repertoires and routines. In these practices actors are tapping into different forms of authority, defined by international and local arenas, and they are borrowing from political, economic and "traditional" status positions. Even if, as we have seen, the discourse on mining presents the political, the economic and the traditional actors as distinctive, the study of practices demonstrates that these types of authorities are entangled, and are only effective due to this hybridity.

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12

Peace parks as the cure for boundary conflicts? Creating the Namibian-South African AI-AIS/Richtersveld park along the contested Orange River boundary

Marloes van Amerom

Introduction

Globalization theorists' claims in the 1990s that globalization would demise the nation-state (Amin & Thrift 1995, Ohmae 1996, Held *et al.* 1999) and create a "borderless world" (Ohmae 1990) have proven to be highly premature, at least for now: Boundaries have remained an important feature of the political landscape and continue to shape cultural-political identities world-wide (Blake 1998). This development means that inter-state conflict over boundaries has remained a political reality in many places around the world (Ghai 2003). Africa is no exception. As Figure 12.1 indicates, the continent knows a relatively high number of contested boundaries. The majority of these disputes have their roots in colonial times. The boundaries drawn by the end of the 19th century by Western colonial powers little reflected the settlement and mobility patterns of the indigenous population and some boundaries were not delineated according to procedures common in international law. Boundaries in international river basins constitute a good example (Conley & van Niekerk 1998). Coupled with the fact that the boundary treaties were all signed by the former colonial powers instead of independent African states, their legitimacy can be relatively easily questioned (Griffiths 1995, Griggs 2002).

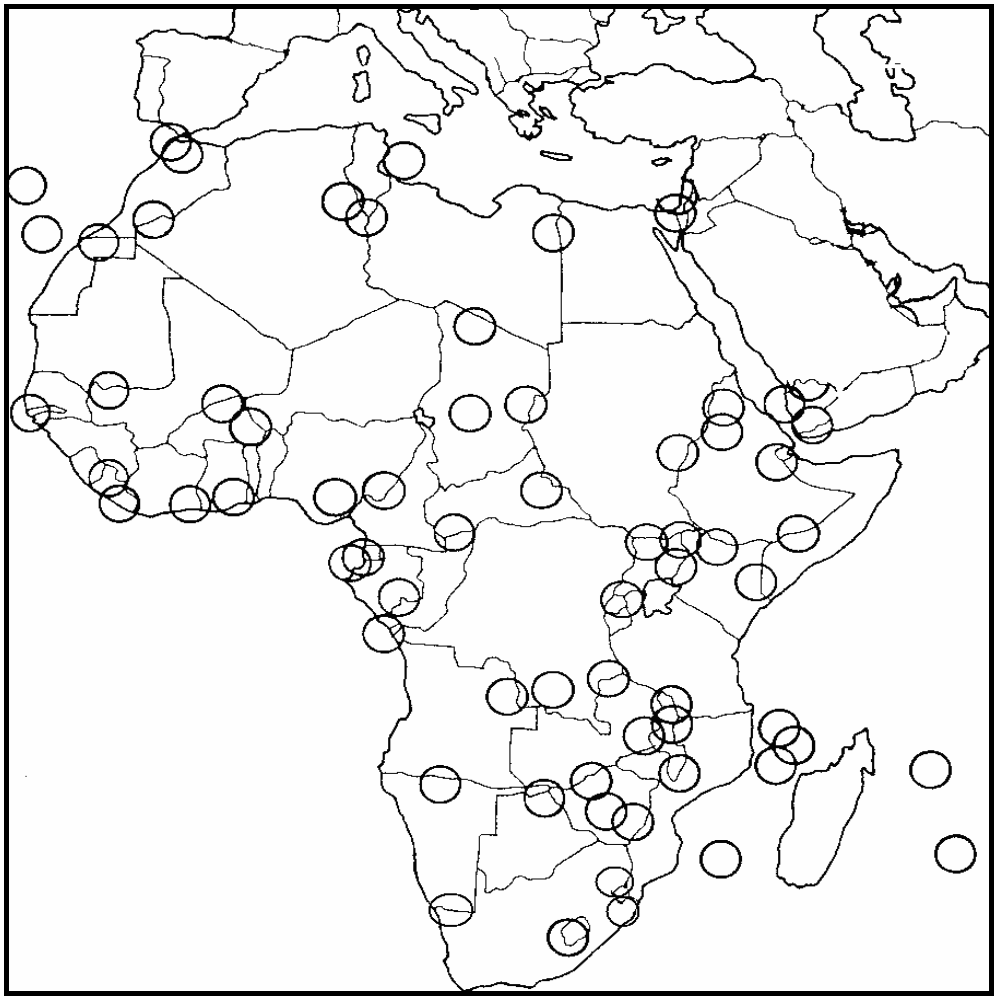

Figure 12.1 Disputed boundaries in Africa (based on Downing 1980)

On the other hand, and notwithstanding various inter-state wars and armed conflicts over boundaries (for example, between Eritrea and Ethiopia and Cameroon and Nigeria respectively), the outbreak of large-scale boundary conflict between African states has been rather successfully prevented by the Organization of African Unity (OAU). By signing unto its Cairo Resolution in 1964, Africa's newly independent states accepted their colonial boundaries and agreed to pursue modification demands through legal routes only (Brownlie 1979). In 70% of all boundary conflicts in Africa the states in question adhere to peaceful means to settle their boundary dispute.[1]

Even when "managed" (CIA 2004), ongoing boundary conflicts are likely to be problematic (Davidson 1992, Griggs 2002), however. Contested boundaries tend to be relatively closed, constraining legal cross-border trade and social traffic (Nugent & Asiwaju 1985; Nkiwane 1997, Miles 2005), often to the detri-

[1] Personal Communication, Prof. G.H. Blake, founder and former director of the International Boundaries Research Unit, Durham, 2003.

ment of a borderland's population's well-being and economic development (Martinez 1994, Miles 2005). National economies may also suffer, for example when the boundary conflict hampers wider regional attempts to create common markets (Anyang'-Nyong'o 1990, Henz 2004) or prevents the exploitation of natural resources located in the contested borderland (Griggs 2000). Finally, unresolved boundary conflicts may represent significant political liabilities. Persistent disagreements over the location of their boundary may put pressure on the overall quality of international relations between states, thereby introducing the prospect of violent conflict at a later stage (Davidson 1992, Akweenda 1997).

With the persistence of boundary conflicts in Africa and elsewhere in the world (International Boundaries Research Unit [IBRU] 2006), the necessity of finding strategies and mechanisms to help settle boundary conflicts between states in a non-violent way remains acute. This article explores the possibilities of Peace Parks to do so, with a focus on the creation of a Transboundary Protected Area in Southern Africa and its bearing on a long-standing boundary conflict between South Africa and Namibia.

Transboundary Protected Areas (TBPAs) can be defined as "biodiversity and wildlife conservation areas that straddle the boundaries of, and are managed in common by, two or more countries" (van Amerom & Büscher 2005: 160). In addition to their assumed contribution to sustainable development,[2] TBPAs have been promoted as means to help settle boundary conflict (McNeil 1990, Brock 1991, McManus 1994, Hamilton *et al.* 1997, Griffin *et al.* 1999, Ramudsindela & Tseola 2000, ITTO/IUCN 2003, van Amerom 2005: 10-18, Westing 1993, 1998). The notion is supported and promoted by international environmental organizations, including the IUCN, the UNEP and the Peace Parks Foundation (PPF), as well as the World Bank and politicians, including former South African President Nelson Mandela. The notion that TBPAs can act as Peace Parks, even in "once-conflict ridden borderlands" (Hanks 2001), by reducing or settling boundary conflict, is underpinned by notions that co-operation in transboundary projects will strengthen, improve or reconcile relations between states: Increased exposure to "the Other" (Said 1993) is alleged to increase cross-border trust and friendship (Mitrany 1965, Swatuk & Vale 1999, Henz 2005). Co-operation in environmental projects is deemed particularly suitable to further this end (Zbicz

[2] As large-scale natural areas hosting a relatively wide range of biodiversity and in which tourists can freely cross boundaries, TBPAs have been predicted by environmentalists, ecotourism developers and politicians supporting their creation to lead to a massive rise in ecotourism to the borderland in which they are located (Spenceley 2001). Local communities are often portrayed as the prime beneficiaries of such developments through increased income and employment opportunities. In reality, these prospects are likely to greatly differ from area to area depending on such factors as actual tourism attractions, accessibility and also political stability (Schoon 2004, van Amerom 2006). In addition, local communities often only marginally benefit, and sometimes outright suffer from the creation of TBPAs, most notably where these limit or cancel local land rights (Draper *et al.* 2004, Norman 2005).

1999, Anonymous 2000: 4). It is alleged to be less politically sensitive and easier to realize than inter-state co-operation in more "loaded" "high politics" areas, such as security (Mitrany 1965, Anonymous 2000). Transboundary co-operation could allegedly also discourage conflict over boundaries through the cultivation of joint economic or other shared interests between states in their disputed borderlands (Swatuk & Vale 1999). Reflecting the growing popularity of the notion of "environmental security" (Westing 1998), the presumed ability of TBPAs to prevent wars over limited resources by setting up regimes that enable the sharing and more effective use of natural resources in borderlands has also been used to underpin the notion of Peace Parks (Duffy 2005). Where the delimitation of boundaries in a given area is hindered by competition over access rights to natural resources in the borderland the creation of Peace Parks could thus, in theory, provide a possible solution through an improved allocation of resources (Griggs 2001).

Since the first *de facto* Peace Park in 1932,[3] over a dozen TBPAs have been created world-wide, many of which have the explicit aim of promoting peaceful relations between the states involved. In 1999 the "biggest Peace Parks plan ever" was adopted in Southern Africa, envisaging the creation of six Peace Parks between South Africa and neighbouring countries (see Figure 12.2). Following the quick improvement in relations between South Africa and neighbouring countries since the ending of apartheid (1994), and stimulated by the newly founded Peace Parks Foundation[4] (1997), the Peace Parks concept was put on the highest political agendas and became a formal policy priority of the Southern African Development Community. The Botswana-South African Kgalagadi Park was the first TBPA to open in 2000. In 2004 wildlife corridors and free tourism traffic were created in the Mozambican/South African part of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park.

The TBPA which seems next in line to be established is the South African-Namibian Ai-Ais/Richtersveld TBPA. In 2004 a treaty was signed and the TBPA formally declared open.[5] The remaining three TBPAs are in various stages of progress (van Amerom and Büscher 2006).

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[3] The US-Canadian Waterston-Glacier Park is widely recognized as the first de facto Peace Park, an important objective of its creation being the celebration and strengthening of the high quality relations between the US and Canada.

[4] Founded by South African businessman Dr. A. Rupert, together with Prince Bernard of the Netherlands (former WWF chairman) and then South African President Nelson Mandela. The networks of these "Big Men" and their access to international funding facilitated the promotion of the concept in Southern African's highest political and business circles in as well as outside Southern Africa (van Amerom 2005, van Amerom & Buscher 2005).

[5] But not *de facto*. The underlying causes for the delayed opening of the TBPA will be discussed in more detail in section three below.

