Living the end of empire: politics and society in late colonial Zambia

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Living the end of empire

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Living the end of empire
Politics and society in late colonial Zambia

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Andrew Dunlop Roberts, who retired in 1998 from the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, as Emeritus Professor of the History of Africa, is the doyen of Zambia's academic history. The author of A History of the Bemba (1973), an all-time classic of African historiography, and subsequently of A History of Zambia (1976), still unsurpassed as an account of Zambia's history up to and beyond Independence, Andrew Roberts has supervised and motivated several generations of Zambianists. By dedicating this set of essays to him, the editors and contributors place on record the enormous debt of gratitude they all owe him. The gentlemanly academe so perfectly epitomized by Andrew Roberts may be disappearing, but his rigorous scholarship, wide-ranging erudition and generous collegiality remain enduring sources of inspiration.

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Andrew D. Roberts: An appreciation

John McCracken

Terence Ranger has suggested that African historians can be divided into two main groups: those like himself whose research have focused on one country, albeit with periodic excursions into other areas, and those who have moved from one country to another across the continent, never staying long enough to be identified with a particular locality. Andrew Roberts fits into neither of these categories. His earliest work, after leaving Cambridge, was in Kampala, where he carried out the research that led to the publication of his path-breaking article on 'The Sub-Imperialism of the Baganda'.[1] His first full-time job was as oral historian in Dar es Salaam, where he worked on Nyamwezi trade and edited an important book, *Tanzania before 1900* (1968), which brought together recent research from across the country.[2] Later, at London's School of Oriental and African Studies he extended his interests on a continent-wide scale into the colonial period in work that came to a climax in Volume 7 of the *Cambridge History of Africa* (1905 to 1940), a book edited

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1 A.D. Roberts, 'The sub-imperialism of the Baganda', *Journal of African History*, 3 (1962), pp. 435-50.

2 A.D. Roberts, ed., *Tanzania before 1900: Seven area histories* (Nairobi, 1968); 'Nyamwezi Trade'. In: R. Gray & D. Birmingham, eds, *Pre-colonial African trade* (London, 1970), pp. 39-74.

with meticulous care by Roberts and containing no less than four chapters written by him.[3]

Yet if at one level, Roberts's expertise extends across the African continent and beyond to the African diaspora, his place as the leading historian of Zambia cannot be challenged. I have always thought it a little surprising that a scholar with such a bookish and urban background as Roberts (the son of two distinguished British writers, himself deeply immersed in English literature) should have enrolled at Wisconsin as one of Jan Vansina's first doctoral students in African oral history. The beneficial consequences for Zambian history, however, cannot be doubted. In turning to Zambia and focusing on the Bemba for his PhD dissertation, Roberts was able to avail himself of the remarkably rich scholarly legacy left by a generation of anthropologists linked to the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, notably the work of Audrey Richards. But, as he subsequently noted, 'little of the work bearing specifically on the Bemba was concerned with history' and in consequence he was entering onto largely uncharted waters. The resultant study, *A History of the Bemba,* published in 1973 though principally based on field research conducted in 1964-65, set the bench-mark by which future studies of pre-colonial Zambian history would be judged.[4] His introductory quotation, from Antonio Gamitto's 1832 comment on the Bemba, reveals much of Robert's painstaking approach:

> Information I got from some people when set against information I got from others always revealed contradictions. But by dint of much work and thought I consider that what follows is not far from the truth.

At the heart of the book are the interviews he and his assistant carried out with over 80 informants. But to these are added Roberts's meticulous dissection of the work of previous amateur collectors of oral traditions as well as his careful study of virtually every literary source available. In later articles, such as his pioneering account of 'Livingstone: the Historian', he was able to throw fresh light on early European sources, for example revealing discrepancies, previously unknown, between what Livingstone wrote in his diaries and what was published in Horace Waller's edition.[5] It is no surprise that, more than 40 years on, *A History of the Bemba* remains the essential starting point from which all subsequent research in the region stems.

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3 A.D. Roberts, ed., *The Cambridge History of Africa*, Vol. 7: From 1905 to 1940 (Cambridge, 1986).

4 A.D. Roberts, *A history of the Bemba: Political growth and change in North-Eastern Zambia before 1900* (London, 1973).

5 A.D. Roberts, 'Livingstone's value to the historian of African Societies', in Centre of African Studies, *David Livingstone and Africa* (Edinburgh, 1973).

Roberts's second major achievement as a Zambian historian is his *History of Zambia*, published in 1976, an eminently scholarly yet accessible volume, which builds on Roberts's experience both as a doctoral student in the mid-1960s and also as research fellow at the University of Zambia from 1968 to 1971.[6] In the 1960s and early 1970s the creation of independent African states was followed by the publication of many 'national' histories, often designed on the basis of limited evidence to demonstrate that the shiny new post-colonial state had deep historical roots and that the necessary outcome of anti-colonial struggle was the emergence of the fully-fledged African nation. As early as 1967, in his chapters on Zambia for *Aspects of Central African History*, Roberts had demonstrated his reluctance to limit his focus to this approach by rejecting the single-minded emphasis on African resistance taken by other contributors.[7] And this attitude was even more apparent in *A History of Zambia,* which he described as 'a study of history *in* Zambia rather than a history *of* Zambia'. The result is a book, based on careful scholarship yet entirely accessible to readers, which has retained its value, while other national histories have not, precisely because it has not attempted to force Zambia's pre-colonial and colonial path into a nationalist straitjacket. Well over half the book, nearly 150 pages out of 254 of text, is devoted to an admirably clear and dispassionate account of the pre-colonial history of people living in the Zambian region. Although 'the growth of a nation' is the almost obligatory title for the chapter on African politics from 1930 to 1964, it is partnered by a chapter, 'Mines and Migration', which provides a marvellously lucid introduction to the making of the colonial economy.

Scholars working directly on Zambia are well equipped to appreciate the variety of Andrew Roberts's contributions to their field. They include his painstaking supervision of many PhD theses (one of them written by the joint-editor of this volume) and his careful editing of myriads of articles during his long and distinguished tenure as editor of the *Journal of African History.* Time and again he has thrown light on areas requiring new research, whether in his perceptive article, 'Notes towards a Financial History of Copper Mining in Northern Rhodesia', published in the *Canadian Journal of African Studies* in 1982 or else in his pioneering account of 'The Lumpa Church of Alice Lenshina', a work that still merits re-reading.[8] Above all, he has constantly demonstrated that clarity of expression and high scholarly standards are entirely compatible. There could be no better tribute to his achievements than

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6 A.D. Roberts, *A history of Zambia* (London, 1976).

7 T.O. Ranger, ed., *Aspects of Central African history* (London, 1968).

8 A.D. Roberts, 'The Lumpa church of Alice Lenshina'. In: R.I. Rotberg & A.A. Mazrui, eds, *Protest and power in Black Africa* (New York, 1970), pp. 513-568.

the recognition by a new generation of Zambian historians that, as Roberts has shown, the best African history is often the most accessible.

PART I

BACKGROUND

1

Introduction: A new take on late colonial Northern Rhodesia

Giacomo Macola, Jan-Bart Gewald & Marja Hinfelaar

Premises

The publication of *One Zambia, Many Histories* inaugurated a long overdue process of revision of the historiography of post-colonial Zambia.[1] The collection sought to challenge the continuing hold of a UNIP-centred scholarship that, the editors maintained, had done no justice to the complexity of post-colonial Zambian history and the many internal lines of conflict and contestation that characterized – and still characterize – it. The present volume expands on the basic argument of *One Zambia, Many Histories* by locating the mainsprings of many of these conflicts in the late colonial era and by throwing new light on some of the historical trajectories that the teleological gaze of

[1] J.-B. Gewald, M. Hinfelaar & G. Macola, eds, *One Zambia, many histories: Towards a history of post-colonial Zambia* (Leiden and Boston, 2008). A Zambian edition of this work was published, by The Lembani Trust, Lusaka, in 2010.

politically committed social scientists has tended to ignore or belittle.[2] By bringing to view the deep-rooted tensions underlying the Zambian nationalist movement, the painful dilemmas faced by chiefly and religious institutions, and the contradictory political and cultural experiences of European and Asian minorities, *Living the End of Empire* draws inspiration from – and contributes to – a growing literature concerned with the study of such social, political and cultural forces as did not readily fit into the then dominant narratives of united anti-colonial struggles.[3] The opening of the political space brought about by the democratization movements of the 1990s makes it both possible and necessary to examine the last decade of colonial rule with new eyes. The picture that begins to emerge is one in which internal fractiousness and ambivalence, rather than the crystalline oppositions of an all-encompassing inter-racial confrontation, dominate the scene to a much greater extent than has commonly been assumed.

Apart from the work of historians and political scientists caught up in the wave of optimism that accompanied the rise of African nationalism, the other major body of scholarship bequeathed to us by the late-colonial period in Zambia consists of the foundational anthropological research carried out under the aegis of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute (RLI). The 1950s marked the high point of the RLI output, especially insofar as urban studies are concerned. This is not the place for reviewing the vast literature dealing with the RLI and the Manchester School's contribution to African studies and the discipline of social anthropology as a whole.[4] What needs to be emphasized at this stage are the

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2 For an early critique of 'nation-based', ideologically driven histories, see D. Denoon & A. Kuper, 'Nationalist historians in search of a nation: The "New Historiography" in Dar es Salaam', *African Affairs*, 69 (1970). This strikingly forward-looking piece was kindly brought to the attention of Giacomo Macola by Harri Englund.

3 See, e.g., J.M. Allman, *The quills of the porcupine: Asante nationalism in an emergent Ghana* (Madison, 1993); J. Alexander, J. McGregor & T. Ranger, *Violence & memory: One hundred years in the "dark forests" of Matabeleland* (Oxford, 2000), esp. chapters 8 and 9; D. Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau, creating Kenya: Counterinsurgency, civil war, and decolonization* (Cambridge, 2009); G. Macola, *Liberal nationalism in Central Africa: A biography of Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula* (New York, 2010).