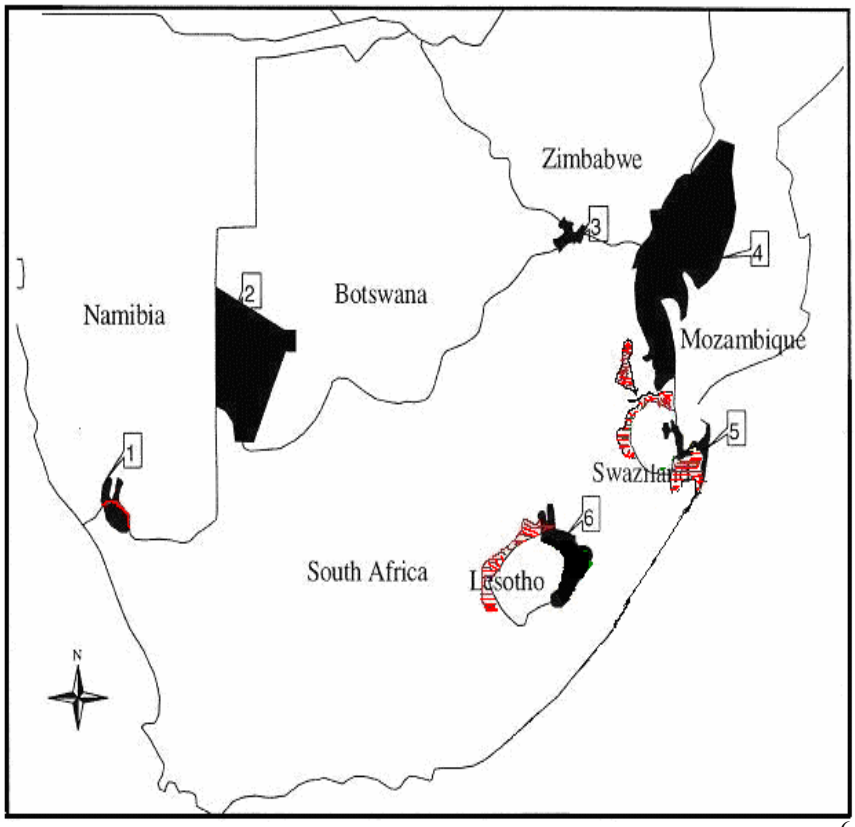

Figure 12.2 Peace Parks and contested boundaries in Southern Africa[6]
1) Ai-Ais/Richtersveld TBPA 4) Great Limpopo TBPA
2) Kgalagadi TBPA 5) Lubombo TBPA
3) Limpopo Shashe TBPA 6) Maloti/Drakensberg TBPA
=== Land claims on South African territory

Particularly since the announcement of Southern Africa's large Peace Parks Plan, the Peace Parks concept has gained world-wide prominence, attracting favourable media coverage world-wide (Warburton-Lee 1999, van der Linden 2000, Godwin 2001, Bittorf 2002, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* 2002, Pabst 2002, Michler 2003). Western donors and NGOs[7] have embraced the concept as a means to promote sustainable development and political stability. With evermore actors jumping on the TBPA "bandwagon", Peace Parks are now set up in "virtually every corner of the African continent" (Wilkie *et al.* 2001, Wolmer 2003, Lycklama à Nyeholt *et al.* 2001, van Amerom & Büscher 2005). The presumed ability of Peace Parks to promote peace, including by reducing boundary conflicts, is an argument often used, alongside their expected ecological and economic benefits, to justify the reservation of land for TBPAs (Griffin *et al.* 1999, Hanks 2001). Some conservationists present the ability of TBPAs to

[6] Thanks to Dr. T. Islam for assistance in the production of this figure.
[7] In addition to the World Bank, Save the Children, USAID, GTZ, the German Development Bank and the Italian CESVI are all involved in the creation of Peace Parks, for example.

promote peace in contested borderlands to be so enormous that they recommend the creation of Peace Parks in areas still engaged in armed conflict, such as borderlands in the Great Lakes region (van der Giessen 2005). Other Peace Park protagonists have acceded, however, that without the absence of armed conflict no TBPAs are possible (Hammelburg 2006).

The potential of TBPAs to help settle boundary conflict between countries maintaining peaceful relations can also be questioned, although the conditions in which these TBPAs are created are clearly more favourable. The "rational actor", "resource scarcity" and other notions implicitly underpinning the idea that inter-state co-operation and governments' stakes in TBPAs will result in international friendship and clear the way for a resolution of boundary disputes have been uncovered as inadequate explanatory models for the behaviour of states in TBPAs (Lejano 2006, Duffy 2005). The scant empirical findings on the political performance of TBPAs in borderlands indicates that persistent boundary conflicts may hamper the creation of Peace Parks, rather than Peace Parks settling or lessening inter-state conflict over boundaries, particularly if the TBPA in question has not been explicitly founded to help settle a given boundary conflict, for example in the aftermath of a peace treaty in post-boundary conflict areas (Hearns 1997, Alcalde *et al.* 2005).

Considering that the peace-building and boundary conflict reducing effects of TBPAs cannot be assumed, the generation of more data on the interaction between inter-state cooperation in TBPAs and existing boundary conflicts is desirable. This article aims to contribute to this line of inquiry by considering the creation of the Namibian-South African Ai-Ais/Richtersveld TBPA (see Figure 12.3) and its effects on the status of the Namibian-South African conflict over the location of the Orange River boundary, if any. The next section will first outline the history and status of the Orange River boundary conflict in more depth. The following section describes major developments and patterns in Namibian-South African collaboration and negotiations on the TBPA. The final section discusses the implications of these for the Orange River boundary conflict and reflects on the broader significance of the findings.

The contested Orange River boundary

Namibia and South Africa share a nearly 1,000 km-long boundary, a considerable part of which runs through the Orange River, along the northern high water mark (Brownlie 1979), rather than being in the middle of the river, as is common international practice.[8] This delineation originated in July 1890 (Demhardt

[8] Personal communication (e-mail), M. Pratt, Director International Boundaries Research Unit, Durham, 2004.

1990), when the Germans accepted this boundary line proposed by a military superior Britain,[9] and agreed to article III of the Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty:

> In Southwest Africa the sphere in which the exercise of influence is reserved to Germany is bounded. To the south by a line commencing at the mouth of the Orange rivers, and ascending the *north bank* of that river to the point of its intersection by the 20th degree of east longitude (Herslet 1967, quoted in Dierks 2000).

This situation posed few problems until Namibia's independence from South Africa in 1990. The Namibian constitution (article 1(4)) stipulated that:

> The national of Namibia shall consist of the whole of territory recognised by … the United Nations as Namibia … and its southern boundary *shall extend to the middle of the Orange River* (Demhardt 1990: 362, italics added).

Namibia referred to, amongst others, the Helsinki Rules on the Uses of International Rivers to defend its claim.

With reference to the OAU's Cairo Agreement, South Africa continued to adhere to the existing boundary contract, however, claiming "*both* [river]banks (Evans 1993: 134). From the early 1990s onwards South Africa and Namibia discussed the location of the Orange River boundary, establishing a Joint Technical Committee to research and report on the boundary demarcation in 1993 (Evans 1993: 134). Contrary to other Namibian territorial claims in South Africa,[10] the boundary dispute was never settled. The issue is complicated by two factors:

> (1) The presence of valuable natural resources in, and on the banks of, the Orange River

The river mouth contains major diamond deposits, and islands in the Orange River provide valuable grazing land, while the river also provides good fishing opportunities and is a source of water in the arid desert borderland. Both Namibia and South Africa claim access to these resources.[11] While South Africa has expressed the willingness to revise the boundary to follow the river's median line, it has never been willing to relinquish its water, grazing, fishing and mineral property rights, to the dismay of Namibia (Maletsky 2000, van Amerom 2005).

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[9] The then colonial powers of respectively Namibia and South Africa.

[10] On 1 March 1994, following three years of bi-lateral negotiations, a South African-Namibian dispute over ownership of Walvis Bay, a coastal enclave, and 12 offshore islands was resolved, when South Africa returned these areas to Namibia.

[11] When South Africa still ruled Namibia, it exercised sovereignty over the whole river, which is very wide in places. During this period South Africa granted mineral rights to South Africa's mining companies to exploit the area's valuable diamonds, and land rights to the river's islands to the local communities in and around the Richtersveld. Under pressure from these beneficiaries, South African governments have generally been unwilling to release South Africa's access rights to these natural resources. Access to land and diamonds in what it perceives to be "its" side of the river and river mouth is a key motivation for Namibia's request for boundary re-adjustment, however (van Amerom 2005: 198).

(2) Disagreements over earlier agreements

South Africa already agreed to review the boundary during the two presidencies preceding President Thabo Mbeki's ones. The premature ending of De Klerk's administration and postponements during the Mandela regime meant, however, that the process of specifying what had to be delineated was never accomplished (Conley & van Niekerk 1998, Graig 2001). Namibia requests a following up of these tacit agreements. Current South African President Mbeki does not feel obligated by these never formalized arrangements of his predecessors. South Africa decided that the boundary would not be adjusted during his first presidency, in July 2000 (Graig 2001) and demanded that Namibia would adhere to "the OAU's policy on respecting colonial boundaries" (Pana 2000). This has not happened; the Orange River boundary dispute has continued to flare up periodically and put pressure on the otherwise cordial relations between South Africa and Namibia (Evans 1993).

At the start of the Namibian-South African cooperation in the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld the boundary dispute had been laid dormant for some time. This may well have been a precondition for co-operation on the TBPA to occur – the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld incorporates a substantial part of the contested South African-Namibian border along the Orange River (see Figure 12.3). South African conservation authorities had earlier excluded Namibia from the Botswana-South African Kgalagadi TBPA, allegedly out of fear that the Namibian boundary claims would interfere with the creation of the TBPA (Ramutsindela 2004: 66). While, perhaps for similar reasons, the settlement of the Orange River boundary conflict was never listed as a formal aim of the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld TBPA's creation, Namibian-South African co-operation in the TBPA might nevertheless *de facto* contribute to this scenario, according to the earlier discussed premises underpinning the Peace Parks concept. Aided by favourable geographical circumstances and a general consensus between Namibia and South Africa on desired land use, jurisdiction and security management of the TBPA, negotiations took place in an amicable atmosphere and caused few tensions.

Furthermore, many of the key South African and Namibian players in the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld Park, such as the Ministries of Mining and Natural Resources, are also major players in the boundary conflict. This overlap increases the likelihood that friendship and mutual understanding generated in the cause of co-operation in the TBPA could have a spin-off effect and facilitate renewed discussion on the boundary or its "*dépassement*" (i.e. setting aside territorial claims for greater mutual benefits – Bourguiba quoted in Nordquist 2001: 28, 37). For this to happen, negotiations on the TBPA needed to develop in isolation of the

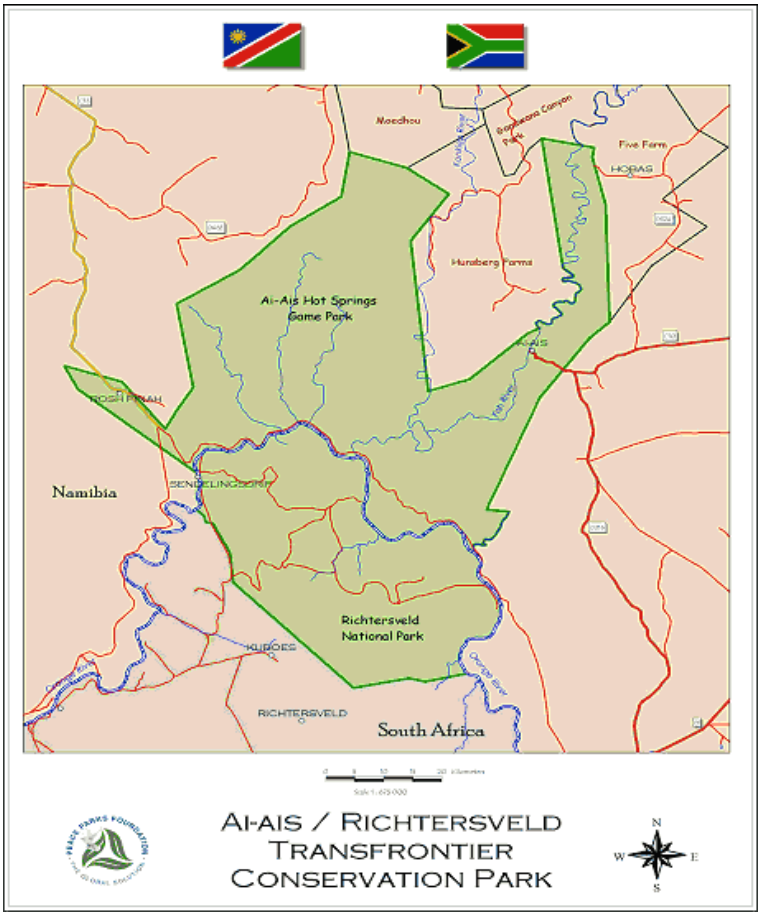

Figure 12.3 Map of the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld
Source: Peace Parks Foundation (2004).[12]

boundary conflict, however. Instead, co-operation in the TBPA became soon hampered by, and subjected to, a renewed outbreak of conflict over the location of the boundary.