4 A useful survey is R.P. Werbner, 'The Manchester School in South-Central Africa', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 13 (1984). More recent studies are H. Macmillan, 'Return to the Malungwana Drift – Max Gluckman, the Zulu Nation and the Common Society', *African Affairs*, 94 (1995); L. Schumaker, *Africanizing anthropology: Fieldwork, networks, and the making of cultural knowledge in Central Africa* (Durham and London, 2001); and T.M.S. Evens & D. Handelman, eds, *The Manchester School: Practice and ethnographic praxis in anthropology* (New York and Oxford, 2006).

potentialities and limitations of this celebrated scholarship for historians of the end of colonialism in Zambia. While their profound engagement with African realities and empathy with the subjects of their work qualified the RLI researchers as uniquely well-placed observers, their work was nonetheless deeply influenced by a theoretical interest in general principles of social coexistence and macro-level social transformations (which, of course, could be gleaned through micro-level, 'situational' analysis.) This is not to say that the RLI scholars were unaware of the contingent politico-economic context shaping their work,[5] or, even less, that they were uninterested in the history of the institutions and processes they chose to focus on.[6] However, when set against what appeared to be the momentous social effects of labour migrancy and industrialization, the politics of African nationalism or of settler assertiveness must have seemed somewhat unworthy of sustained analysis. Also at work, of course, was the tendency to consider the African elites which spearheaded or confronted these politics as unrepresentative of the broader 'ordinary' population. Politics, in this context, was best explored through the prism of the locality, as attested, for instance, by Epstein's outstanding study of African militancy in Luanhsya.[7]

We are, of course, talking about a profoundly heterogeneous 'school' – one that, for all its common methodology and emphasis on the shared experience of fieldwork, could also accommodate the pioneering archival-based work of Lewis Gann,[8] and the early *volkekunde*-inspired ethnography of J.F. Holleman (who, in a later proof of his intellectual autonomy, would go on to produce the only extant sociological survey of the Copperbelt's white miners [see Phimister, this volume]).[9] However, the general point stands: the RLI anthropologists have provided us with rich insights into the sociology of work in late-colonial Central

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5 J.C. Mitchell, 'The shadow of federation, 1952-55', *African Social Research*, 24 (1977); Werbner, 'The Manchester School', p. 168.

6 See, e.g., A.L. Epstein, *Politics in an urban African community* (Manchester, 1958), p. xiv.

7 Ibid. To stress the RLI researchers' focus on 'local-level politics' (the title of a collection of essay (London, 1968) to which Max Gluckman and many other former RLI associates contributed) does not imply adhering to the critique that the RLI anthropology was dominated by the tribal unit of analysis; W. van Binsbergen, 'From tribe to ethnicity in Western Zambia: The unit of study as an ideological problem'. In: id. & P. Geschiere, eds, *Old modes of production and capitalist encroachment: Anthropological explorations in Africa* (London, 1985).

8 Gann's principal studies of Northern Rhodesia are *The birth of a plural society: The development of Northern Rhodesia under the British South Africa Company, 1894-1914* (Manchester, 1958) and *A history of Northern Rhodesia: Early days to 1953* (London, 1964).

9 On Holleman, see Schumaker, *Africanizing anthropology*, pp. 44-48, 82-83.

Africa and with a variegated body of both rural and urban evidence to be restudied along the modalities suggested by Annear – who, in his contribution to this volume, reads Ian Cunnison's scholarship as illustrating a particular moment in time in the Luapula valley's economic and ecological life.[10] But they can scarcely be expected to have dealt satisfactorily with the political and socio-economic experiences that this book seeks to illuminate. Writing in the 1970s, Clyde Mitchell himself, a former director of the RLI between 1952 and 1955, regretted that 'economic studies' (as opposed to the study of the social effects of economic change) and the examination of Northern Rhodesia's 'non-African minorities' had not played a more central role in the Institute's research agenda at the time of his tenure and afterwards.[11] In many ways, then, the essays presented here are intended to supplement and integrate, rather than jettison, the conclusions drawn by our distinguished predecessors.

Contributions

In 'Northern Rhodesia: the post-war background, 1945-1953', Andrew Roberts offers a lucid and succinct summary of politico-economic developments in Northern Rhodesia during the crucial period comprised between the end of World War II and the inception of the Central African Federation. For all the centrality of the Copperbelt to the history and historiography of colonial Zambia, it was only in 1949-1950, Roberts reminds us, that the copper industry finally began truly to prosper. Between the late 1940s and the early 1950s, the long-awaited boom in the copper industry went hand-in-hand with the consolidation of a unionized African working class and the growth of white immigration. The white population, which had stood at 20,000 in 1946, was already close to 50,000 in 1953. In turn, it was the settlers' manifest ambition to disengage from the Colonial Office's overlordship through amalgamation and, later, federation with self-governing Southern Rhodesia that accounted for the increasingly successful efforts on the part of Africans to devise adequate forums for the expression of their interests and opinions. Roberts' article thus provides a backcloth against which successive contributions explore more in depth the complexities of both African politics and settler society in late-colonial Northern Rhodesia.

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[10] Annear's approach is loosely comparable with that of J. Pottier, *Migrants no more: Settlement and survival in Mambwe Villages, Zambia* (Bloomington, 1988), and H. Moore & M. Vaughan, *Cutting down trees: Gender, nutrition, and agricultural change in the Northern Province of Zambia, 1890-1990* (Portsmouth, NH, 1994).

[11] Mitchell, 'Shadow of Federation', p. 314.

Scholars of African politics in Northern Rhodesia in the early 1960s were, perhaps understandably, far from dispassionate.[12] The interest and sincere enthusiasm generated by the long-drawn-out, at times violent, struggle for the dissolution of the settler-dominated Central African Federation and national independence led most progressive observers closely to identify with the organization – Kenneth Kaunda's United National Independence Party (UNIP), Zambia's sole ruling party from 1964 – by which that struggle had been interpreted in the most militant terms. Feeding upon one another, the discourses of academics and party thinkers reached the same conclusion: UNIP did not merely serve the interests of the young nation; it was its embodiment. UNIP – to paraphrase a famous party slogan – was not only 'power', but it was also and most definitely 'progress'. The existence of dissenting voices within the nationalist movement was conveniently forgotten or treated as a minor 'tribal' irritant destined to be swept away along the path towards full-blown nationhood.[13]

A direct, and highly damaging, by-product of this set of discursive elisions is that the study of the Zambian anti-colonial movement has lagged far behind that of other nationalist trajectories in late-colonial Africa. While, for instance, the social and ethnic conflicts that molded the nature of Ghanaian nationalism, not to speak of those that underlay Mau Mau in Kenya and the liberation war in Zimbabwe, have received significant scholarly attention, the analysis of Zambian nationalism has scarcely progressed beyond the formalistic, institutional perspectives that dominated the field in the 1960s and 1970. Particularly unsatisfactory – as Giacomo Macola's chapter argues – is the still common tendency to explain away the rupture of Zambian nationalist unity in the late 1950s as the inevitable consequence of the personal foibles and supposed growing moderation of Harry Nkumbula, the long-serving president of the African National Congress (ANC), Northern Rhodesia's first nationalist party. Rejecting this facile narrative, the chapter seeks instead to foreground the true complexity of Nkumbula's nationalism and the contradictoriness of the social interests that it strove, but ultimately failed, to reconcile. The formation of ZANC/UNIP, Macola argues, had much less to do with Nkumbula's flaws than with the eruption of hitherto latent socio-economic and ethnic conflicts. For behind the crystallization of a two-party structure in the late 1950s lay 'the

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[12] See especially R.I. Rotberg, *The rise of Nationalism in Central Africa: The making of Malawi and Zambia, 1873-1964* (Cambridge Mass., 1965), and D.C. Mulford, *Zambia: The politics of independence, 1957-1964* (Oxford, 1967). This paragraph and the next draw on Macola, *Liberal Nationalism in Central Africa*, pp. 2-4.

[13] Similar considerations have been made with regard to the Asante's National Liberation Movement in late colonial Ghana; Allman, *Quills of the Porcupine*, pp. 3-4.

clash between two ill-defined and ill-definable interest blocs structured around both ethno-linguistic criteria (Bemba-speakers vs. Bantu Botatwe) and different regional modes of incorporation in the colonial economy (roughly: waged workforce in the Copperbelt and its vast Northern hinterland vs. rural-based agricultural producers in the Southern and Central Provinces). In this latter respect at least, the militant – if, given the prominence of nationalist discourses and claims, always subterranean – ethnic ideologies that underlay the ZANC/UNIP split were closely interwoven with contemporary economic circumstances.'

But Nkumbula's and his ethnic constituents' are not the only historical trajectories that urgently demand that we broaden our focus of observation so as to account for the panoply of African politics in late-colonial Zambia. If colonial administrative policies had placed Northern Rhodesian chiefs in what Gluckman called an 'inter-hierarchical position'[14] – a problematic intermediary role in which they were ideally 'to serve two masters and please them equally', but often 'found themselves falling in between two stools or leaning towards one side or the other'[15] – the sharp polarizations brought about by mass anti-colonialism from the early 1950s compounded, if possible, their predicament, threatening fully to unmask such divorce between legitimacy and authority as had characterized the institution of chieftainship throughout most of the colonial era. Yet Northern Rhodesian 'Native Authorities' often proved equal to the challenge, learning not to antagonize their subjects' aspirations while striving to preserve enough room for independent manoeuvre vis-à-vis anti-colonial activists.[16] Indeed, the UNIP-sponsored reform of Local Government in 1964-1965 and the ensuing abolition of Indirect Rule may well be read as indirect testimonies of the extent to which African chiefs had succeeded in retaining a substantial measure of power and social influence throughout the 1950s – powers and social influence that a government with totalitarian aspirations (as distinct from actual potentialities) was scarcely prepared to tolerate. We still know very little about the ways in which chiefs pulled off this feat of adaptation. Walima Kalusa's careful examination of Kalonga Gawa Undi X's

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14 M. Gluckman, 'Inter-Hierarchical roles: Professional and party ethics in tribal areas in South and Central Africa'. In: M.J. Swartz, ed., *Local-level politics: Social and cultural perspectives* (London, 1968).

15 H. Meebelo, *Reactions to colonialism: A prelude to the politics of independence in Northern Zambia, 1893-1939* (Manchester, 1971), p. 99

16 S.N. Chipungu, 'African leadership under indirect rule in colonial Zambia', in id ed., *Guardians in their time: Experiences of Zambians under colonial rule, 1890-1964* (London and Basingstoke, 1992); G. Macola, *The kingdom of Kazembe: History and politics in North-Eastern Zambia and Katanga to 1950* (Hamburg, 2002), chapter 7.

changing relationship with the Zambian nationalist movement and quest for autonomy provides a useful template for future in-depth studies.

The Catholic Church was another institution forced to adjust to the late-colonial era's transformed political landscape. Marja Hinfelaar argues that the implementation of the Catholic Social Doctrine, a set of guidelines based on a series of encyclicals urging governments to protect the human rights of their citizens, enabled the Catholic Church successfully to reposition itself vis-à-vis the emerging independent nation and prevent the inception of a much-feared 'atheist' post-colonial state. Essential aspects of the process were the creation of a national church to replace the scattered denominations' spheres of influence and the formation of an African Catholic lay 'defence force', consisting both of elite members who could be expected to occupy important public places in the emerging post-colonial dispensation and of such large-scale Catholic social movements as the Catholic Action, the Legion of Mary and the Young Christian Workers.

Enmeshed in the workings of institutions and broad social forces, of course, were also individuals whose uniquely complex and contradictory lives are poorly served by sociological categorizations and explanatory models. Dixon Konkola – the subject of Ken Vickery's biographical essay – was the long-serving president of the Northern Rhodesian African Railway Workers Trade Union and, later, of the unified Rhodesian Railway African Workers Union. Unlike the more famous Lawrence Katilungu, the president of the African Mine Workers' Union, Konkola never subscribed to the ideal of a-political trade unions, serving as the ANC's vice-secretary-general between 1953 and 1956 and playing a leading role in the radical politics of Broken Hill, the town where he was based and which he quickly turned into a hotbed of anti-colonial contestation. One of Nkumbula's early left-wing critics, by 1957, Konkola had been pushed to the margins of the Congress and was dreaming of launching an African socialist party committed to both immediate independence and structural social transformation. Between 1958 and 1959, Konkola was instrumental in the formation of both ZANC and, later, UNIP, of which he briefly served as interim president. However, an increasingly damaging persecution complex and deep-seated bitterness at what he construed as his unjust marginalization led him to change his politics beyond recognition. Ousted from the presidency of RAWU, by 1962, Konkola had reinvented himself as president of two ephemeral parties, the United National Republican Party and the Central African People's Union, both of which are likely to have benefited from direct financial assistance from Roy Welensky's United Federal Party. Returned to 'the lamest of lame-duck parliaments', the last Federal Assembly of 1962-1963, in an election almost universally boycotted by Africans, Konkola spent his last few months in the public eye condemning

Communism and UNIP-sponsored violence, blaming the UN actions in Katanga and praising Welensky and the federal experiment. By defying generalization, Konkola, the internationalist Marxist firebrand turned federal supporter, reminds us that Zambian nationalism amounted to much more than a morality play and the Manichean clash of good and evil portrayed in UNIP historiography.

If the dominance of a UNIP-centred narrative of political change has militated against forming an adequate understanding of the complexity and fractiousness of African nationalism in late colonial Zambia, the history of Northern Rhodesia's non-African minorities has also suffered from an unmistakably ideologically driven scholarly neglect. This is all the more lamentable, considering (a) the dominant role played by the economic sectors that white settlers controlled, and (b) the initial success of their efforts to assert themselves politically through the instrument of Federation. Ian Phimister's chapter draws on J.F. Holleman and S. Biesheuvel's underutilized survey to question standard understandings of the historical experience of the Cobberbelt's white miners, of whom, by the mid-1950s, there were more than 7,000.[17] Largely ignored by professional academics – who have preferred to concentrate on the history of black workers and their trade unions[18] – white miners have generally been caricatured as an uncultured, Afrikaans-speaking lot whose dominant concern was the defence of the job colour bar on which their unquestionable affluence and privileges rested.

In fact, when the findings of Holleman and Biesheuvel are given due consideration, and when a dispassionate gaze is brought to bear on the subject, an altogether messier picture emerges. Contrary to the impression created by visiting journalists and other progressive commentators, the Copperbelt's white miners in the 1950s were overwhelmingly English-speaking, with as many as

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[17] J. F. Holleman & S. Biesheuvel, 'The attitudes of white mining employees towards life and work on the Copperbelt', Part I A Social Psychological Study, Part II An Interview Study, Part III Summary, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research Contract Report 10/60 (Johannesburg, 1960). J.F. Holleman with S. Biesheuvel, *White mine workers in Northern Rhodesia 1959-60* (Leiden, 1973) was the abridged published version.

[18] C. Perrings, Black mineworkers in Central Africa: Industrial strategies and the evolution of an African proletariat in the Copperbelt 1911-41 (London, 1979); J.L. Parpart, *Labor and capital on the African Copperbelt* (Philadelphia, 1983). Closer attention to the (European) Northern Rhodesia Mine Workers Union, however, was paid by E.L. Berger, *Labour, race, and colonial rule: The Copperbelt from 1924 to Independence* (Oxford, 1974). A number of revealing insights into white attitudes and social life on the Copperbelt are also to be found in H. Powdermaker, *Copper town: Changing Africa. The human situation on the Rhodesian Copperbelt* (New York, 1962), esp. chapter 5.

30 per cent hailing directly from the UK. While undoubtedly committed to high living and conspicuous consumption, most miners had a less 'predatory' relationship with the colony than has previously been assumed; in as late as 1960, as many as '50 per cent hoped to stay until the end of their working lives', though 'only 16 per cent envisaged staying beyond retirement. Most importantly, Phimister hints at the need to set the motives and ambitions of white miners against those of the mining companies, whose much-heralded commitment to 'partnership' and African advancement has frequently been portrayed as an enlightened attempt to confront the self-interested racism of their white employees. Viewed from the vantage point of white miners, and set in the context of rising production costs and increasing assertiveness on the part of African labour, Anglo American and, especially, RST's support for the cause of African advancement appears much less virtuous and morally-driven an initiative than influential contemporary observers, such as the pro-federal American Congresswoman Frances Bolton (DeRoche, in this volume), and even later scholars purported it to have been.[19]

But Northern Rhodesia's 'settler society' was no more internally coherent than its African nationalist galaxy. Indeed, a very different settler community from the Copperbelt's gravitated around the Southern Province and Livingstone, the variegated social fabric of which is explored by Joanna Lewis in an essay that uses the commemorations held to mark the centenary of David Livingstone's first sighting of what he would call the Victoria Falls as an entry point into the town's rich history. By the mid-1950s, having lost its status as the colony's capital to the advantage of Lusaka and been overtaken economically by the booming towns of the Copperbelt, Livingstone still retained some of the features that had accompanied its inception as a frontier trading settlement at the beginning of the century. At the same time, the town was also seeking to stem the tide of decline by reinventing itself as a main regional tourist destination for Southern Rhodesian and South African whites.

Livingstone's white population in the 1950s consisted mainly of transient skilled or semi-skilled workers. A degree of stability was provided by the descendants of its original founders and by representatives of the farming community of the Southern Province, the only region of the colony where settler capitalist agriculture had developed to any appreciable extent. For such a divided group, the 1955 celebrations provided an obvious opportunity for a rare display of solidarity. But even the memory of the eponymous ancestor proved insufficient to mask deep-rooted internal and inter-racial tensions. Due to its protean character, the image of Livingstone could be made to serve very

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[19] See, most recently, L.J. Butler, *Copper empire: Mining and the colonial state in Northern Rhodesia, c.1930-1964* (Basingstoke, 2007).

different political purposes, appealing equally to genuine supporters of multi-racial partnership and to less progressive defenders of white superiority. Moreover, no amount of cultural manoeuvering on the settlers' part could mask the deepening racial antagonism that the inception of the Central African Federation had brought about and that was threatening to result in the final demise of this 'state-protected white settler enclave'.

The establishment of the Federation exacerbated tensions in Northern Rhodesia; yet these tensions did not necessarily manifest themselves in ways immediately apparent – or intelligible – to contemporary political observers. In the early 1950s, increasingly wild rumours flowed back and forth through the societies of Northern Rhodesia. Jan-Bart Gewald's chapter charts the origin and development of some of these fears and fantasies, and seeks to contextualize them by drawing out their links to overt political developments in the country and abroad. Particularly striking is the relationship between colonial fears and African aspirations with regard to events taking place in Kenya during Mau Mau. If the insurgency in Kenya epitomized the administrators and settlers' greatest anxieties, Northern Rhodesia's Africans turned it into a largely metaphorical cudgel with which to threaten white rule. Gewald's contribution thus removes African rumour from the realm of the irrational and situates it firmly, alongside settler fears, within a political discourse dealing with the legitimacy of the Federation.[20]

While accounting for the spread of the fears and fantasies examined by Gewald, the hardening of political and racial divisions ushered in by Federation posed a specific set of challenges to colonial Zambia's most liminal group of settlers, those of Asian (and, specifically, Hindu) descent, whose political and social histories form the subject of Friday Mufuzi and Joan Haig's contributions, respectively. Mufuzi's chapter captures some of the complexities of Indian politics in colonial Livingstone. Driven by the enduring ambition to improve their community's vulnerable socio-economic standing in racially stratified Northern Rhodesia, Livingstone's Indian traders initially resisted Federation, which, they assumed, would result in the extension to the northern territories of Southern Rhodesia's harsher discriminatory provisions in regards to commerce and immigration. However, unlike the Africans, who were never won over by Federation, the Indians eventually mollified their stance and began to appreciate the broader economic opportunities brought about by the new institutional dispensation. Although a minority of Indian traders identified themselves with the African campaign for self-rule right from the start, most of their peers strove to preserve a degree of autonomy in the clash between settler

[20] Cf. with the very different perspective adopted by L. White, *Speaking with vampires: Rumor and history in colonial Africa* (Berkeley and London, 2000).

and African nationalism and only threw their weight behind the latter once it became clear that the federal experiment was doomed and that their future would depend on their finding a niche within an independent black-ruled country.

And yet, for all the precariousness of the Indians' condition and the very real restrictions under which their social life evolved, the 1950s were also the time in which colonial Zambia's Hindu community really came of age, forging both a new corporate identity and a feeling of collective belonging to the country. Central to the process, of course, were the consolidation and diversification of their economic position during the Federal years, but no less significant were the changes in cultural life brought about by the increased presence of Indian women and the strengthening of such associational and recreational networks as would culminate in the foundation of a territory-wide Hindu Association. It is probably the 'significant control' that the Indians wielded 'over their own cultural spaces and activities' that accounts for the generally positive memories surrounding the 1950s – memories in which past hardships are glossed over and ideas of powerlessness and oppression play a surprisingly insignificant role.

All in all, the editors believe that the essays presented in this volume offer a more nuanced and complete picture of the late colonial period in Zambia than has generally been the case in a literature too narrowly focused on the growth of national consciousness and the dynamics of an ostensibly all-determining racial conflict. In reinstating within the mainstream of Northern Rhodesia's history the bewilderingly diverse historical trajectories of neglected social groups, individuals and institutions, the volume may be said to have appropriated and built upon the most innovative of the RLI's insights. For to view Northern Rhodesia as 'one society' – whose inhabitants 'are bound together in a common political and economic system' and where 'the effects of movements in this system influence every part of the lives of all the different groups'[21] – is first and foremost to allow for heterogeneity.

[21] M. Gluckman, 'Social anthropology in Central Africa', *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal*, 20 (1956), p. 15.

2

Northern Rhodesia: The post-war background, 1945-1953

Andrew D. Roberts

It is many years since I said anything new about the colonial history of Zambia, so I was flattered to be invited to contribute to this collection as well as to the conference on which it is based. There seemed to be two ways in which I could try to be useful. I shall sketch the background to Northern Rhodesia in the 1950s, by way of providing a context for the research papers which follow. And along the way I shall take note of themes and topics which still call for study, despite the recent revival of interest in late-colonial Zambia.