Namibian-South African collaboration in the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld

Compared to many other TBPAs (van Amerom & Büscher 2005, van Amerom 2006), the connection of the Namibian Ai-Ais with its South African counterpart (the Richtersveld Park) can be undertaken relatively easy. The Ai-Ais hot springs reserve and the Richtersveld Park are adjacent and, with the boundary separating the two conservation areas being little demarcated with fences, already *de facto* connected in many places. Especially in the dry season, when the Orange River separating the Richtersveld from its Namibian counterpart tends to dry up, uninhibited pedestrian and wildlife cross-border access is a reality. Furthermore, there are no major security issues constraining the creation of unimpeded cross-

[12] Thanks to Mr. C. Beech.

border access for animals and people alike within the TBPA. For these reasons, the creation of the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld Park could and did initially progress relatively rapidly. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Transboundary Park was signed on 17 August 2001 (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2003).

The smooth Namibian-South African co-operation in the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld did not have a noticeable positive effect on the Orange River boundary issue, however. Two months after the signing of the MoU on the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld the boundary conflict flared up once more, with Namibia demanding once more an adjustment. South Africa attempted "agenda-removal". It referred to a presidential summit in 2001, during which President Thabo Mbeki and his Namibian counterpart Sam Nujoma had already agreed on the boundary's present location, for which reason the boundary dispute had not come up since. This did not resolve the issue, however. Namibia claimed that it had raised its concerns regarding the location of the boundary in discussions between the ministers of trade on a project around the Orange River later in the year (Graig 2001, van Amerom 2005: 199).

Not only did Namibian-South African relations become strained once more by the boundary conflict following their collaboration in the TBPA, the continuation of negotiations on the TBPA became linked to progress on the boundary issue. When South Africa failed to re-negotiate the boundary issue, Namibia strategically started to demand that the boundary issue be settled prior to any further meetings on the TBPA, turning it into a *de facto* condition for further cooperation.[13]

Namibia could use its continued participation in the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld as a pressure means for various reasons. While "Namibia has an interest in developing ecotourism to its Ai-Ais Park by means of the TBPA, the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld is particularly driven, and desired, by South Africa. Namibia provides most of the land for the Peace Park, however (4,326 km^2 of a total 5,921 km^2). The involvement of the South African PPF also made it attractive for Namibia to try and politically exploit its participation in the TBPA. As an NGO, the PPF has no major say in the boundary dispute" (van Amerom 2005: 200). However, Anton Rupert, its founder and head, could exercise considerable influence in this area, because of his involvement with Transhex, a powerful South African mining company which he founded. Although headed by his son, Anton Rupert still owned a substantial number of shares in the company and Transhex actively supports the creation of the TBPA. "By refusing to further co-operate with the TBPA Namibia could use its participation in the Park as a means of pressurizing

[13] The following discussion of events is based upon fieldwork undertaken in the period 2002-2003, PhD. Discussed events that took place after 2003 have been observed and researched through literature research.

the Rupert family to give up its resistance to a revision of the boundary. Protecting its exploitation rights to diamonds in the area, Transhex fiercely opposes a settlement of the boundary dispute to Namibia's advantage, and lobbies the South African government accordingly" (van Amerom 2005: 201).

Furthermore, Namibia demanding a re-adjustment of the Orange River boundary prior to further progress on the TBPA made sense politically. Possible security implications of the connection of the South African Richtersveld with the Ai-Ais Park included the usage of the TBPA by criminal syndicates involved in diamond and arms smuggling (Minaar 2001). Both Namibia and South Africa acceded that, in order to check this risk, custom officials needed to be installed (two at each side of the border) requiring the erection of a border post. The existing, but closed, Sendelingsdrift border post was identified at the most suitable spot, as a result of which its re-opening became part of the plans for the TBPA, following the MoU. The establishment of a border post is not just functional, however, but also has a highly symbolic meaning. Indicating where the territory of one country ends, and that of the other starts, border posts implicitly confirm a given boundary line, even with those not internationally recognized or disputed (van Amerom 1997, Custred 2003). By implicitly confirming the existing boundary line in the Orange River, which Namibia wants to be re-drawn to follow the river's middle, the erection of a border post in the TBPA along a not re-drawn boundary could achieve the very thing Namibia wants to avoid: Weigh in against a possible future settlement of the Orange River boundary dispute in its advantage.

South Africa, by means of its Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), continued to resist the Namibian demand, however. It refused to link the discussions on the boundary arrangements in the TBPA to wider discussions on the location of the boundary (van Amerom 2005: 201). The South African lack of willingness to discuss the boundary issue eventually led Namibia to unilaterally break off negotiations on the TBPA. Rather than providing a platform to bring Namibia and South Africa closer together on the boundary issue, prior to its official opening the Peace Park became a "stage for magnifying historical grievances, hegemonic relations, and mistrust", as Peace Parks may also do (Lejano 2006: 577).

In mid-2002 the Namibian government "put on hold" all plans regarding the TBPA (Namibian official in confidential correspondence with South African National Parks [SANPs] official). Namibian officials involved in the negotiations on the Peace Park were explicitly instructed by their superiors not to organize or attend any meetings on the creation of the TBPA "until further notice" (Namibian Park official, Interview, 2003). South Africa did not respond to these actions. In fact, officials of the South African Department of Environmental Affairs and

Tourism denied there was a dispute over the boundary in the TBPA, given that Namibia had "at no stage" launched such a request "through the appropriate channels", or even at earlier meetings at ministerial levels on the TBPA (anonymous source DEAT, 2002). They also contested the legitimacy of Namibia's claims on the Orange River, pointing to the decision of the International Court of Justice in 1999. Asked by Namibia and Botswana "to determine the boundary … around Kasikili/Sedudu Island" (International Court of Justice 1996) the Court ruled in favour of Botswana, rejecting Namibian claims on the island and maintaining the current Botswana-Namibian boundary as stipulated in the Anglo-German Treaty of 1890. As such, the court recognized the validity of the Anglo-German boundary agreements, illustrating, according to DEAT, that Namibia's demands were not legitimate. DEAT also perceived Namibia's behaviour as "unacceptable blackmail" (anonymous source, DEAT 2002).

At lower levels, relations seemed remarkably little affected. Park officials, NGO people and other actors actively involved in the day-to-day planning of the park on both sides of the boundary expressed regret that the boundary issue halted the process, but many were sympathetic to the position of the adjacent country. One South African expressed understanding for Namibia's desire to want to challenge an "apartheid boundary" and hoped it would succeed, whilst a Namibian felt apologetic towards its South African colleagues for suddenly having to stop the work on the TBPA. All expressed a desire to reconnect with their colleagues across the boundary as soon as the "crisis" would be over, and at international meetings on TBPAs Namibian and South Africans readily engaged in conversations. They also made it clear, however, that the breaking of the deadlock would depend on the respective Ministries of Environment on both sides of the boundary (see also van Amerom 2005: 235).

In spite of the lack of South African concessions regarding the position of the boundary, the Namibian government eventually eased its resistance and negotiations on the TBPA were resumed. Three years after the signing of the MoU, the treaty for the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld was eventually signed on the 1st of August 2003. Missing out on the economic advantages of cross-border co-operation generated by the TBPA is likely to have played a role in Namibia's resumption of the negotiations on the Peace Park with South Africa. Namibia's withdrawal of support in the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld delivered no results whilst Namibia has considerable ecotourism interests in a linkage of its relatively underdeveloped Ai-Ais Park to the more advanced and better known Richtersveld Park. Had Namibia resumed negotiations on the TBPA solely, or mainly, in order not to loose future ecotourism benefits from the TBPA, the binding role of a TBPA between two countries engaged in a boundary dispute could be said to have been confirmed. Moreover, considering that the creation of the TBPA would entail the

creation of border posts, thereby confirming its current status, Namibia's continuation with the TBPA represented some sort of acceptance at least to some extent, of the Orange River boundary as currently drawn. This could indicate the start of the boundary dispute's "*dépassement*". This situation entails that there is *de facto* and durable acceptance of the status quo: The "claimant" state accepts the boundary demarcation and stops demanding an alteration of the boundary (Nordquist 2001). As such, Namibia's decision to continue to participate in the TBPA at the first sight appeared rather promising: Not just for the creation of the TBPA, but also because it could pave the path for the boundary conflict's ultimate disappearance of the agenda.

However, Namibia's decision to re-engage with the TBPA appears to have only been limitedly motivated by the prospect of growing ecotourism revenue from the TBPA. Economic interests in transboundary co-operation with South Africa in other policy areas played a considerably important role as well.

Hostile relations between Namibia and South Africa as a result of the renewal of their boundary dispute meant that lucrative marine diamond mining plans had to be delayed, as well as an exploitation of recently discovered gas reserves in the area, leading to corporate pressure on both governments to bypass the boundary dispute and come to a workable agreement (van Amerom 2006: 202). Prospects of gains from gas finds in the borderland seem to have also fuelled Namibia's willingness to co-operate with South Africa in spite of the outstanding boundary dispute. It is interesting to note that the treaty of the Ai-Ais/Richterveld was signed on the same day that the countries signed a Bilateral Gas Trade Agreement to exploit gas reserves on the Kudu Gas Field (1 August 2003) (Nujoma 2003b). On the 5th of August, an agreement over shipping gas was signed. As part of this agreement the countries committed themselves to negotiate on other policy areas, including environmental ones. The progress made on the Ai-Ais/Richterveld seemed therefore to depend on progress made in transboundary economic cooperation in other areas (van Amerom 2005: 202).

Secondly, Namibia's resumption of negotiations on the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld in spite of South Africa's refusal to honour Namibia's border adjustment request, and the subsequent signing of the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld treaty, does not necessarily mean that its position regarding the boundary has changed. Namibia has, thus far, failed to follow up its arrangements with South Africa regarding the Sendelingsdrift border post and the operation of a pontoon across the Orange River, which would enable transboundary tourism traffic within the TBPA. Although the TBPA was already formally declared open in 2003, following the signing of the treaty, it was still not possible for tourists to legally cross the Orange River by means of the appointed pontoon. This is rather remarkable.

From a technical viewpoint, in 2003 it was already possible to cross the Orange River by means of the traditional "pontoon" installed for that purpose at the Sendelingsdrift border post on the western boundary of the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld (Dentlinger 2003). Furthermore, the border crossing point could play a "pivotal role for tourism" (Kanzler 2005). As a reporter of a magazine for adventure motoring notes, its instalment would mean that

> it will no longer be necessary to make the lengthy detour to the Vioolsdrif/Noordoewer border post via the main South African N7 and Namibian Bl route which links Cape Town and Windhoek" or "to exit the Richtersveld at the Helskloof gate and drive the mountain pass via Helskloof Reserve between Eksteenfontein and Vioolsdrif (Dalglish 2006).

Nevertheless, Namibian and South African immigration authorities had by August 2003 still not put the "administrative procedures in place" (Dentlinger 2003), meaning that the pontoon continued to be used only for mining personnel working across the border, not tourists. Given the relatively long time that passed between the signing of the MoU and the treaty, coupled with the fact the Park has been formally declared open and that there are no major security constraints preventing the connection of the two parks, these delays can be called remarkable. Even more striking is that none of the subsequent deadlines to operationalize the Sendelingsdrift Border Post and the pontoon have been adhered to, in contrast to stipulated progress in other policy areas, such as the development of a joint tourism marketing plan,[14] due to continued inaction or changing demands by Namibia (see also Table 12.1).

On the other hand, limited capacity to finance its border posts (Philander 2006) could also account for Namibia's failure to create transboundary cross-border access for tourists in the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld. Following promises by mining companies Scorpion Zinc, Rosh Pinah and Namdeb to fund a building with offices for border officials and nature conservation staff, Namibia committed itself once more to the opening of the Sendelingsdrift border post in November 2005, which suggests that limited finances may have been an obstacle. However, this goes only so far in explaining the Namibian delays. Following this agreement, no action to construct the border post was undertaken on the Namibian side until present (2006). Furthermore, delays were also caused by an apparent lack of willingness by the Namibian government to clear administrative obstacles to the operation of the pontoon, and to formally sanction the creation of the Sendelingsdrift border post.

[14] On 28 February 2004 at Sendelingsdrift, the then Ministers of Environment and Tourism of Namibia and South Africa respectively, Philemon Malima and Valli Moosa, appointed a Joint Management Board (JMB) for the TBPA, whilst also deciding that South Africa would be the co-ordinating country for the first two years. In addition to completing a tourism plan, their tasks involved the opening of the boundary between the two countries. By the end of 2004, the tourism plan was being finalized, but the pontoon was still not operational for tourists.

Table 12.1 Overview of announced expected opening dates/time frames of the Sendelingsdrift Pontoon Border Post

Year of announcement	Source	Event/publication	Announced opening date	Announced reason for earlier delay
2003 (18 February)	Vali Moosa (South African Minister of Environment and Tourism)	Comment to Parliamentary Monitoring Committee	1st of August 2003	Delays in implementing agreements of Joint Management Plan
2004	Peace Park Foundation	Annual Review	June/July 2005	Namibian desire to conduct further study into feasibility of border post (van der Walt 2004)
2005 (14 May)	Kanzler, S.	InterMinisterial Meeting on TBPA	"soon"	Formal procedures in Namibia not yet in place
2006	South African National Parks	Website	November 2006	-
2006	South African National Parks	Annual Report	March 2007	-
2006 (28 November)	Konjore 2006, quoted in Gaomas 2006	Interview to New Era	May/June 2007	-

In 2004 the installation of the renovated pontoon was completed thanks to contributions by Scorpion Mine, and started to be used for mining personnel already (van der Walt 2004). On the basis of earlier made arrangements with Namibia, South African National Parks expected thereafter the Sendelingsdrift border post and pontoon to be operational towards the end of 2005, with the work on the boundary post to starting "in the first quarter of 2005" (SANPs 2004: 14). However, the special permission needed from Namibia to operate the ferry had still not been given by spring 2005, in spite of Namibia's completion of a comprehensive study into the construction of a pontoon-operated border post facility at Sendelingsdrift in 2004 (van der Walt 2004). "Concrete talks … about opening the border crossing at Sendelingsdrift on the Gariep/Orange River to establish a direct link between the parks" only started in September 2005 (Kanzler 2005), including, as explained by Namibian Minister of Environment and Tourism Fanual Demas, because Namibia was "still looking into registering ... the ferry" (Demas 2005, quoted in Kanzler 2005).

By October 2006 the Namibian cabinet had still not formally approved of the plans for the construction of the Sendelingsdrift border post. More than three and a half years since its official opening in 2003, the TBPA is still not operational as a result of these delays. Even if Namibia may no longer demand an adjustment of the Orange River boundary in exchange for its continued participation in the planning of the TBPA, negotiations on boundary management issues, that by

their very nature explicitly draw attention to the position of the boundary, appear to have remained a sensitive issue.[15]

Expected future ecotourism spin-offs from the TBPA continue to play a rather marginal role in structuring Namibia's willingness to create the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld. This might well change, once the TBPA is operational, and generates more ecotourism income. However, this prospect will depend on the construction of the border post, creating a Catch-22 situation.

In the meantime, rather than or alongside Namibia's economic interests in the TBPA, expected economic advantages from agreements with South Africa in other areas shape Namibia's continued engagement with the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld. These dynamics indicate further limitations to the ability of TBPAs to promote close ties between countries involved in a boundary dispute, on the basis of their shared interests in expected ecotourism benefits. Renewed pledges made by Namibia to fulfil its earlier promise of constructing the border post tend to follow or coincide with the finalization of agreements with South Africa on economic co-operation in other areas, or other initiatives that are, also, in Namibia's favour. For example, in November 2006, the Namibian cabinet eventually sanctioned the creation of the Sendelingsdrift pontoon border post and the operation of the ferry. This decision followed South Africa's publicly announced resolve to re-open the Mata Mata border post to allow tourism traffic to and from Namibia into the Botswana – South African Kgalagadi,[16] six weeks earlier. This measure is an important victory for Namibia, which has always contested the "unilateral" closure of the border post by South Africa following its independence in 1990 and has tried to re-negotiate its re-opening since then. The economic benefits of such a linkage are likely to be considerable, with polls indicating that 80% of tourists visiting the Botswana- South African Kgalagadi Park will want to continue to Namibia from there (Springer 2005).

Furthermore, the Namibian cabinet approval for the construction of the Sendelingsdrift border post coincided with the finalization of new Namibian-South African development initiatives along the Trans-Kalahari Highway, as well as with a Namibian-South African agreement to market 48 identified projects at a jointly organized investors' conference mid-2007. As part of a Presidential Top discussing these subjects, the movement of tourists in the Ai-Ais/-Richtersveld Transfrontier Park was once more put on the agenda (Ngatjizeko

[15] By the end of November 2006 Namibia made renewed promises to re-open the Sendelingsdrift border post, however, with Minister of Environment and Tourism, W. Konjore, confirming the prospect that the pontoon-operated border post would be functioning by June 2007 (Konjore, quoted in Gaomas 2006). This plan and its planned financing were officially adopted by the Namibian Cabinet, which may indicate that the opening of the Sendelingsdrift border post has gained higher priority.

[16] In addition, the Peace Parks Foundation allocated N $1 million (€ 104,606) to Namibia to assist it with its creation of the Mata Mata border post in November 2006.

2006, quoted in Maletsky 2006). Progress with the creation of the TBPA seems therefore to be considerably linked to agreements on Namibian-South African projects in other areas. Rather than a TBPA working as an independent variable able to change the wider economic-political settings in which it operates, as Peace Park protagonists maintain, its course may be greatly determined, and at times subjected to, developments in these spheres.

Conclusion

Two main ways in which the Namibian-South African boundary dispute could be peacefully resolved, other than through international arbitrage, can be identified:

- a re-drawing of the boundary line, as requested by the claimant state (Griggs 2001);
- a fading away into non-existence or insignificance as a political predicament, with the claimant country ceasing to request a adjustment of the boundary (Nordquist 2001).

Thus far, Namibian-South African co-operation on the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld has not led to any of these changes. Namibia's demands to re-adjust the boundary prior to the TBPA's opening, were not met by South Africa, as a result of which Namibia withdrew temporarily from the negotiations on the TBPA. Considering Namibia's reluctance to construct the Sendelingsdrift border post, the boundary dispute seems not to have faded away into non-existence either. Not only has the formal establishment of the TBPA not had any noticeable positive effect on the boundary dispute, it may have fuelled existing resentments over it. In the meantime, the TBPA's *de facto* opening appears to be dependent on the arrangements that Namibia and South Africa make in other economic areas, whereby expected economic benefits seem to serve as a motivation for Namibia to continue with the TBPA.

Indirectly, and as part of a wider web of transboundary projects between Namibia and South Africa, Namibian-South African co-operation in the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld may have laid some foundations for the future settlement of the boundary dispute, however. According to Nordquist (2001), the extent of compensation that a claimant state may receive from the country that wants to maintain the boundary line as it is, may play an important role in promoting an acceptance of the boundary line as it stands. By using its continued participation in the TBPA as a "pawn" in negotiations in other areas, Namibia may have assured certain economic benefits it might not otherwise have obtained. In the meantime, a new set up of the Namib borderland has been negotiated with South Africa, whereby Namibian access into Botswana and South Africa will be assured through the Mata Mata border post. While these agreements do not directly compensate Namibia for its perceived loss of diamond fields and other resources (due to a boundary granting South Africa these rights up to the north-

ern bank of the Orange River, rather than just up to the middle of the river), they might have a similar function. As such, they might make it easier for Namibia to accept the boundary as it stands, without experiencing major loss of face and by limiting its economic losses. Whether these agreements will be enough "compensation" for Namibia to drop its boundary alteration demands remains an open question, however.

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13

Development encounters: Westerners and chieftaincy in Southern Ghana[1]

Marijke Steegstra

Every once in a while, one can read about the installation or the good deeds of a so-called development chief or queen mother in Ghanaian newspapers and magazines. Often the development chief concerned is a wealthy Ghanaian, possibly living abroad, who shows concern for his/her (home) community. Remarkably, however, many times the development chief mentioned is a foreigner from the Netherlands, Germany, America or elsewhere. How to interpret this phenomenon?

A development chief or queen mother occupies a special position in the complex Ghanaian chieftaincy tradition. The word "development chief" is the English translation of the Akan title *Nkosuohene*. *Nkosuo* means "progress", or "development" ("-*hene*" is the designation for a chief). Since the late *Asantehene*, Otumfuo Opoku Ware II, created this new position in 1985 at the occasion of his 25th jubilee of his ascension to the golden stool, dozens of Ghanaians, but at least as many Westerners, have been installed as development chiefs or queen mothers. The latter category (Westerners) is especially on the rise since the mid-

[1] This paper is based on material that was assembled during fieldwork conducted in Ghana's Volta, Eastern, Brong Ahafo and Ashanti Regions between 2004 and 2005. The research took place in the context of my post-doctoral research project "The cultural construction of development: the installation of 'white' chiefs in Ghana". It was made possible financially by the Netherlands Foundation for Tropical Research (WOTRO).

1990s, which seems to coincide with a sharp increase in international tourist arrivals at that time.[2] The people involved range from gap-year students, tourists and African-American roots pilgrims to businessmen and aid workers (see Steegstra 2006 for more details).

The impulse to "enstool" foreigners was given by the *Asantehene* and thus was encouraged among the Akan speaking chiefs.[3] But soon non-Akan speaking communities in mostly southern Ghana started to copy the phenomenon and used their own terms to designate very similar positions. For example, among the Ewe, a development chief is called *Ngoryi-fia* (*ngoryi* = "to go forward", "to progress", "development"; "*-fia*" is the Ewe designation for a chief) or *Dunenyofia* (literally "to make the town beautiful" [in terms of development]). A development chief is usually installed without very elaborate procedures, which are mostly based on the public aspects of chieftaincy. The installation ceremonies vary very much and can be characterized as local inventions of tradition. They do not follow customary regulations and are not subject to political considerations like that of regular chiefs. Likewise the powers of development chiefs are limited to matters of "development". Although people in Ghana in general do respect the "white" chiefs and take them serious, most Ghanaians know how to interpret the position and where to place it in the chiefly power hierarchy.[4]

However, Western popular media have often depicted these white chiefs as "rulers" and "kings", thereby exoticizing or even ridiculing the phenomenon. The stories typically lack any nuancing or explanation. For example, *The Sun* recently published a story entitled "Brit pair rule in Africa", which says that the British couple "became Africa's first white chief and queen".[5] This type of stories is one of the reasons why development chiefs are the subject of debate, especially among Ghanaians abroad. Also some chiefs and opinion leaders in Ghana fear a degradation of the chieftaincy institution as a result of the seemingly indiscriminate installation of foreigners. At the same time, many African-Americans and other diasporans view the enstoolment of whites as a corruption of tradition, sacrilegious and disgraceful, because they have laid claim on the institution of chieftaincy as a distinction mark of a "Black identity" (Schramm 2004: 166).

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[2] See also www.world-tourism.org.