Let us begin with the copper industry, which for a century has been so important a factor in Zambia's history.[1] We must recognise that it only began to prosper in l949. During the last two years of World War II the mines were badly run down: existing workings were yielding diminishing grades of ore, and large-scale development was needed to gain access to ores of a quality which would – as in the later l930s – compensate for the high costs of transport. Hence, from l945 to l949 the Rhodesian Selection Trust, which dominated two

[1] A.D. Roberts, 'Notes towards a financial history of copper mining in Northern Rhodesia', *Canadian Journal of African Studies,* 16 (1982); L.J. Butler, C*opper empire: Mining and the colonial state in Northern Rhodesia, c.1930-1964* (Basingstoke, 2007).

of the four operating mines, paid no dividends: it devoted net profits to mining development. But in l949-50 two things happened which gave a mighty boost to the industry. In September l949 the pound sterling was devalued by 44 per cent against the U.S. dollar. The price paid for Northern Rhodesian copper by the British government had been based on the dollar price, and the sterling price rose accordingly. Then in mid-1950 the Korean War broke out: this provoked fresh demands for copper, and between 1950 and 1953 the dollar price rose by a half. Thanks to post-war development work, output rose in response: between 1950 and 1953 it increased by 40 per cent. The value of sales increased three-fold, for from 1951 demand was further stimulated by the strategic stockpiling of copper by the U.S. government. And in 1953 Britain ended the bulk-buying contracts with the mine companies which had governed sales in most years since 1939. As a result, Northern Rhodesia was able to supply the U.S. stockpile: in 1953, over 10 per cent of Northern Rhodesia's copper exports were sold to the dollar area.

After nearly thirty years, large-scale, deep-level mining in Northern Rhodesia was beginning to pay off. By 1951 all four copper mines were paying dividends. Between 1945 and 1953 over £120 million were sent abroad from Northern Rhodesia in dividends, interest payments and profits; some of this was re-invested in the Copperbelt, though much was directed to mining and transport elsewhere. As for the Northern Rhodesia government, its share in the country's copper wealth was boosted by changes in company taxation, and by an agreement in 1949 with the British South Africa Company whereby the government took one-fifth of the gross value of royalties paid to this company by the mine companies. Government revenue – roughly half of which came from the copper industry – rose from £4.3 million in 1947 to £10 million in 1949 and £30 million in 1953. Even allowing for post-war inflation, this represents something like a five-fold increase.

If l949 marked a milestone in the financial history of Northern Rhodesia, it was also a milestone in the history of industrial labour. For it was in that year that the legal basis of trade unions was firmly placed on a colour-blind footing. This was not to be taken for granted. To be sure, laws setting out the rights and duties of trade unions, and the regulation of industrial disputes, had by 1941 been introduced throughout British West and East Africa, and these were indeed colour-blind. But Northern Rhodesia was a rather special case. The economy of the territory – and particularly the copper industry – was locked into the systems whereby capital and labour were deployed throughout southern Africa. White mineworkers – many from South Africa or Southern Rhodesia – comprised roughly one-tenth of the labour force and monopolised the more highly skilled jobs. In l936 they formed a trade union – in response to the African miners'

strike in the previous year. This union, and other white unions, were – in the absence of appropriate local legislation[2] – subject to the trade union law of the United Kingdom. As for African workers, their relations with employers were still governed by Master and Servant legislation, whereby breach of contract was a criminal offence[3].

World War II compelled some forward thinking. True, the white mineworkers were able to take advantage of Britain's dependence on supplies of Northern Rhodesian copper: in a much quoted letter of 1942, Harold Macmillan – then at the Colonial Office – admitted, 'As long as we must have copper we are in the hands of the Mine Workers' Union'[4]. But a second series of strikes by Africans in l940 had shown that they too were very much a force to be reckoned with. Officials in the Colonial Office came round to thinking that once the war was over Africans too should be allowed – indeed, helped – to form trade unions: properly run unions, so far from being subversive, might usefully insulate African workers from communist influence (which after all was very much part of the South African industrial scene). So soon after the war a veteran Scots trade unionist, William Comrie, was sent out to Northern Rhodesia to promote the formation of African trade unions: several were formed between l947 and 1949.

To regulate these, and for that matter the existing white unions, the Northern Rhodesia government in 1949 introduced a Trade Unions Ordinance and an Industrial Conciliation Ordinance. These did not in fact differ greatly from the British statutes which they replaced. The crucial fact was precisely that they were colour-blind: they did not distinguish between white and black trade unions. African unionists were implicitly allowed exactly the same bargaining rights as white unionists. In this respect, Northern Rhodesia stood out in sharp contrast to South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. To be sure, there were African trade unions in both countries, but they were effectively emasculated by Industrial Conciliation Acts which denied African unions the bargaining rights enjoyed by white unions. I emphasise this point because it does not emerge very clearly from the literature; for example, Fred Cooper's discussion of Northern Rhodesian labour history makes no mention of the 1949 legislation.[5] We are

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2 This was a matter of dispute between 1938 and 1943; see E. Berger, *Labour, race and colonial rule: The Copperbelt from 1924 to independence* (Oxford, 1974), pp. 65-68.

3 See M.K. Banton, 'The colonial cffice, 1820-1955'. In: D. Hay & P. Craven, eds, *Masters, servants, and magistrates in Britain and the empire, 1562-1955* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2004), pp. 296-99.

4 Berger, *Labour, race, and colonial rule,* p. 97.

5 F. Cooper, *Decolonisation and African society: The labour question in French and British Africa* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 329-330, 573. The bibliography omits

looking at the kind of historical episode in which what matters most is what is not said – nothing about race or colour. It's the silence which speaks the loudest. And it was this legislation which made possible in 1952 the impressive three-week strike by African mineworkers which resulted in significant wage increases: between 1949 and 1954 their real wages rose by 75 per cent or more.[6] True, the industrial colour bar persisted after 1949, but not for much longer. In 1953 Britain ended its bulk-buying of Northern Rhodesia copper, and the mine companies were ready to risk alienating white miners by promoting African advancement into jobs hitherto reserved for whites. Work on the mines was beginning to offer Africans career prospects of a sort: a small but growing minority were committed to wage labour and formed the kernel of a real working-class.

The late 1940s also witnessed the beginnings, in official circles, of something like an ideology of development. In the case of Northern Rhodesia, this can be traced back to the Pim Report of 1938. Sir Alan Pim, formerly a civil servant in India, had been charged by the Colonial Office with finding ways to reduce government spending in Northern Rhodesia. Pim refused to be trammelled by this narrow, bean-counting brief: instead, he took a long-term view of the country's problems and potential, and treated it to by far the most searching of his numerous reports on colonial finance. He argued that if real economies were to be made government spending should actually be increased. 'The essential social services', he declared, 'are very backward and require to be largely expanded'.[7] Pim challenged the local forms of white supremacy: if Africans were given a proper chance to show what they could do, the country would be saved the expense of feather-bedding whites. (This was not Pim's language, but it was certainly his message.) The war precluded any systematic follow-up to Pim's report, but colonial development – and welfare – became an object of British policy. In line with this, in l947 Northern Rhodesia produced a Ten-Year Development Plan with a strong African emphasis. For example, 12 per cent of the budget went to African education, and only 2 per cent to

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fundamental studies of African labour by B.C. Roberts (*Labour in the tropical territories of the Commonwealth* [London, 1964]), Gertrude & Colin Newbury ('Labor Charters and Labor Markets: The ILO and Africa in the Interwar period', *Journal of African Studies*, 3 [1976]) and M.K. Banton, 'Colonial Office supervision of the introduction and revision of labour legislation in British Africa' (PhD thesis, University of London, 1993).

6 Cooper, *Decolonisation,* p. 461; cf. p. 346.

7 *Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Financial and Economic Position of Northern Rhodesia* (Colonial 145, 1938), p. 347. P.J. Cain & A.G.,Hopkins pointed out some time ago that Pim deserves study: *British Imperialism: Crisis and deconstruction, 1914-1990* (Harlow, 1993), p. 231n.

European education.[8] This promised a dramatic break with the past: after all, the country's first secondary school for Africans, Munali, had been founded only in 1939, and in 1945 there were only 65 pupils in its secondary classes.

A further feature of the post-war decade was the rapidly growing importance of African voices. (It is a great pity, by the way, that there is no Zambian equivalent of Terence Ranger's splendid anthology *The African Voice in Southern Rhodesia* [1970] – and even that stopped short at 1930.) Here I want to note two different ways in which Africans made themselves heard. The government provided new forums for the expression of African opinion: from 1944, provincial councils, and from 1946 the African Representative Council. From 1948 – and more effectively from 1952 – two Africans sat in the Legislative Council. Meanwhile, Africans were making use of the media. They wrote letters to the press – and from 1936 this included *Mutende*, a government-sponsored paper addressed to Africans.[9] Much more important, though, was the Central African Broadcasting Service, based in Lusaka. This was, as Rosaleen Smyth has noted, the first radio station in Africa beamed exclusively at Africans. From 1949, thanks to its ingenious director Harry Franklin, CABS reached a truly mass audience through the sale of a short-wave battery-powered receiver – the Saucepan Special.[10]

The main political issue in Northern Rhodesia after the war was of course the territory's relationship with Southern Rhodesia, where a white minority had enjoyed self-government since 1923. The post-war prosperity of Northern Rhodesia attracted white immigrants. Between 1946 and 1951 the white population grew from around 20,000 to 35,000; by 1953 it was close to 50,000.[11] Understandably, many whites felt more and more restive under Colonial Office rule: they compared their lot with that of whites in Southern Rhodesia. Some whites hoped for a majority in the Legislative Council of elected, unofficial members: they wanted 'responsible government'. Others sought to achieve formal supremacy by joining hands across the Zambezi, through an amalgamation of the two Rhodesias. This campaign was largely successful, inasmuch as extended negotiations with successive governments – Labour and Conservative – in Britain resulted in Federation in 1953.

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8 R. Baldwin, *Economic development and export growth: A study of Northern Rhodesia, 1920-1960* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1966), p. 194.

9 See R. Smyth, 'Propaganda and politics: The history of *Mutende* during the Second World War', *Zambia Journal of History*, 1 (1981).

10 R. Smyth, 'A note on the "saucepan special", the people's radio of Central Africa', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television,* 4 (1984).

11 R. Gray, *The two nations: Aspects of the development of race relations in the Rhodesias and Nyasaland* (London, 1960), pp. 200-201.