[3] A chiefly "stool" symbolizes authority and the power of the ancestors. A chief "occupies a stool", which refers to his influence sphere. It also is an actual wooden seat. During the enstoolment the new chief or queen is ceremonially seated on his or her stool (see also Sarpong 1971). Thus installation is called "enstoolment" and deposition is known as "destoolment".

[4] To most Ghanaians a "white" skin color is quite loosely defined. A "white man" can be somebody from the Netherlands, but also from China. Both will be called "*oburoni*" (Twi for "from overseas", "white man"). Even African-Americans, often much to their amazement, are called "*aburoni*" (plural). The subject of this paper is such that the term *white* is being questioned; however, for ease of reading I have not used scare quotes throughout. For ease of reading I have also not referred to "chiefs and queen mothers" throughout. Where I mention "(white) chiefs" I refer to both men and women.

[5] *The Sun* Online, July 11, 2006. Retrieved from: www.thesun.co.uk/article.

One example of a development chief whose installation has created a lot of media attention as well as confusion and debate, is Dutchman Henk Otte. He has been a chief in Mepe in the Volta Region of Ghana since 1997. He has appeared in many television shows in the Netherlands and elsewhere, and newspaper articles about him appeared all over the world. Headlines in the media said for example: "Jobless man ruler of a kingdom" (*Birmingham Evening Mail*, January 19, 2000); "White man proclaimed king of Ghanaian tribes: In Ghana, the Dutch native is carried by throne-bearers and surrounded by cheering crowds" (*The Vancouver Sun*, January 19, 2000); "Jobless white builder rules as African king. Dutchman is declared reincarnation of monarch" (Sparks 2000, *Sunday Telegraph* [London], March 26, 2000). Otte also featured in an American documentary film called "Togbe" ("The incredible true story of how an ordinary man became a King" – Reel Films, 2001).[6] The stories of Otte supposedly being a reincarnation of a "monarch" and "ruler" in Ghana was picked up by Ghanaians living abroad and consequently by Ghanaian media too and caused much turmoil. Otte subsequently has been the subject of much debate on discussion fora on Ghanaian websites.

In this essay, I approach the emergence of white development chiefs from an ethnographic perspective. In order to comprehend this relatively new phenomenon, it is necessary to place it in the wider societal context of the Ghanaian communities in which they are installed. In so doing, the relationship between development chiefs and contemporary transnational connections, as well as the popularity of the development discourse will be taken into account. The attitude and intentions of both Ghanaian chief makers and white development chiefs and queen mothers will be illustrated through the case study of the Dutchman Otte. I will argue that it is not adequate to approach the institution of white development chiefs as an example of exotic culture, or to condemn it as a degradation of chieftaincy. I suggest approaching this phenomenon from an agency point of view. The installation of white development chiefs and queen mothers offers Ghanaians the possibility to appropriate development and express dreams of development. The installation of development chiefs is a way for both villagers and those bringing "development" from outside to find a style of synthesis, through which they can realistically engage with a world of development (cf. Leigh-Puigg 1997: 282). However, the involvement of "white" chiefs can be a risky undertaking as Otte's case will make clear.

[6] For an impression of this film, see: www.christmaswish.org/togbe/Togbe.htm.

Chiefs and development in Ghana

Southern Ghana has a longstanding history of kings, chiefs and their female counterparts the "queen mothers", especially among the numerically and culturally dominant Akan-speaking communities, who make up almost 50% of the total population of Ghana. During the period of British indirect rule, chiefs were integrated in colonial governance. Since the early 1950s the national state declared that power was to reside with elected politicians rather than with those who occupied traditional offices (Arhin 1985b, chapter 6). After independence, and particularly in the Nkrumah era, the attempt to contain chiefs went beyond the whittling of power to the crushing of Ghanaian chiefs suspected of opposition sympathies (Arhin 1985a; Rathbone 2000a, 2000b). Classical modernization theories in the 1950s and 1960s assumed that the principles of modern bureaucratic office would become more important than traditional hereditary leadership anyway. Chiefs were seen as anachronistic and as barriers to the achievement of material modernization. The processes by which chiefs rule and the rituals and mystique that legitimized their authority were considered incompatible with rapid transformation. Chieftaincy was seen as a major aspect of the problem of "underdevelopment" rather than as part of the solution (Rathbone 2001: 3-4).

By the mid-1960s the institution of chieftaincy had been significantly weakened, although a genuine popular interest in chieftaincy affairs remained (Nugent 1996: 211-212). Chiefs lost most of their local government and judicial functions, but were left with a residual role in the Regional Houses of Chiefs. The 1969 Constitution, however, established a National House of Chiefs.[7] Within this institution, traditional rulers, despite various degrees of power, have been formally incorporated into the modern structures of governance. The Fourth Republican Constitution of 1992 restored the dignity of chiefs, debarring them from active participation in politics, but allowing them to be appointed to serve in public institutions with non-partisan character (CDD-Ghana 2001: 37-39; van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal 1987).

Today, the state's position vis-à-vis chieftaincy is ambivalent, but the latter's popularity, especially in the rural and in the Akan-speaking areas, remains unchallenged. In Ghana, chiefs and queen mothers are usually called "traditional rulers" (Arhin 1985b) and custodians of "traditional culture", and function as an emblem of authenticity in the discourse of cultural nationalism (Schramm 2004: 158). In general chiefs play an important role in ceremonial and political-judicial functions, control lands and resources and have actual power to mobilize people. As brokers between "local culture" and "development", traditional rulers in

[7] Queen mothers are debarred from participation in the National House of Chiefs.

Ghana are urged to work towards "development". Yearly festivals where chiefs and queen mothers gather have themes such as "Unity – tool for development" (Ngmayem festival 2004 in the Eastern Region) and "Consolidating Gbidukor. Unity and development" (Gbidukorza 2004 in the Volta Region). At durbars (parades) during such yearly festivals an "appeal for funds for development" will usually be part of the programme. In their speeches chiefs talk about the need to raise the standard of living in their area. Therefore, they are called "vessels for development" (e.g. Agyekum 2004: 31). Instead of being seen as impediments to development, they are now seen as catalysts in development on the local front. And as such they are now regularly urged by government officials to modify or eliminate cultural practices that are seen as inimical to "development". At the same time, cultural traditions are to be harnessed to development, as nation-building is promoted through the appreciation of their diversity (Lentz & Nugent 2000: 10). Chieftaincy is therefore indicative of an area where the assumed paradox of the preservation of "culture" and the pursuit of development and progress, is tried to be resolved (cf. Mazrui 1979).

Chieftaincy in Mepe

The road from Accra to Mepe in the Volta Region leads through flat grasslands with an occasional village along the road. Mepe is a small town along the Volta River in the North-Tongu District and the capital of the Mepe Traditional Area, which includes almost forty surrounding villages. Its inhabitants are Tongu-Ewe speaking. The Basel Mission came to Mepe town in 1898 and brought the first school. Today the successor of the Basel Mission Church, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, is still strong in Mepe. Other denominations that are present are the Apostolic and the Catholic Church, and several charismatic churches. There is one secondary school and a rural bank. The town only has had electricity since 1995. The main economic activities are farming and fishing. The women also used to do oyster and clam picking along the Volta River, while the men did creek fishing. Still many roads in Mepe are paved with oyster shells. The women were doing so well, that they were the ones supporting their children through school. But the closure of the Volta Dam in 1964 led to ecological changes that obliterated these sources of income. Tongu people's livelihood was then organized around male-centred lake-side fishing, which had consequences for women's autonomy and created tensions in gender relations (Tsikata 2006). Generally it led to impoverishment in the area. Now the river is polluted and causes water-borne diseases. Also, the fact that Mepe is a stronghold of the former government party NDC seems to have slowed down its development. The electoral defeats of NDC in 2000 and 2004 are considered to have quarantined power brokers in the region.

Chieftaincy has been shaped by values of very different cultural traditions and consequently carries different meanings from area to area within Ghana (Rathbone 2000b: 4). The Ewe must have had their own chiefs already in pre-colonial times (Amenumey 1986: 13), but the stools are probably an Akan borrowing (Nugent 2005: 31). Overall the chiefs' power base in the Volta Region is weaker than that of their counterparts in the Akan areas in Ghana. The different Ewe peoples do not recognize one central ruler and the Volta Region can be characterized as a "regional melting pot" (Nugent 2005). In addition, unlike the Akan chiefs, the chiefs do not own any stool lands,[8] thus they have less power to control access to land and the people who work on that land. The amalgamation policy of the British colonial regime has left its mark too (see Nugent 1996 for a more detailed discussion). The disregard of the British colonial state of historical relationships or even ethnic and linguistic differences in the process has generated problems that have continued into the present.

Four of the five different "houses" in Mepe (Adzigo, Sevie, Dzagbaku and Gbanvie) claim to have migrated from different areas and settled in the present area in the 15th and 16th centuries.[9] The Akovie are late-comers in the area and are said to originate from the Akan (Akwamu). They are the ones who deliver the paramount chief. The current paramount chief of Mepe (since 1986) is *Togbega* Kwao Aniparti IV, who also is the president of the Tongu House of Chiefs. He is an educated man in his seventies, who has a doctorate degree in agriculture from the Michigan State University and who has worked in the University of Ghana for 28 years. He is now the dean of the (private) Wisconsin University of Ghana, which is situated in Accra.

Ewe chieftaincy does not have a long tradition of queen mothers. Akan chiefly traditions have influenced the appearance of chieftaincy all over (southern) Ghana. In Mepe area too this Akanization of "traditional" chieftaincy is reflected in the rising profile of queen mothers. The old paramount queen mother from the Adzigo house, mama Awusi Sreku III, was installed in Mepe in 1954. At the time of my research, at the end of 2004, there were only two others, who were divisional queen mothers. Queen mothers are seen as the ones who organize the women, for example for communal labour. They also see to any affair concerning women and try to settle domestic disputes. The men handling chieftaincy affairs vigorously opposed to an attempt by the paramount queen mother to be carried in a palanquin during the yearly festival in 1972. This incident has dampened the

[8] Stool land is land vested in a stool on behalf of and in trust for the subjects of a stool – a customary community – in accordance with customary law and usage (sections 36[8] and 267[1] of the 1992 Constitution).

[9] A "house" refers to a lineage, or "people of a house", i.e. "house" conceived as a social unit. Some Mepe citizens called the "houses": "tribes" or "clans".

relations between the different groupings in Mepe society ever since and according to some of the chiefs, has diminished the influence of the queen mother.

The case of the Dutch Togbe

Togbega Aniparti IV, the paramount chief of Mepe, recalled that the story of *Togbe* Ferdinand Gakpetor began with his marriage in the Netherlands to a woman whose grandfather is from Mepe. *Togbega* Aniparti told me: "When they came to visit, he was with us … Every project we wanted to do, Henk wanted to take part. After visiting Ghana three times, my leaders met. We decided we wanted to honour him and give him a ceremonial title so that he can use his influence and connections to help us." He admitted that the initial idea came from the elders and the chief of Otte's (Adzigo) house. But *Togbega* Aniparti and his elders wanted to share in the idea when the Adzigo people came to ask permission from him: "When we met him [Otte], we wanted him to rather be the chief for the whole of Mepe, instead of just a development chief for Adzigo."

Otte is connected with the Adzigo people through his wife. But as in other cases where people told me that through an installation they wanted to make the person a part of their community, Otte's people tried to stress the kinship relations by giving him a special name. They named him *Togbe* Korsi Ferdinand Gakpetor II, after his wife's grandfather, Ferdinand Gakpetor, who died in 1974. The family head and another elder present during an interview I had with them, agreed that naming a person after someone is normally done to "encourage the person", and his behaviour should reflect that of his namesake. As Sarpong (1976: 88-89) indicates, one is not simply called X in Ghana, one *is* X. In this manner, the name expresses the identity of the person who bears it. A name given to a child eight days after birth by his father is usually the name of someone, dead or alive, whom he loves very much and wants to honour; and the child is supposed to grow to be like the person after whom it has been named. This naming tradition is also followed in the case of many of the development chiefs. Therefore, Henk Otte's being named after his wife's grandfather Ferdinand Gakpetor means that he resembles the latter who was (also) considered a good and kind man. Henk Otte's own additional understanding of the explanation of people in Mepe, however, was that a soothsayer had revealed that he is the grandfather's reincarnation. Therefore they call him *Togbe* Ferdinand Gakpetor II ("the second"). Even though he did not believe in his own reincarnation, Otte told me, this convinced him that the people of Mepe wanted him, a "common man", as their chief. However, an elder from his wife's family who took part in the installation said: "He [Otte] was installed as Ngoryifia. The story that a fetish priest was consulted to install him is a lie. It is a total fabrication. How Otte laughs and talks does resemble the way Ferdinand behaved, but it is not a divine source."

Nevertheless, the Western media from Japan to the USA picked up the story about the "unemployed ex-builder from Amsterdam" who "has been crowned King *Togbe* Korsi Ferdinand Gakpector II following the discovery that he is the reincarnation of the last great warrior king of the 250,000-strong Ewe tribe in Ghana" (Sparks 2000). But even if the grandfather had been a chief and Otte had been a blood relative, he would not have been considered a rightful heir to the stool of his wife's grandfather. Ewe society is patrilineal, and a hereditary chiefly position would normally follow the (direct) male line. Otte's wife's father does not originate from Mepe or even Ewe society (her mother and her mother's father do), and her own position is that of an honorary queen mother. In short, in line with Mepe people's explanation, the link with the dead grandfather must be solely interpreted as forging a bond between Otte and his Ghanaian family, between a foreigner and the community.

Where some of the Mepe people thus tried to stress bonds of kinship with the new development chief, others preferred to make a sharp distinction between "honorary positions" such as Ngoryifia, and the "real stools". Many people, including the paramount chief, but especially Ewe living abroad, reacted to the reincarnation story by saying: "How can a white man be a reincarnation of a Ghanaian?" They make the point that the grandfather was not a "real" chief, which is also indicated by his name Ferdinand. A stool name would not be a "foreign" name. One elder explained to me: "A real stool is something from nature; it has been there since time immemorial, nobody knows where it comes from. It came with us when we migrated to this place." Some of the "real stools" are so-called black stools, consecrated stools. One chief, *togbe* Amafu, said: "A black stool is a war stool. It is higher in rank than a newly created one, and spiritually too it is stronger." The black stools and other "real stools" are kept in the "stool room", which is only accessible for certain people like the chiefs and the elders. They have to bath in order to become ritually clean before entering. The powerful stools are passed on from generation to generation, they are hereditary stools. *Togbega* Aniparti too stressed that Otte's position is an honorary one. According to him, a "real chief" has to come from the right lineage and has to be qualified, whereas: "Otte is not from Mepe. His title is a ceremonial type of recognition." With "qualified" he meant that "[the person is] from the male line. He has not done anything bad. He is pure, and has never been in prison." Thus a development chief is chosen on his merits but not based on descent and he does not occupy a "real stool".

According to the *Togbega* and other interview-partners, Otte's installation in 1997 was clearly stating that his position is an honorary one and the whole ceremony was again "to encourage him" as an elder of the Adzigo "house". He was given cloth, a crown and sandals, but he did not have to be secluded in the

bush or confined in a room for a longer period. The whole ceremony resembles the "outdooring" part of an installation, as any final "coming out" of a rite of passage is called in Ghana. Some of the interviewed said that Otte did swear an oath to the Adzigo chief and again to the paramount chief, others said he did not. All agreed that Otte's wife accompanies him dressed as a queen mother because she is the wife, but she was not installed as such. The wife herself, though, claims to have been given the title of "Mamaa Awo Mepeyo Kpui II" and calls herself the "Ngoryi-nyornufia of Mepe Traditional Area", thus the development queen mother of Mepe.

The elders of the Gakpetor family had taken initiative to install Otte on their own account in the family house in 1995 already, before they presented him to the paramount chief. There he was confined for a few days in a room where accordingly he was advised and taught by the elders about how to rule, dress and dance as a chief and about his responsibilities and the family structure. After two days, two bottles of schnapps and two bottles of *akpeteshie* were presented to the elders, together with a ram. Accordingly, the ram was slaughtered and Otte had to walk through the blood. The elaborate ceremony reflects the seriousness with which his people took his installation. At the same time the whole ceremony can be called an invention of tradition, following arbitrary rules, as Otte was the first development chief ever in the whole area. According to the *mankrado* (the one that installs the chiefs and is the custodian of the town) and his elders, among the established chiefs and queen mothers, only the paramount chief and the paramount queen mother and the *mankrado* are confined in a room for one week, the other (war-) chiefs are brought to the wilderness for one day. Sheep are slaughtered, but the blood is not poured on the particular candidate's feet.

In Western media "chiefs" are usually called "kings", which evokes romantic associations with cultural Others that are quite different from African reality. Although in Ghana all chiefs are addressed in English as chiefs, making it difficult for outsiders to know their exact rank and position, in local languages there are different titles, such as the Akan *omanhene* (paramount chief), *ohene* (divisional chief) and *odikro* (sub-chief). But in Western media, the romantic idea that Otte was an "ordinary man" who became a "king" was stressed all the time. The Western media that came with this unnuanced story of Otte being the "king" of "*the* Ewe tribe" caused Mepe citizens living abroad to complain about the matter. Otte was accused of posing for a paramount chief. But in Mepe nobody saw Otte as a threat and according to the elders of the paramountcy: "Any time he comes he lowers himself to the *Togbega*", and they work "in harmony". Otte's installation was based on family relationships through his wife, but his position clearly states what was expected of him: To bring development.

Development encounters

Development is the buzz-word in Ghana. It is almost impossible to escape involvement in the discourse of development wherever you go. In ordinary Ghanaians' view, development means, at the very least, satisfying basic needs such as education, clean water, employment, health services, and good sanitary conditions and roads. The implementation of modernization by the national government has failed. The elders in Mepe said that the government is not assisting their area with development. People in the area feel things have come to a standstill, because they are known to support the former government party of J.J. Rawlings, the NDC. Supposedly due to the partisan politics of the District Assembly, hardly any projects are allocated to them. *Togbega*'s linguist said for example: "If your political representative is not there, then you will not get anything from the national cake." There are some local development initiatives, like the "C5-foundation" that helped finishing the local post office.

The installation of development chiefs in Ghana is seen as a more promising way of attaining the benefits of modernity. Many of them have constructed school blocks, provided bore holes or wells, and donated poles for electricity, books for libraries, or hospital equipment and supplies. Many of the Ghanaian development chiefs are migrants who have access to international networks and funds and support their home community. The acceptance of a long-term commitment as development chiefs to a (small) community by Westerners also fits in with a recent trend of concerned Westerners who initiate small-scale development projects after having travelled to Third World countries. They want to make a direct contribution to the improvement of the lives of people they have met. Otte has founded a Mepe Foundation in order to raise funds for the development of Mepe. Many of the other development chiefs in Ghana have initiated NGOs to support their communities. Some cooperate with existing organizations. But in many cases the help remains a one-time affair. The case of Mepe looked promising in the sense that a long-term connection seemed viable, as Otte had married into the town.

Most people in Mepe who are familiar with their Dutch development chief know that he has sent hospital beds, bicycles, wheel chairs and some other items at his own initiative, and they want him to send more. According to the elders of the paramount chief, they did not tell Otte what to send, but only that they want "development". The Mepe Development Association (MDA), a very active association that works together with the Traditional Council, does still have a number of things on its wish list: A hostel, a school, internal roads, a better drainage system; and they want an extension of the electricity network. Nevertheless, in general most people in Mepe I talked to, chiefs, queen mothers, elders and local opinion leaders, all talked very positively about their development chief and his

achievements. They all pleaded with me to tell him to return to Ghana. He should send more "things" and bring "development". Only two men who were agricultural officers and worked with the MDA between 1995 and 1997, told me that in their opinion the development chief had brought "unnecessary things", like the pumps that could not be used because the necessary pipes were not there. According to them, the MDA rather had to pay for the clearance of the hospital beds from the harbour. They claimed the development chief had lost popularity since the negative messages on the internet and in the newspapers.

Otte's way of raising money for his Mepe Development Foundation was by seeking media attention and asking donations from interviewers. However, he found out that this was a risky undertaking. After earlier commotion about his supposedly being "the king of Mepe", the biggest turmoil came about when the Associated Press in 1999 published an interview in which Otte allegedly said that Mepe's elders were barmy to have given him the status of chief ("king") and that he could go nowhere unescorted, not even to the bathroom. When this story was copied by many other "reporters" and appeared in similar forms all over the world, the controversy surrounding Otte's position reached a height. Especially Ghanaians living abroad who had access to these media reacted to the story. Otte received so many bad reactions on his website, that he decided to close it down. Otte was even denied a visa from the Ghana embassy in the Netherlands the following year, because he was said to have damaged the country's reputation. Only when the paramount chief of Mepe intervened with Ghana's foreign minister, was he reprieved. However, due to threats he received at home, Otte has been reluctant to return to Ghana afterwards.

Most of the Westerners installed seem to be wanting "to do good" in Ghana. They try to raise funds and usually do not see themselves as very affluent. But of course, in the eyes of Ghanaians they are very rich. Otte may be portrayed as an "ordinary man becoming king", but many Ghanaians, especially those in the rural or impoverished areas, do not see any white man or woman as "ordinary". Benevolence is expected from those whom the local people perceive as possessing more than they can possibly ever afford. As much as the installation of whites as chiefs can be a sincere demonstration of friendship and appreciation, it is also an implicit indication of responsibility on the part of the white to help raise the image of the particular town or community, preferably financially endowed.[10] Even though a development chief or queen mother is said to be selected on qualities such as "being respectful, a good listener, social and active", people nowadays are often quick to install any willing foreigner that more or less passes by. To them the "white man" represents wealth, or at least he is close to it.

[10] Compare F.B. Nyamnjoh & B. Page's examples of strategies of Cameroonians in using white people as a gateway to the benefits of modernity (Nyamnjoh & Page 2002).

Neighbouring towns of areas with a white chief also want their own. In the Mepe case, I was told that neighbouring towns and villages such as Battor, Dove and Tefle now also have a "white" chief or queen mother. People claim that a Ghanaian development chief would only help his own "house" and not the community. In Mepe some people felt that Otte was likewise claimed by his Ghanaian family. The paramount chief of Mepe tried to prevent this partiality by making him a development chief "for the whole area".

Conclusions

After the development chief's donations of wheelchairs and hospital beds several years ago, people in Mepe are waiting for more. But the controversies have made it difficult for Otte to raise money and have made him reluctant to return. Elsewhere in Ghana, similar stories of disappointments and about development chiefs who have never returned, vanished money, one-time actions, or failed projects can be told. But there are also success stories, of development chiefs or queen mothers who visit "their" community in Ghana every year and have been able to build school blocks, deliver hospital equipment and bring electricity. In short, there are chances of productive partnership, but also real possibilities of disappointments and opportunism. Chances of success depend on the personal qualities of the development chief and the local leaders, and their capacity to cooperate in the interests of their particular community.

From the point of view of Ghanaian chiefs and their entourage it is quite clear why some of them, who are eager to defend chieftaincy as an emblem of authentic national culture, see the installation of foreigners as chiefs as an erosion of chieftaincy. In this view Ghanaian culture, chieftaincy in particular, is made "cheap" by "selling" it to outsiders. It is felt that "white" chiefs and queen mothers give wrong impressions to outsiders of what Ghanaian chieftaincy is all about and make it seem as if just anybody could become a chief or queen mother. Indeed the idea that Westerners are "ruling" in Ghana is based on misconception and romanticized ideas of African chieftaincy. But their position also does not lead to an erosion of "authentic" chieftaincy as if that would be an unaltered relic from the past. Chieftaincy as it is today is the result of historical processes, which have changed much of its essence over time (Rathbone 2000: 4). The creation of new titles and changing functions proves chieftaincy's flexibility and ability to adapt to changing times. The installation of foreigners as chiefs or queens of a specific community link that community to the world at large. Chiefs seek to reassert their authority by becoming brokers in the development arena. To people outside the big cities, the government is far away in Accra, and government representatives do not often come to their aid. What people still want in the first place are the basic needs such as education, better sanitary and health conditions,

and they look for means to get access to these. Ordinary Ghanaians take chieftaincy very serious. To them chieftaincy is not an emblem of the past, something exotic, but real and representing their "culture". They welcome any help they can get which in their view brings them closer to "development". Their chiefs try to bring development by installing foreigners as development chiefs and queens. Ghanaian chiefs thus act as active agents in the development encounter.