Meanwhile, pressure by assertive white politicians had caused a thorough-going revision of the Ten-Year Development Plan. As I have noted, this started out in l947 as a bold, indeed radical, scheme for African uplift. But over the next few years it was repeatedly revised: it became a relatively conservative, play-safe programme focused on the line-of-rail and offering far more to those – whether white or black – who already had than to those who had little or nothing. I don't know of any sustained analysis of the stages by which the Plan was modified in the Legislative Council: this seems to be yet another aspect of the post-war years which has been neglected by historians. I will give just one illustration of my point. In 1947, as we have seen, the Plan assigned 12 per cent of its budget to African education and only 2 per cent to European education. By 1953 these ratios were almost exactly reversed: African education got less than 2 per cent while European education got nearly 10 per cent.[12] This reverse is overlooked by Fay Gadsden in an otherwise helpful survey[13], and for that matter in Nick Wincott's still earlier essay.[14]

This is indeed an occasion to enter yet another plea for historians to look at a neglected subject: in the past twenty years there has been little or no research on the education of Zambians during the crucial two decades between the end of World War II and Independence. This is specially disappointing, because it is far from being a dull subject. Since so little was done by government to expand secondary education for Africans, more and more was done by Africans themselves. Some took correspondence courses; several went abroad. There is an interesting story to be told from files in the National Archives about post-war bursaries for Africans to study elsewhere. I have only glanced at them myself, but a good impression is provided by *Who's Who in Zambia*.[15] This lists eighteen Zambians who studied abroad in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Six went to South Africa, three to Southern Rhodesia, three to Britain, and three to India – each of whom went into politics: Simon Kapwepwe, Nalumino Mundia, Munukayumbwa Sipalo. And a full secondary education was needed for admission to university courses. It was not until 1957 that the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, in Salisbury/Harare, opened its doors; nevertheless, by 1955 B.A. degrees were being awarded to Zambians who had

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[12] Baldwin, *Economic development*, p. 196; cf. E. Clegg, *Race and politics: Partnership in the federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland* (London, 1960), pp. 140-141.

[13] F. Gadsden, 'Education and society in colonial Zambia'. In: S.N. Chipungu, ed., *Guardians in their time: Experiences of Zambians under colonial rule, 1890-1964* (London and Basingstoke, 1992).

[14] N. Wincott, 'Education and urban development in Zambia'. In: G.W. Smith, B.Pachai & R.K.Tangri, eds, *Malawi past and present* (Blantyre, 1971).

[15] K.G. Mlenga, *Who's who in Zambia* (Lusaka, 1968).

gone through Munali. Three had graduated from Fort Hare, in the eastern Cape, and Arthur Wina had a London degree gained at Makerere College in Uganda. Meanwhile, a future vice-chancellor of the University of Zambia was reading science at Cambridge: this was Lameck Goma, who had proceeded there from Fort Hare.

I conclude with some remarks about two white men who played leading parts in the arguments after the war over amalgamation and federation: Stewart Gore-Browne and Andrew Cohen. Gore-Browne, a veteran settler, was very much present in Northern Rhodesia at this time, and yet in a sense became absent. From l938 to 1951 he sat in the Legislative Council as a representative of African interests. He took this duty very seriously. Unlike other settlers and most local officials, he had some sense of the rapid growth of African political aspirations during and after the war. When in London in 1945, Gore-Browne made a point of meeting Dr. Hastings Banda – even though he later had to admit that he had never visited Nyasaland. It was, anyway, more important that he had visited British West and East Africa.[16] Yet Gore-Browne's political star was on the wane. He refused to join his friend Roy Welensky in pressing for amalgamation; instead, in 1948, he floated a scheme for 'responsible government'. This was well-intentioned but badly presented. Africans who had hitherto relied on Gore-Browne to speak on their behalf felt betrayed. Besides, there was now an African National Congress to spearhead resistance to amalgamation or federation. Gore-Browne felt he had outlived his usefulness to Africans and resigned from the Legislative Council in 1951.[17]

Finally, I turn to Andrew Cohen, who by contrast with Gore-Browne can be said to have been absent and yet very much present. Between 1933 and 1952 he worked in the Colonial Office, far from Northern Rhodesia; yet he was in a way the most important personality shaping the country's political future after the war. Let us flash back for a moment to 1930, in Cambridge – where Cohen was a brilliant student of classics. Among the other clever young people then at Cambridge was an architecture student called James Mason. Fifty years later, Mason recalled a production of the *Bacchae*, by Euripides, performed in Greek. The future film star played a non-speaking dancer; the leading role – the god Dionysus himself – was taken by A.B. Cohen.[18] This might well have been seen as a portent, heralding a career driven forward by exceptional energy. Cohen's biographer and one-time colleague, Ronald Robinson, wrote of his 'dynamic

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[16] P. Short, *Banda* (London and Boston, 1974), p. 47; Northern Rhodesia, *Legislative Council Debates,* 24 March 1948, 23 September 1947.

[17] See R.I. Rotberg, *Black heart: Gore-Browne and the politics of multi-racial Zambia* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1977).

[18] J. Mason, *Before I forget* (London, 1981), p. 33.

enthusiasm'; he had 'a heroic image of himself as idea in action, compounded of Carlyle and Euripides'.[19]

Cohen's first contact with Northern Rhodesia came in 1937 when, as a twenty-eight year old civil servant, he was secretary to the Pim commission of enquiry into its finances. This experience confirmed Cohen's scepticism about British professions of 'trusteeship' in Africa. He was shocked by the extent of unofficial colour bars; and it was Cohen who urged the British government to help Northern Rhodesia buy the mineral rights of the British South Africa Company. Early in World War II, Cohen was sent to Malta, but by 1944 he was back in Whitehall, and he impressed Gore-Browne with his continuing knowledge of Northern Rhodesia. In 1946 Welensky too met Cohen: unsurprisingly, they quarrelled, but Welensky later reported, 'He is first class'.[20] By 1947, not yet forty years old, Cohen was known to his colleagues as 'King of Africa'. Not only was he in charge of African matters in the Colonial Office: he was setting out Britain's first overall policy for Africa – phasing out Indirect Rule and preparing the colonies for democratic self-government.

Yet Cohen was far from being a sentimental champion of African claims; rather, he was a socialist in the elitist Fabian mould, determined to do what *he* thought best for Africa. Thus for Kenya, in 1946, Cohen backed renewed white immigration, while he had little time for Jomo Kenyatta, now back from England and trying to organise the Kenya African Union.[21] As for Central Africa, Cohen's thinking was much affected by the advent in 1948 of an Afrikaner Nationalist government in South Africa. This was unlikely to be supportive of British interests, and Cohen sincerely believed that a British counter-weight must be formed – by combining the three territories of Central Africa under a constitution which would allow Africans to gain an increasing share of power. This was the thrust of a trenchant memorandum by Cohen in March 1950, though it has recently been argued by Philip Murphy that 'the white settler threat to make Northern Rhodesia ungovernable was a more immediate (if inadmissible) pressure'.[22] (In May 1948, Welensky had declared in an interview that Britain would have to bring in troops if it wanted to enforce

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[19] R.E. Robinson, 'Cohen, Sir Andrew Benjamin (1909-1968)', rev. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004); online ed., May 2007 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/32478].

[20] *Legislative Council Debates,* 4 August 1944, 3 December 1946.

[21] D. Throup, *The economic and social origins of Mau Mau, 1945-1953* (London, 1987), pp. 46, 51, 127.

[22] Summary by John Darwin, *Times Literary Supplement*, 17 February 2006, in reviewing P. Murphy, ed., *British documents on the end of empire: Central Africa* (2 vols., London, 2005).

the paramountcy of African interests.[23]) As it turned out, Cohen's scheme – realised in the Federation created in 1953 – had the unintended consequence of speeding up the growth of African political organisation in the northern territories.

In sketching the background to Northern Rhodesia in the 1950s, I have noted various opportunities for further study. I will end by noting three more. I have referred to Ronald Robinson (who died in 1999) as the biographer of Andrew Cohen, but in fact Robinson completed only three essays on Cohen, and these overlap considerably.[24] Cohen's career was of exceptional importance, and undoubtedly deserves a full-length biography. It would also be helpful – as I remarked thirty years ago – to have a sequel to Davidson's admirable study of the Northern Rhodesian Legislative Council.[25] And this in turn would be an essential part of any attempt to take the full measure of the momentous decade following World War II. There is, of course, much to the point in Lewis Gann's monumental history,[26] but this is now nearly fifty years old: quite apart from any other drawbacks, Gann could see no public records in Britain later than 1910. Since he wrote, there has been nothing on post-war Northern Rhodesia to compare with Iliffe on Tanganyika, or Throup on Kenya.[27] We need a synoptic study of colonial management encompassing the governments in London and Lusaka, the mine companies, the local white settlers and the emergent organs of African opinion: a study, indeed, which pulled together the still discrete academic worlds of imperial, business and African history. It is surely high time we had such a perspective on a territory which after all was crucial both to Britain's imperial economy and to the vision of a 'multi-racial' Commonwealth.

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23 Clegg, *Race and politics*, pp. 156-157.

24 See Robinson's *Oxford DNB* article for details.

25 J.W. Davidson, *The Northern Rhodesian Legislative Council* (London, 1948); A.D. Roberts, review of Rotberg, *Black heart*, in *African Affairs*, 78 (1979), p. 572.

26 L.H.Gann, *A history of Northern Rhodesia: Early days to 1953* (London, 1964).

27 J. Iliffe, *A modern history of Tanganyika* (Cambridge, 1979), chapters 11-15; Throup, *Economic and social origins of Mau Mau.*

PART II

THE POLYPHONY OF AFRICAN NATIONALISM

3

Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula and the formation of ZANC/UNIP: A reinterpretation[1]

Giacomo Macola

Introduction

In pursuance of the intellectual agenda first laid out in the introduction to *One Zambia, Many Histories*, the present collection's companion volume, this chapter seeks to problematize current understandings of Zambian nationalism by taking a fresh look at the activities of Harry Nkumbula, the president of the African National Congress (ANC) of Northern Rhodesia, in the 1950s. Nkumbula – most Zambians outside the Bantu Botatwe areas of the Southern and Central Provinces would today maintain – was a loveable but irresponsible leader.[2] Somehow, before his many weaknesses got the better of him, he briefly managed to embody the new-found unity of purpose of his countrymen and women in the course of the anti-federal campaign of the early 1950s. The rise of

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1 This paper consists of a summary of the second and third chapters of my *Liberal nationalism in Central Africa: A biography of Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula* (New York, 2010).

2 Throughout this piece, I use the term 'Bantu Botatwe' as a crude synonym for Tonga, Ila and Lenje, ethnic groups who spoke mutually intelligible dialects and had indeed been conceived of by some missionaries and colonial administrators as forming one distinct linguistic and cultural entity. See E. Colson, 'The Bantu Botatwe: Changing political definitions in southern Zambia'. In: D. Parkin, L. Caplan & H. Fisher, eds, *The politics of cultural performance* (Providence and Oxford, 1996), pp. 62-63.

a new – younger, more militant and morally upright – generation of leaders from the mid-1950s brought this aberration to an end and made the achievement of national independence possible – a feat which Nkumbula, left to his own devices, would never have managed to pull off.

My starting point is that this facile caricature – one peddled by Kenneth Kaunda's ZANC/UNIP in the aftermath of the split within the ANC in 1958, but also, as will be seen below, echoed in academic discourse[3] – has obfuscated the true complexity of Nkumbula's nationalism and the disparate interests it strove to reconcile. But – I contend – it is only when this complexity is acknowledged and foregrounded that it becomes possible to make sense of African political life in late-colonial Zambia and of the two-party structure into which it finally crystallized. Throughout this paper, then, my focus will be on the polyvalence of Nkumbula's thought and on the conflicting nature of the social forces that shaped the pattern of his political engagement.

The first section of this chapter examines the dynamics of the anti-federal battle and the practical examples of inequality and oppression by which it was fired. It shows that from the early 1950s onwards Nkumbula's politics were built around two potentially contradictory principles of affiliation. Building upon these conclusions, the second and third parts of the article consist of an extended exercise in source criticism, the aim of which is to challenge the dominant narrative of Nkumbula's political marginalization and to offer an alternative – and, I maintain, more rounded and historically defensible – reading of the process that resulted in his transformation from 'father of Zambian nationalism' to vilified leader of an increasingly regionalized minority party.

The national and regional dimensions of the anti-federation campaign

Nkumbula was elected to the presidency of the Northern Rhodesia African Congress in July 1951. But even before formally ousting Godwin Mbikusita-Lewanika, the Congress' president since its inception in 1948, Nkumbula had

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[3] Founded in October 1958, ZANC, the Zambia African National Congress, was banned on the eve of the Northern Rhodesian Legislative Council elections of March 1959. Many of its leaders were 'rusticated' to remote rural areas. Upon their release, they took over the reins of UNIP, the United National Independence Party, which had seen the light in August 1959. For a detailed analysis of the exclusionary nature of ZANC/UNIP's anti-Congress propaganda between the late 1950s and the early 1960s, see my 'Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula, UNIP and the Roots of Authoritarianism in Nationalist Zambia'. In: J.-B. Gewald, M. Hinfelaar & G. Macola, eds, *One Zambia, many histories: Towards a history of post-colonial Zambia* (Leiden and Boston, 2008), esp. pp. 19-25.

begun to influence the party's campaign against the proposed Central African Federation, as attested by the complete consonance between 'Federation in Central Africa', the influential treatise he had co-written with Hastings Banda in London in 1949,[4] and the resolutions adopted by a meeting of the Congress' executive council on 18 January 1951. Nabulyato, the secretary-general of the party, had read 'Federation in Central Africa'.[5] In drafting the resolutions of the Executive, he now reiterated Banda and Nkumbula's condemnation of the Southern Rhodesian 'Native policy' – which the Congress 'viewed with horror' on account of the 'political disabilities, social indignities and denial of economic and political freedom' that it inflicted upon 'the African' – and their demand for far-reaching internal social and political reforms as a pre-condition for – or, preferably, an alternative to – Federation: 'the Congress urges the Government to increase the African representation on the Legislative Council to two members for each Province. That it is high time that an African Member be appointed to (the) Executive Council and be given a Portfolio right away.' As Banda and Nkumbula had done, the Congress depicted Federation as merely the first step towards the granting of Dominion status to European settlers – a development that had always spelt doom for the 'indigenous peoples', who had either been 'exterminated (…) or turned (…) into serfs, e.g. Australia and the Union of South Africa' – and advocated the continuance of 'Colonial Office Rule, whose policy is to prepare the colonial peoples for self-government and independence within the framework of the Commonwealth of Nations'.[6]

While Nkumbula would continue to draw on this powerful combination of pan-African solidarities and appeals to the ideals of both imperial citizenship and self-government, he infused it with a new urgency and immediacy by giving vent to widespread popular fears of land alienation.[7] Nkumbula's most explicit early formulation of what would become *the* dominant feature of the Congress' anti-federal campaign took place during a meeting of the Southern Province's African Provincial Council that Harry attended as the representative of the Ila Native Authority, where he sat briefly as a 'progressive councillor' in the summer of 1951. Called specifically for the purpose of discussing the *Report of the Conference on Closer Association* (Cmd. 8233) before the

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4 H.K. Banda & H.M. Nkumbula, 'Federation in Central Africa', London, 1 May 1949, National Archives of Zambia (NAZ), Lusaka, HM 70/4/49/2.

5 R.M. Nabulyato (ed. G. Macola), *African realities: A memoir* (Lusaka, 2008), p. 43.

6 R.M. Nabulyato, Resolutions of the executive council of the Northern Rhodesia African Congress, Lusaka, 18 Jan. 1951, Rhodes House (RH), Oxford, MSS Brit. Emp. s 365, 101/3. Cf. with Banda and Nkumbula, 'Federation in Central Africa'.

7 See already D.C. Mulford, *Zambia: The politics of independence, 1957-1964* (Oxford, 1967), p. 24, and A.D. Roberts, *A history of Zambia* (London, 1976), p. 209.

Secretary of State for the Colonies' planned visit to Central Africa, the meeting represented a personal triumph for Nkumbula. Not only did the meeting fully endorse Nkumbula and the Congress' rejection of the *Report* and demand for the 'progressive political advancement of the Africans in this country',[8] but it also provided Nkumbula with the chance publicly to broadcast his warning that Federation, because of the 'large influx of European immigrants' that it would usher in, would pose an immediate threat to an already significantly weakened system of African land tenure. Amidst enthusiastic shouts of 'hear, hear', Nkumbula asked rhetorically:

> If those people came to this country, where are they going to be? Is (…) Mr. Roy Welensky (…) not going to alienate the present native trust land to find room for them? (…). Would that not affect the interests of the Africans? What land are they going to occupy, is it not Northern Rhodesia, the country of the Africans, that land which is given to the Africans, native reserves and native trust lands?

After pointing out that the envisaged federal Native Affairs Board represented an inadequate form of safeguard, Nkumbula ended his speech by reminding his listeners that

> If we have this Federation, tomorrow we shall have a Dominion in Central Africa. What will [*then*] happen to all the safeguards? We are quite aware of what happens to the safeguards which the British Government gives to the Colonial peoples, they are never honoured, they have been violated. If you go into the pages of Colonial history, even without Dominion status, the safeguards and guarantees that we are given by His Majesty's Government (…) go by the board because of pressure coming from the settlers (…)how much more when you have gone to Dominion Status? In view of this I will repeat myself and say on behalf of the people I represent we totally reject Federation.[9]

I maintain that the site of Nkumbula's peroration was not accidental. For while the fear of land loss was felt throughout the country and by all the Northern Rhodesian Africans in whose name Nkumbula purported to speak, it was undoubtedly especially strong in the Southern Province, both because its comparatively fertile land was then being used more and more effectively by Africans for cash crop production and because of the sustained lived history of dispossession that the region, uniquely in the Northern Rhodesian context, had experienced from early on in the century.[10] 'Southerners are farmers' – a close

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[8] N. Nalumango, in 'Record of a meeting of the Southern Province African Provincial Council', Livingstone, 22 Aug. 1951, NAZ, Box 4c.

[9] Ibid.

[10] There is a vast literature on the agricultural history of Zambia's Southern Province. Here, I am drawing especially on M.R. Dixon-Fyle, 'Politics and agrarian change among the Plateau Tonga of Northern Rhodesia, c. 1924-63', PhD thesis, University of London, 1976; 'Land alienation and the initial African reaction on the Tonga

friend and colleague of Nkumbula once told me. 'They did not move around like the Bemba and others. They have a very high sense of their land. They value it above all things. Harry understood this.'[11] Although the rural concerns of labour migrants were not necessarily less profound than those of market-oriented peasants,[12] the above remarks suggest that, for all its broad appeal, Nkumbula's emphasis on land matters in the early 1950s did introduce an element of ethno-regionalist ambiguity within the Congress' early nationalism. To be sure, the imagination of new inter-tribal solidarities proceeded in earnest. In 'How the Congress works in Northern Rhodesia', for instance, Nabulyato went out of his way to stress the 'strong co-operation and unity' among the party's members. 'Despite tribal differences and petty planted jealousies, Congress members do manage to come together to discuss and decide their future.'[13] And at about the same time, Nkumbula famously pointed to the existence of 'a cold war between the British Government and the indigenous peoples of Africa.'[14] Yet there is little doubt that the arguments that he employed to bring home his point spoke more loudly to the historical experience of one region of the colony than they did to that of the others.

For the time being, however, the political salience of this ideological tension remained muted, as Nkumbula worked tirelessly towards building a national image for himself and his party. In the furtherance of this aim, his oratory powers were no less important than the clarity of his anti-federal exposé. On Christmas Day, 1951, Nkumbula addressed a Congress meeting in Kitwe. His speech began by bemoaning the growing 'intolerance and hatred between the racial groups which inhabit our Protectorate'. This sorry state of affairs, Harry maintained, had nothing to do with the Africans. Rather, it was the consequence of the 'ideology of race superiority' espoused by the 'ever increasing number of immigrants from the Union of South Africa' and of the newly-elected British Tory government's seeming deafness to African concerns about Federation. The much-flaunted economic case for Federation, Nkumbula went on, was but a

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plateau, Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) c. 1898-1935', *Mohlomi. Journal of Southern African Historical Studies*, 3-4 (1981); and K.P. Vickery, *Black and white in Southern Zambia: The Tonga plateau economy and British imperialism, 1890-1939* (New York, Westport and London, 1986).

11 Interview with Rev. Isaac Mumpansha, Lusaka, 30 Oct. 2006.

12 See, e.g., L. Vail, 'Introduction: Ethnicity in Southern African history'. In: id., ed., *The creation of tribalism in Southern Africa* (London, 1989), esp. pp. 14-15.

13 R.M. Nabulyato, 'How the congress works in Northern Rhodesia', n.p., n.d., encl. in R.M. Nabulyato to Fabian Colonial Bureau, n.p., n.d. (but Nov. 1951?), RH, MSS Brit. Emp. s 365, 101/3.

14 H.M. Nkumbula, Speech delivered at a meeting of the 'Working Committee', Kitwe, 25 Dec. 1951, United National Independence Party's Archives (UNIPA), Lusaka, ANC 7/81.

smokescreen designed to mask the ongoing 'exploitation of Africa's natural resources' and protect the privileged position of the 'colonists', who 'enjoy easily gained higher standards of life than they have ever known in their home lands.' But it was the beautifully-crafted, explosive conclusion of the speech that made the most profound impression on his listeners. It is worth quoting it in full:

> Ladies and Gentlemen, we must tell the White Settlers in our Protectorate and the British Government that we cannot trust them any more. We have been much humiliated. We have almost lost confidence in ourselves because of the bad treatment we have suffered from the hands of our supposed partners. Perhaps this is a blessing in disguise. There is now a rising tide of nationalism among our people. Our national spirit, now rife, is an upshot of our long suffering. There is no going back. We are a race and like any other race on earth we love to rule ourselves. How shall we achieve a home rule? There must be economic and political reforms. We must have our own Parliament in which the Europeans and the Indians will have reserved seats. We are a considerate race. We shall respect and protect the interests of the minorities in our nation. But the last word as to the form of Government we shall have, it shall be for us to decide.[15]

Without yet offering a detailed blueprint for the achievement of national independence, by the end of 1951, Nkumbula no longer viewed the latter as a distant, hazy ideal. The realization of what he called 'our national aspirations' had clearly entered the realm of possibility.