However, the somewhat indiscriminate and arbitrary installation of foreigners as development chiefs, which is often mainly based on whiteness, carries the risk of confusing and distorting images of African chieftaincy. This is clearly shown in Otte's case, where in the eyes of the Mepe citizens, he represents access to funds in the West. The fact that he is from "outside" enhances the position of their town in Ghana. Also, a white chief is expected to serve the community, whereas a Ghanaian development chief, especially a migrant, is more likely to support his (extended) family. But to the general Western audience the image of an exotic and traditional Africa is reinforced. That the fairy tale of a construction worker on disability benefit, a "common man", a "Homer Simpson with a heart of gold" as the "Togbe" filmmaker described him, who becomes a "king" in Africa, has proved to be very appealing says much about the continued image of Africa in the West.

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14

African writers in the global world: Tierno Monénembo[1]

Elisa Diallo

Since the 1990s, the phenomenon of 'migrant writing' has become an important focus of attention in the field of African literature written in European languages. This literature has been increasingly studied as a conjunction of the emerging culture of the globalization era; critics and scholars locate in them traces of the multiple identities of the postcolonial African subject. However, while this discourse provides interesting reading perspectives, it also tends to simplify the subject, or even sometimes tends to ignore differing discourses, such as those which are less 'multicultural'. Starting from this consideration, my objective in this essay is twofold. First, through the close reading of two novels by the Guinean writer Tierno Monénembo (b. 1947), I examine how the discursive perspective of the genre of migrant writings can help to outline and understand the changes in his writing since the end of the 1990s. At the same time, I show how such a reading helps, in turn, to moderate this discourse; it reveals, for example, that while writing in the context of a global world and multiple identities, Monénembo, like many other African writers living outside the continent, still writes of Africa, of its specific history and its specific concerns.

[1] I am grateful to the Editors of this volume for their detailed comments and suggestions on an earlier draft of this chapter.

New African writings

When studying recent theories and critics on Francophone African literature in connection with my research project on the Guinean writer Tierno Monénembo[2], I was struck by a sort of consensus among critics, scholars and writers. Since the 1990s, there seems to have been a general tendency to speak of a "renewal" of African literature, of a "new generation" and of "*nouvelles tendances*".[3] From the 1950s until about ten years ago, "*Africanité*" was the predominant concern within the field of Francophone African literature; efforts were made to define an African aesthetic, in which the concept of "orality" was seen as central. However, nowadays it seems as if African writers are less preoccupied with their "*Africanité*". In the current context of globalization, and with the corresponding massive and worldwide movements of people, ideas and images, African texts today are said to be more about universality and global culture.

Within the Francophone literary scene, the debate about the renewal of African literature begins with Abdouraham Waberi's article, *Les enfants de la postcolonie*, which appeared in 1998. In this article, we find the most important concepts that have become central to the debate. Waberi deals primarily with the multiple identities claimed by writers of the new generation, with the fact that they want to present themselves as more than just African, and also with the themes of migration and immigration, which appear frequently in the work of contemporary writers. Many journals and magazines that deal with "non-Western" literature, in particular with African literature, such as *Notre Librairie*, and *Africulture*, as well as publications with broader concerns, have taken up and fed this debate. *Notre Librairie* recently published two issues with revealing titles: "Nouvelle génération", in 2001, and "Plumes émergentes", in 2005. In the first one, Jean-Louis Joubert (2001: 6) writes about a "… sentiment général que quelque chose a changé, qu'une nouveauté littéraire s'est affirmée pendant les années 90 …" Tirthankar Chanda penned a representative article in *Le Monde Diplomatique* entitled "Les combats d'une nouvelle génération d'écrivains":

> A number of writers, born after the Independences, claim the universal quality of an art that not only speaks of Africa, but of the whole world. Their works, written in the first person pronoun, reveal new concerns.
>
> … The new generation of writers of the 1990s, has broken with militant visions of denunciation, controversy and resistance. They seek to develop new literary forms, which are more introspective, in a context of globalization and migration.[4]

It is important to note that this "new generation" consists predominantly of writers who live and work outside Africa, often in France, or at least in a western country. They thus take part in the massive migration flows that typify the

[2] Pseudonym of D.T. Saïdou, born in 1947 in Porédaka, Guinea.

[3] See, among others, Joubert (2001), Diop (2001), Cazenave (2003), Carré (2004) and Chanda (2004).

[4] Chanda (2004). My translation.

present era of globalization, notably from the South to the West. For this reason, the discussion about the new generation of African writers, as well as its terms, must be seen as part of a broader literary debate – that of immigrant/migrant writings. In its turn, this debate is part of an even wider cultural and discursive movement, both international and interdisciplinary, which is centred on questions of hybridity, transculturalism, multiculturalism, displacement and 'up-rootedness'.[5]

> Certainly, experiences of displacement have always been addressed in African literature written in European languages, which more often than not engages with the themes of exile and African diasporas. But what is characteristic about the discourse of migrant literature is its strong connection to a specific context – that of globalization – and of the large movements of people to the rich, western countries. In this specific context, the migrant writer is seen simultaneously as a product, witness and spokesperson. From this perspective, the position of the African writer in the West has shifted: S/he used to be in the first place African, and at the same time an exile, a temporary guest or part of the black or African diasporas. Now s/he is either a migrant or immigrant, and is placed in the same literary category as Francophone writers of Arab descent, or with Indian, Pakistani or Caribbean writers working in England, or Moroccan writers in the Netherlands.[6] Along with others, Francophone African texts are studied as representative of a so-called "migrant culture". Special attention is thus drawn to the specific themes they engage with, and that are related to the contemporary migration phenomenon: Multiple identity, integration problems, discrimination, minority status, cultural difference, etc. An "African aesthetic" *per se* is no longer searched for, but instead an aesthetic which mirrors the multiple contexts of globalization. In this regard, one often speaks about literature that "crosses boundaries", produced by "cosmopolitan" writers, about a blurring of identity references, or about a "cheerful multiculturalism":
>
> > These days, the space of creation does not necessarily coincide with the geographical space of origin. … Heterogeneity … has become the true condition of literary creation. Taking inspiration from various sources, among which the "shadows of the birth country" and world literature, the writer addresses the issue of "belonging" in new ways, invents "imaginary homes" and seeks to position himself in this space of "otherness" that some call "La République mondiale des Lettres".[7]

We should comment here that this criticism sometimes tends to generalize, and also – when one speaks of "cheerful multiculturalism" – to idealize. Indeed, there is a certain renewal of African literature, in which the problem of cultural identity does play an important role, and more and more African writers do in fact engage with the theme of globalization. But this engagement does not always mean crossing borders and praising the global and multicultural world. Amongst other things, I will try to show this while undertaking a close reading of the work of Tierno Monénembo.

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[5] See Joffrin (2000).

[6] See Lionnet and Scharfman (1993), Laronde (1993), Bonn (1995), Griffiths (2000), Canadé Sautman (2003), and Cazenave (2003).

[7] Carré (2004). My translation. The quotations – except for the last one – are from Salman Rushdie in *Imaginary Homelands* (1991). See also, for the three previous comments, Bessière & Moura (1999), Diop (2001) and Albert (2005).

It is essential for a researcher to be aware of the wider discursive framework in which s/he participates (be it cultural, literary or scientific), as the framework is formed not only by him/herself but also by other literary writers. All literary works are, to a certain extent, related to one or more such public discourses.

Tierno Monénembo: The writing of exile, migrant literature

Monénembo is an interesting case for anyone interested in the developments in Francophone African literature. This is mainly due to his personal history: First in exile (living in France since 1973), later as a "regular" immigrant (since 1984 and the death of the Guinean dictator Sékou Touré that year). What is more, in his career he belongs to the different generation of writers commonly distinguished by critics. His first book appeared in 1979, and initially Monénembo was seen as a typical "post-independence" writer; his novel was about Guinea, his country of origin and about the disappointments with independence, and he expressed an especially strong criticism of the country's dictatorial regime. Between 1979 and 2004, Monénembo published a total of eight books. As noted, the critics observing developments in African literature, especially among writers who work outside Africa, paid more and more attention to the emerging discourse of migrant literature outside Africa. Did this *migrant discourse* influence the work of Monénembo? Can characteristics of migrant literature be discerned in his work? I will briefly discuss the relationship between the work of Monénembo and this discourse on the basis of two of his later novels: P*elourinho* (1995) and *Cinéma* (1997).

Pelourinho

Predominantly because of its theme and the location of the story (Brazil), *Pelourinho* differs from the earlier books of Monénembo. Until *Pelourinho* he only wrote about Guinea and France, and about exile. Romuald Fonkoua speaks of a "liberation" of Monénembo's writing after the fall of Sékou Touré's regime in 1984:

> Monénembo used to be an immobile writer, with an imagination that seemed to be confined between predictable places (Ivory Coast and France, for example). He has become a travelling writer, accepting his journeys and their purpose – to produce literature. This way, Guinean literature has become part of world literature.[8]

Pelourinho has, indeed, more to do with travel than with exile. With this text, Monénembo opens his eye to the world. Here, displacement is no longer viewed solely in terms of pain, for which writing serves as an outlet. The journey's destination is depicted as the domain of imagination and of literary creation. Of Escritore, the main character and *alter ego* of the writer, another character says

[8] Fonkoua (2004: 25-26). My translation.

that he has come to Brazil "to write a book". It thus seems that in this text, the writer seeks and claims the position of migrant – no longer as an exile but as a voluntary traveller – because travelling is the starting point of writing.

Moreover, because he chooses South America as his destination, Escritore short-circuits, as it were, the West, and frees Africa from France and from the colonial past. Europe is no longer the centre, the obligatory destination. To the question:

- Africano? Brazil and Africa have so much in common! We are just like twins, on both sides of the Ocean. Only, we never wave to each other, why?

Escritore answers:

- That's why I have come. To correct the abnormality! (Monénembo 1995: 30)

In an implicit way, the colonial perspective is indicated as an "abnormality". It is now time to build a future no longer based on the memory of colonialism, time to let go of the vision that had Europe as the "centre". In an interview, Monénembo explained that Africa "is awakening from a long period of amnesia", and that "as long as we – [the Africans] – continue to view colonialism as the starting and end point of our history, we have no hope."[9] Through his journey, Escritore tries to trace new routes that no longer go via Europe and no longer remind us of the colonial era.

Cinéma

While Monénembo reveals his work to the world with *Pelourinho*, he returns to his country of origin with his next novel *Cinéma,* a story about a young adolescent in Guinea in the 1950s, crazy about American Western movies – a theme used to express the problematic relation between African societies and foreign (western) cultural imports. The boy, Binguel, is the narrator of the story. We follow him as he wanders through the streets of his hometown, Mamou, behaving as a delinquent under the influence of his older friend and mentor, Benté. Both boys have dropped out of school, and obey only one law – the law of the American Far West that they derive from the movies they watch at the local theatre.

Not only does Monénembo go back to Guinea with *Cinéma*, he also returns to a time about which he wrote earlier, namely that of the independence of Guinea in 1958. This forces us to refer back to the discourse mentioned above, about the cosmopolitanism of the African writers. In 1997, after he had travelled to Brazil, Monénembo still wrote about his country of origin and about colonialism. However, some crucial elements in *Cinéma* reveal how this text also engages with contemporary concerns (1990s and after).

[9] *Boutures*, vol. 1, nº 3, September 2000: 4-7. My translation.

One of the most salient aspects of *Cinéma* is the importance of the theme of *space*, which is treated in various ways. Interestingly, space is a key concept for the migrant writings' discourse. Migrant authors are often said to be caught between two – or more – cultures, and the metaphor of "in-betweenness" is widely used to analyse their work. The thematization of space in migrant writings is also commonly studied, as much as it complicates new or shifting relationships between the local and the global.[10]

In *Cinéma,* space is, first of all, that of Mamou, the small town in which the young Binguel grows up. On various occasions, this location is placed in relation to an *elsewhere*, inaccessible, mysterious, strange. In the following extract, we hear Binguel wondering about the journey of the American cowboys, from their "remote and fabulous" country, to the theatre of his small Guinean town:

> I wondered, for example, why that old Lebanese, Seïny-Bôwal, had to wait until dusk to open his movie theatre. And it took weeks before the bright answer came and illuminated my stupid head: Cowboys could not have arrived earlier even if, in their extreme kindness for own town, they had left at dusk the remote and fabulous country they surely came from. At last I understood why the old Lebanese lost it when an impudent kid asked him to show *Les Cavaliers* or *Le Bourreau du Nevada* again the next day: "I first have to write them, you stupid fool! Do you think heroes from the movies can just come to Mamou whenever they want?" (Monénembo 1997: 101)[11]

The irony of this fragment highlights not only the naivety of the boy, but also the marginality of a town like Mamou in relation to the United States of America, to Hollywood, to wherever the internationally most visible cultural products come from. The following passage, on the foundation of Mamou, participates in the same discourse:

> That's why a relay city was necessary, to allow, via railway transportation, the passing through of latex and wax produced in the mountains. Mamou, a town without name or memory (just enough passion and self-esteem), was condemned from the very start to be nothing more than a brothel, a refuge or a camping site! (Monénembo 1997: 158)[12]

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[10] Blommaert & van der Donckt explain for example that "the thematization of space and place (the latter denoting a space made social, hence becoming a space in which humans make social, cultural, political and historical investments) is […] a crucial ingredient of the process of coming to terms with globalization." (Blommaert & van der Donckt 2002: 138).

[11] My translation. ("Je me demandais par exemple pourquoi ce vieux Libanais de Seïny-Bôwal attendait la tombée de la nuit pour ouvrir son cinéma. Et il m'avait fallu des semaines avant que l'étincelante réponse n'illumine ma pauvre tête : les cow-boys ne pouvaient arriver qu'à ce moment-là, même si par extrême gentillesse pour notre cité ils avaient quitté depuis l'aube le lointain et fabuleux pays qu'ils se devaient d'habiter. Enfin, je comprenais pourquoi le vieux Libanais sortait de ses gonds quand un malappris lui demandait de repasser le lendemain *Les Cavaliers* ou *Le Bourreau du Nevada* : 'Faut d'abord que je leur écrive, bougres de cons ! On ne vient pas à Mamou à n'importe quel moment quand on est un héros de cinéma.'")

[12] My translation. ("D'où la nécessité d'une ville-relais à même de faire écouler par le transport ferroviaire le latex et la cire produits sur les montagnes. Mamou – cité sans nom et sans mémoire (juste ce qu'il faut de passion et d'amour-propre) – était condamnée dès l'origine à tenir lieu de bordel, d'asile et de bivouac!")

The town of Mamou, founded for the economic needs of the imperial power, now a neglected place, can be viewed as a metaphor for the whole African continent: Previously exploited, and now "left behind" in the contemporary globalizing world. We recognize here a major concept of the migrant writings' discourse, namely the opposition between centre and periphery. This metaphor is widely used in cultural and literary studies to explain asymmetrical power relations (be it economically, socially and culturally) between the old imperial centres – now extended to the whole of the western world – and the former colonies. From this point of view, Mamou can be said to symbolize the peripheral situation of the whole African continent in the world. From the two fragments quoted above, we can thus see how in *Cinéma*, contemporary concerns are projected on the Guinean context of the 1950s and how the text seems to take part in actual debates about the place of Africa in the global world at the end of the 20th century.

Furthermore, the analysis of the theme of space in *Cinéma* reveals the specific position of the young narrator Binguel in relation to his geographical surroundings. Such a closer analysis also shows how this text addresses contemporary issues related to globalization, American cultural influence in the world, and to the impact of these developments on the African youth.

Binguel is an African child, a Guinean child, a child from Mamou. But he is also, because of the influence of the Western movies he watches, a child from elsewhere, from America in particular. While calling himself "l'Homme de l'Ouest", and calling his friend Benté "Oklahoma kid", he declares:

> "I heard strange city names: Télimélé, Youkounkoun, Siguiri, Bamako, Kénéma, Ziguinchor! Unreal places, charming, in a delicious way disquieting …" (Monénembo 1997: 104)

We see here a key concept of the discourse of globalization, namely that this phenomenon has caused drastic changes in the way people experience the *here* and the *there*, the *near* and the *far*. Geographical distance and cultural distance no longer coincide or agree per se:

> … it is one of the main assumptions of globalization studies that multiple cultures can exist in one space and that, conversely, one culture can be produced in different spaces. (Blommaert & van der Donckt 2002: 138)

In the imagination of this Guinean boy, names of cities relatively near to his home town, sound "strange", "disturbing" and "unreal". They become the locations of the "exotic", while Oklahoma is completely familiar to him.

American culture and counter-nation

The problem of the estrangement of the African youth from their immediate environment is, of course, not new within the field of Francophone African

literature, whether colonial or postcolonial. It is traditionally associated with the issue of cultural alienation as a result of (neo)colonialism. However, *Cinéma* distinguishes itself within this specific tradition, as the force of alienation comes from America, not France.[13] This element is significant. First, because it indicates that Monénembo endeavours to highlight alternative connections between Guinean society and the world (as seen in *Pélourinho*). But what is more significant, is that these specific connections in fact characterize the contemporary, globalized world order, in which the American cultural influence has largely supplanted the French. Thus, in the same manner as the theme of space discussed earlier, the theme of American culture's domination of the African youth indicates that *Cinéma* engages with contemporary concerns, different from those of the 1950s. Binguel, admiring Gary Cooper and Rod Steiger, represents a culture drastically different from that of his parents, but also from most other boys of his generation, and is suggestive of the contemporary global youth with their admiration of American idols.

Also significant, is the fact that Binguel does not place any hope in the future of his newly independent country. Not only is he completely estranged from the traditional French influence, preferring the American one, he does not care much for the ideal of an independent and renewed African culture either. Rachael Langford (2005) analyses the way in which Binguel systematically chooses high-up places from where to observe and comment on his environment. She shows how the boy uses this position to mark his distance from – and his superiority to – the rest of the inhabitants of Mamou. Furthermore, his positioning signifies, in terms of space, a process towards autonomy and the creation of his own identity, built around alternative cultural values. We find a representative example of this attitude at the very beginning of the text. Binguel comments on the iron post he has climbed upon to observe the town's market square and his friend Benté:

> I should be happy to have discovered such a great hiding place. Just as the market, or Seïny-Bowal's movie theatre, or the Almamya stadium, this good old iron post also has its own history. They used to attach oxen to it, and thieves. It served to hoist the French and later the Guinean flag, to rape girls from the countryside and hang the first conspirators against the reborn and eternal Africa. But we don't care about that. To us it's nothing but an old iron post, without past or intelligence, on which we sometimes used to masturbate and tell the sky our first insults. Before, the 14th of July, now the 2nd of October, one date or another, one journey or another, mine starts today ... (Monénembo 1997: 24) [14]

[13] It is worthy of note that the French cultural influence is almost never referred to in *Cinéma*.

[14] My translation. ("Je dois plutôt m'estimer heureux d'avoir déniché une si bonne cache. Comme le marché, comme le cinéma de Seïny-Bowal ou le stade d'Almamya, il a aussi son histoire à lui, ce bon vieux poteau de fonte. On y a attaché des bœufs, des brigands, hissé tour à tour les pavillons français et guinéen, déviergé les campagnardes et pendu les premiers comploteurs de l'Afrique renaissante et éternelle. Mais, nous autres, on s'en fout. Ce n'est rien d'autre qu'un vieux poteau sans mémoire et sans malice où il nous arrive de nous masturber et de dire au ciel nos premières injures apprises. Avant,

That Binguel makes this post his own is an act of trespassing; he chooses to ignore its historical and social value. But, at the same time, it is also a constructive act; this positioning, high up and out-of-the-way, is a starting point for his own history, disentangled from that of colonialism and independence. What is telling is his rejection of the different authority figures in his direct environment: His father, the French school, Islam.

The figure of the child lends itself very well to such a challenging attitude, both destructive and affirmative. As a future adult, he symbolizes a generation to come. The use of the pronoun "we" – in "but we don't care" – is, in this sense, revealing; Binguel's project is a collective one. The boy incarnates an alternative ideal, a new future and a new identity. Here again, it seems that *Cinéma* engages with questions characteristic of the actual, globalized world, more than of the 1950s. Indeed, Binguel can be said to personify the contemporary "global youth culture", the "world culture of the street kids", modelled on the American ghetto culture.[15] In their article on the figure of the child and the globalization discourse, Jean & John Comaroff (2000: 92) assert that:

> The idea of a notion of globalization, at least as an analytical concept, is still questioned in some circles. But hardly anybody would deny that one of the global characteristics that define the contemporary world, from Chicago to Cape Town, via Calcutta and Caracas, is the feeling of crisis around the uneasiness of the youth.[16]

In the global context:

> Young people, as well as people deprived of their right to be represented, constitute a sort of counter-nation with its own illegal economy, its own production and leisure spaces, its own caricatured patriotism. (Ibid.: 91)[17]

In *Cinéma,* the child narrator represents this culture, the culture of globalization *par le bas*, that of the marginalized. Binguel symbolizes this culture even more, in that he chose street life. He is not poor – his father is a prosperous trader – and he chose this street life because it was his ideal. Binguel is, in this sense, an emblematic figure of a sort of subaltern culture, the culture of the subordinated, who himself *claims* his subordinated position and meanwhile challenges the dominant culture. He prefers his heroes from the American Western movies.

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le 14 Juillet, aujourd'hui le 2 Octobre, date pour date, épopée pour épopée, la mienne commence maintenant …").

[15] See Comaroff & Comaroff (2000: 94).

[16] My translation. ("Le sens de la notion de globalization, du moins en tant que concept analytique, est encore discuté dans certains cercles. Mais rares sont ceux qui pourraient nier que l'une des caractéristiques globales qui définissent le monde actuel de Chicago au Cap, en passant par Calcutta et Caracas, est le sentiment de crise qui entoure le malaise de la jeunesse.")

[17] My translation. ("[…]les jeunes, ainsi que d'autres personnes privées de leur droits de représentation[…], constituent une sorte de contre-nation avec sa propre économie illégale, ses propres espaces de production et de recréation, son propre patriotisme parodique.")

Conclusion

We have seen in this essay how the theoretical tools developed around the concept of migrant writings – such as the metaphor of centre versus periphery, the idea of decentring, of local versus global – can help identify important concerns in Monénembo's recent texts. Significant aspects of the novel *Pelourinho* indicate its author's ambition to shift the positioning of the African continent in the world and separate it from its exclusive connection with the European (former) centre. In *Cinéma*, the analysis of the thematization of space reveals a range of concerns shared by many contemporary texts, which, in one way or another, take part in the current debates on the accelerating globalization of the world and its effects on local cultures. Such a reading is thus productive. However, we should be careful not to become blind to other discourses in Monénembo's writing. If *Cinéma*, for example, refers to contemporary processes of globalization, the text is also – and perhaps more importantly – strongly anchored in a local context, that of Guinea. The character of Binguel can be read as an emblematic figure of the current global culture. But he also gives shape and voice to a personal memory – that of the author. It is a memory rooted geographically and historically in a specific, national space.

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