It was surrounded by such a growing militant aura that Nkumbula returned to London in the spring of 1952. Timed to coincide with the Lancaster House conference – that, despite being boycotted by the official African delegates from both Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, would culminate in the publication of a *Draft Federal Scheme* (Cmd. 8573)[16] – the Congress 'London Delegation' was meant 'to educate the British public in Central African Affairs' and to put forward the case against Federation in the largest possible number of public and private meetings.[17] Besides enabling Nkumbula to broaden his already impressive array of international contacts, the trip was especially notable for marking the beginning of the so-called 'Land Rights Case'. All but ignored by students of Zambian nationalism, this legal initiative, in which the services were enlisted of Rev. Michael Scott, the director of the Africa Bureau, and progressive lawyer Dingle Foot, is nonetheless indicative of Nkumbula and his key constituents' priorities in the early 1950s.

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15 Ibid.

16 R.I. Rotberg, The rise of nationalism in Central Africa: The making of Malawi and Zambia, 1873-1964 (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), pp. 240-241.

17 R.M. Nabulyato, Report on 'African delegation to London on Federation', May 1952, NAZ, HM70/7/52/1.

In its initial and most limited application, the 'Land Rights Case' was intended to employ the letter of the 'treaties of protection' stipulated between British agents and African chiefs at the close of the nineteenth century to question the legality of the successive Orders in Council with which the Northern Rhodesian government had acquired the right to expropriate and 'assign any land in the country, including Reserves, for any purposes.'[18] A separate, though obviously related, line of juridical attack was to use the same treaties and, especially, the so-called 'Barotse Concession' of 1900 to stall the implementation of the Federal scheme, which, it could be argued, 'represent[ed] a breach of these agreements', for the direct descendents of the original signatories were to be handed over to what was, 'in substance, if not in strict form, a new State different from that which they originally contracted.'[19] In practice, however, even Foot considered the chances of either case ever making it through British courts extremely slim and, insofar as Federation as a whole was concerned, thought it more realistic to request the intervention of the United Nations, the Charter of which Federation might be construed as running against. Predictably, the 'Land Rights Case' failed to take off. Shelved in October 1953,[20] two months after Federation had finally become a reality, it would appear *prima facie* as nothing more than a tactical blunder and a considerable waste of resources. Yet, the sincere faith that Nkumbula placed in the case,[21] and the fact that it would eventually resurface in 1955, bring out in sharp relief the common ideological ground and the solidity of the alliance between the Congress' president and the Bantu Botatwe of the Southern Province, among whom 'the idea that Chiefs could sue Government for the return of their land [was] extremely popular.'[22] Nothing epitomizes the Southern Province's satisfaction with Nkumbula's doings in the UK better than a Tonga song that was still remembered in the 1970s:

Harry Mwaanga.
Harry Mwaanga.
Nkumbula is fighting our cause in England.
Here he comes from the edges of the world.

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[18] 'Note as to conference at Mr. Dingle Foot's chambers', 16 Jan. 1953, encl. in Bryden & Williams to Chief Mpezeni, London, 16 Jan. 1953, NAZ, HM 70/6/53/1.

[19] D. Foot, 'Northern Rhodesian African Congress. Opinion', London, 24 March 1953, UNIPA, ANC 9/49.

[20] *Congress News*, Oct. 1953.

[21] See, e.g., H.M. Nkumbula to M. Scott, Lusaka, 27 Oct. 1952, Ompie Nkumbula-Liebenthal's collection, Lusaka, and H.M. Nkumbula to 'All chiefs and African people in N. Rhodesia', Lusaka, 24 Dec. 1952, UNIPA, ANC 9/49.

[22] R.P. Bush (Secretary of Native Affairs) to (PC, Southern Province?), Lusaka, 16 July 1953, NAZ, SP 1/14/18.

He is not afraid to go to the white man.
He is not afraid of the one who speaks English.
Harry Nkumbula.[23]

By including two chiefs in the London delegation – the Bemba Paramount, Chitimukulu, whose remit in the UK meetings was to deliver a speech on how time-honoured treaties were 'being violated by European schemes for Federation', and Senior Chief Musokotwane of the Southern Province's 'Toka' or 'Toka-Leya', who dwelt specifically on European 'encroachment on African lands' and the obstacles that prevented the full 'development of agriculture in N. Rhodesia'[24] – Nkumbula signified his intention to involve Native Authorities in the colony-wide anti-federal agitation. This determination found its most tangible expression in the decision to transform the Congress' annual conference of August 1952 into a 'Chiefs and Delegates Conference'.[25] Attended by more than one hundred chiefs drawn from all over the country, the Conference, striking as it did at the heart of the colonial neo-traditionalist project, was greeted with considerable anxiety by administrators,[26] or, in the words of Nkumbula himself, threw the government 'completely (…) off its rails'.[27] Held less than three months after the adjective 'National' had been added to the name of the party,[28] the Conference's primary aim was clearly to demonstrate the unity of all Africans behind the Congress' anti-federal battle and to counter customary charges of unrepresentativeness on the part of colonial authorities.

In his presidential address, an effective compendium of all the standard motives of his anti-federal platform, Nkumbula first of all stressed the uniqueness of the occasion, 'the first time in the history of this country that

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23 Dixon-Fyle, 'Politics and agrarian change', pp. 429, 283.

24 Nabulyato, Report.

25 H.M. Nkumbula to 'All chiefs and people', Lusaka, 5 June 1952, Ompie Nkumbula-Liebenthal's collection; G.W.C. Kaluwa to 'Dear chief', Lusaka, 5 July 1952, SOAS Archives, London, Thomas Fox-Pitt Papers (TFPP), PP MS 6, Box 13, File 6/7/2.

26 R.P. Bush (Secretary of Native Affairs) to PCs, Lusaka, 23 July 1952, NAZ, SP 1/14/18.

27 Nkumbula to Scott, 27 Oct. 1952.

28 The first written mention of the new name – 'African National Congress of Northern Rhodesia' – that I know of dates to June 1952 (Nkumbula to 'All chiefs and people', 5 June 1952). There is considerable confusion surrounding the timing of the introduction of the new name, with Sikalumbi wrongly stating that it took place in as late as 1953 and Mulford & Roberts as early as 1951. W.K. Sikalumbi, ed., H.W. Langworthy, *Before UNIP* (Lusaka, n.d. [but 1977]), p. 9; Mulford, *Zambia*, p. 20; Roberts, *History of Zambia*, p. 210. No precise dates are given by either Rotberg, *Rise of nationalism in Central Africa* or F. Macpherson, *Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia: The times and the man* (Lusaka, 1974)

Chiefs and Commoners from all parts of this protectorate have been able to come together to discuss matters that affect them (…).'[29] Having already provided a point-by-point rebuttal of the constitutional provisions contained in the *Draft Federal Scheme* in June,[30] Nkumbula chose instead to take his listeners yet once more into 'the annals of the British Colonial History' with a view to illustrating the dire consequences of the granting of Dominion Status – which, as we know, the Congress assumed with some reason to be the 'ultimate goal' of the 'federationists' – for 'aboriginal races' the world over.

> (The) British Colonists in North America and Canada exterminated the Natives of those countries and occupied their lands. (…) safeguards did not save the Red Indians from the bullets and poison of the British Colonists. (…). In Australia similar things happened. Today the Red Indians and the Australia aborigines no longer exist as a race. (…). In South Africa our fellow men were sold by Her Majesty's Government to the White Settlers when the British Government granted Dominion Status to the Union.[31]

After restating his abhorrence of the 'savage' Southern Rhodesian 'way of life' and solidarity with the oppressed 'brothers and sisters' of that unhappy country, Nkumbula pointed out that Federation amounted to nothing less than a betrayal on the part of the British Government, that, by forsaking its obligation to lead the Northern Rhodesian Africans towards self-government, was similarly abdicating any claim on the future loyalty of its charges. As in Mapoloto two months earlier – and despite the 'uneasiness among the Europeans' that his remarks had then caused – Nkumbula reiterated the view that 'the only best government for the Blacks was a government fully manned and run by the black people of Africa.'[32]

Yet, notwithstanding the internationalist, pan-African rhetoric by which it was informed, the nationalism expressed by the 'Chiefs and Delegates Conference' did have a pronounced Southern Province flavour. Possibly because more than a third of the chiefs in attendance hailed from Nkumbula's home region,[33] the grievances of agricultural producers were much more central

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[29] H.M. Nkumbula, Presidential address, Lusaka, 19 Aug. 1952, UNIPA, ANC 9/39.

[30] H.M. Nkumbula, 'The General President's statement (…) at the Mapoloto African Township', Lusaka, 26 June 1952, UNIPA, ANC 7/91.

[31] Nkumbula, Presidential address.

[32] Ibid. In Mapoloto, Nkumbula had added: 'I shall die a very unhappy man if I shall not see a truly African Government in Central Africa. My children and my grandchildren shall continue with this objective if it cannot be achieved in my life's time. I do not accept Welensky's or Huggins' Governments. They are, to me, foreign and foreign they shall remain.' Nkumbula, 'The General President's statement'.

[33] Since the second largest chiefly contingent came from the Central Province, more than half of the Native Authorities represented at the Conference belonged to the

to his demonstration of the exploitative nature of colonial rule than were specifically urban concerns, such as the refusal to 'put into practical application' the 'principle of equal pay for equal work' on the mines. In his presidential address, for instance, Nkumbula offered a detailed analysis of the maize marketing system and, especially, the workings of the so-called 'African Farming Improvement Fund' (AFIF), which, he maintained, far from assisting a select group of 'modern' cash crop farmers, served merely to squeeze surplus out of rural producers and entrench the 'discrimination in the price of articles put on the market by Africans and European sellers.'[34] More in general, land matters featured very prominently in the agenda of the Conference, the first day of which was entirely taken up by the compilation of a written account in which the chiefs explained when and 'how Crown Lands were acquired in their respective areas'.[35] This is likely to have been an all-Bantu Botatwe affair, for, as has already been pointed out, the Southern Province was the only region of the colony where land alienation and the removal of Africans to 'Native Reserves' had taken place to any appreciable extent.

The increasing likelihood of a complete settler victory over Federation brought about a distinctive radicalization in Nkumbula's politics between 1952 and 1953. In his New Year message to the 'Chiefs and People of Northern Rhodesia', Nkumbula, in yet another proof of the multifarious nature of his political repertoire, ventured into a Marxist interpretation of Federation as the tool of international capital. In a language of which his old Marxist hero, George Padmore, would undoubtedly have been proud, he wrote about the continuing need 'of raw materials for the British and American manufacturers' and the crisis that the 'forces of freedom and independence' were brining about for 'the Capitalists'.[36] Of much more immediate impact, however, was Nkumbula's public burning of the final *Federal Scheme for Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland Prepared by a Conference Held in London, January, 1953* (Cmd. 8754) before a large audience of Lusaka residents on 22 March. In the speech that preceded this act of open defiance, Nkumbula warned that the introduction of Federation was bound to result in 'unrest in Central

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Bantu Botatwe. 'A list of chiefs who attended the Chiefs and Delegates Conference', encl. in Minutes of the conference, Lusaka, 18-25 Aug. 1952, NAZ, HM 70/6/52/1.

34 Nkumbula, Presidential address. On the AFIF, see M. Dixon-Fyle, 'Agricultural improvement and political protest on the Tonga Plateau, Northern Rhodesia', *Journal of African History*, 18 (1977), and J.C. Momba, 'Peasant differentiation and rural party politics in colonial Zambia', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 11 (1985).

35 Minutes of the conference.

36 H.M. Nkumbula to 'All chiefs and people of Northern Rhodesia', Lusaka, 22 Dec. 1952, UNIPA, ANC 9/49.

Africa, perhaps of the worst kind,' and that, since there was 'no force in the world which [*could*] destroy the love and aspirations for freedom and National Independence among the Black Races of Africa', the 'talking stage' would now be superseded by 'the stage for action.'[37] In the event, the planned action amounted to very little, due mainly to the last-minute refusal of Lawrence Chola Katilungu, the president of the African Mine Workers' Union and the Trades' Union Congress, to commit his followers to a nation-wide strike scheduled for 1-2 April ('National Days of Prayer').[38]

On 2 June, a few weeks after the second reading of the federal enabling bill in the Commons, Nkumbula issued a bitter 'Statement on the Imposition of Federation':

> How can it be possible for the British Government to hand over her protected persons to a handful of reactionary white settlers (…)? To me, and to any person living, nothing could be more savage and immoral than the imposition of such a measure against the unwilling millions of inhabitants of Central Africa.

After reiterating the Congress' commitment to 'a policy of non-cooperation without violence' (though adding ominously that there was 'no guarantee as to whether or not the non-cooperation movement will not break into violence. After all we are all human beings and our endurance to a physical agony is very limited'), Nkumbula advocated a widespread campaign 'against the evils of colour-bar' in shops and public places and, more importantly for my argument so far, hinted at the possibility of calling for the wholesale withdrawal of African labour from the mining centres and European farms.

> There is no need for any able-bodied African to sell his labour to the white man for wages. I have given six months notice to all African working population to get ready for gardening during the next rainy season. (…). Get back to the land before the land-grubbing (sic) settlers have taken the last inch of your soil.[39]

Running against the grain of much of the territory's colonial history, this threatened initiative is less significant as a plan for bringing about the premature economic paralysis of Federation than as an indication of Nkumbula's increasingly ruralist orientation. Already in April, talking about the few African civil servants who had been dismissed from their jobs for having taken part in the ill-fated National Days of Prayer, Nkumbula had openly encouraged them to return to their villages and take up agriculture.

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[37] H.M. Nkumbula, 'The President's Statement on the White Paper of January, 1953', (Lusaka), 22 March 1953, UNIPA, ANC 9/49.

[38] See, e.g., Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 24.

[39] H.M. Nkumbula, 'A Statement on the imposition of federation by the President General', Lusaka, 2 June 1953, NAZ, HM 70/5/53/4.

> You should realise that the economic future of the Africans in this country does not lie in industrial employment. In other words, your economic future should be based on self-support which is only possible by a large scale agricultural development. The Europeans of this country have plans for taking you away from the villages where you carry out an independent life and turn you into wage earners.

In the villages, 'the African' will be able to settle down 'comfortably', rather than carrying 'out an economic life which he hardly enjoys by selling his labour to the white employers. (…). Aim at economic independence in your own villages.'[40]

Although never really put into practice, the idea took firm roots in the Southern Province, where it was still widely discussed well into the mid-1950s.[41] Following closely Lonsdale's argument about Kenyatta's dismay at the 'modern divorce of waged ambition from local duty' among the Kikuyu of Kenya[42] – a people whose social organization and experience of colonial rule were not entirely dissimilar from those of the Northern Rhodesian Tonga – I maintain that Nkumbula's glorification of the life of independent, market-oriented agricultural producers was not merely a knee-jerk reaction to the failure of his efforts to prevent the imposition of Federation, but rather the product both of the recent historical experience of successful cash crop agriculture among the Bantu Botatwe and of a, perhaps less recent and more deeply ingrained, civic thought that placed a premium on agricultural and cattle-keeping pursuits and saw self-mastery as being closely related to the right freely to dispose of one's labour. At this stage, Nkumbula does not appear to have been troubled by the question of the extent to which this philosophy – or 'moral ethnicity' – would also appeal to social groups, such as the Bemba-speakers of the Northern and Luapula Provinces, whose colonial trajectories had been deeply shaped by the experience of labour migrancy and waged employment.

But this was a question that the latter's representatives within the Congress began to ask themselves with increasing frequency from the mid-1950s, the period marked by the Congress' boycott campaign. After the inception of Federation, in the fight against which the party had invested all of its material and intellectual resources, Congress passed through an entirely understandable period of crisis,[43] from which it sought to emerge with a campaign against the

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[40] H.M. Nkumbula, 'The President's Statement on the Effects of the National Days of Prayer', Lusaka, 11 April 1953, NAZ, HM 70/5/53/2.

[41] See, e.g., Bush to (PC, Southern Province?), 16 July 1953; G.Clay, 'Southern Province Intelligenec Report. Period Ending 25 March 1954', (Livingstone), n.d., NAZ, SP 1/3/3; Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 48.

[42] J. Lonsdale, 'Jomo Kenyatta, God and the modern world'. In: J.-G. Deutsch, P. Probst & H. Schmidt, eds, *African modernities: Entangled meanings in current debate* (Portsmouth [NH] and Oxford, 2002), p. 49.

[43] See Mulford, *Zambia*, p. 36; Roberts, *History of Zambia*, pp. 218-219.

so colour-bar in shops and such public places as restaurants and hotels. The campaign, extending over much of 1953-1955 and consisting mainly of boycotts of butcher's shops that discriminated against their customers on the basis of colour,[44] was obviously of more immediate concern to town folks than rural residents.[45] Although boycotts did occur in Livingstone and, more sporadically, in some of the townships of the Tonga plateau,[46] the longest and most successful pickets took place in Lusaka, Broken Hill and some of the industrial towns on the Copperbelt.[47] Because of this, and despite having achieved the important result of keeping Congress in the public eye after the excruciating defeat of 1953, the boycotts also had the unintended effect of throwing into stark relief the specificity of the Southern Province's experience and interests and the unwillingness on the part of Congress' increasingly influential urban spokesmen to countenance them. The contradictory forces and political messages that Nkumbula had successfully welded together in the early 1950s were beginning to drift apart.

Questioning the ZANC/UNIP narrative

The first and most influential formulation of the soon-to-become-hegemonic account of Nkumbula's political decline came from none other than his former secretary-general, Kaunda, who, in an important letter to potential foreign allies of his new movement, the Zambia African National Congress (ZANC), offered a detailed discussion of what he viewed as Nkumbula's principal personal failings and political mistakes in 1957-1958. The long list of recipients of the missive suggests that its contents were never meant to remain private.[48] They, indeed, would shortly thereafter be reproduced and embellished in Kaunda's autobiography.[49] Kaunda's published version was later incorporated into Sikalumbi's part-autobiographical history of African politics in Northern Rhodesia in the 1950s. Consisting originally of two separate typescripts written between 1957 and 1959, this was published in a single volume many years

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44 See, especially, Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, pp. 26-33, 43-50**.**

45 A point made by K.M. Chittenden, 'Namwala Intelligence Report. Period Ending 1 March 1954', (Namwala), n.d., NAZ, SP 1/3/3.

46 Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 47; Dixon-Fyle, 'Politics and agrarian change', p. 312.

47 Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, pp. 26-33, 43-50.

48 Kaunda, for instance, posted identical letters to T. Fox-Pitt, of the Anti-Slavery Society (Lusaka, 2 Dec. 1958, NAZ, HM 71/1), and H. Selwyn-Clarke, of the Fabian Commonwealth Bureau (Lusaka, 2 Dec. 1958, RH, MSS Brit. Emp. s 365, 101/3).

49 K.D. Kaunda, *Zambia shall be free* (London, 1962), chapters 12 and 13.

later.[50] Sikalumbi's treatment of the two years preceding the formation of ZANC late in October 1958 is entirely consistent with Kaunda's. His work, however, supplements Kaunda's with a detailed description of the period 1955-1956, projecting backwards that tension between moderation and activism that Kaunda had dated to 1957-1958. The story, as told by these two influential direct witnesses, goes as follows.

In January 1955, both the president and secretary of the Congress were sentenced to two months' imprisonment with hard labour for possession of such prohibited publications as pamphlets issued by the British Communist Party and Fenner Brockway's Movement for Colonial Freedom.[51] The effects of this harsh experience on the two leaders were profoundly different. While Kaunda 'emerged from prison a more determined man',[52] Nkumbula regained his freedom convinced that the 'two months he spent with me in Her Majesty's Hostel were more than enough for him for he has spoken openly he was not prepared to go to prison' again.[53] Shocked and intimidated by the extent of colonial repression, the 'erstwhile fire-eating Orator [*became*] more cautious.'[54] In the summer of 1955, Nkumbula's new-found 'spirit of moderation' manifested itself in the decisions to revive the old and ill-fated 'land case against the British South Africa Company' (see above),[55] to put forward a plan for parity of representation, coupled with restricted African franchise, in the Northern Rhodesian Legislative Council,[56] and to curtail the independence of the Congress' Action Groups in Lusaka and the Copperbelt, which he suspected of being bent on forming 'another political party to overtake the Congress.'[57]

Colonial Secretary Lennox-Boyd's refusal to grant Nkumbula an audience during his solo visit to London at the end of the year strengthened the Congress president's determination to look for 'official recognition and respect' in colonial circles.[58] This he sought to secure by drawing closer to Harry Franklin,

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50 Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*. Sikalumbi's 'The Growth of African Nationalism', n.d. (but 1957), and 'The Circumstances which Gave Rise to the Banning of the Zambia African National Congress – Northern Rhodesia', n.d. (but 1959) are to be found in NAZ, HM76/PP/6/1-2.

51 Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, pp. 60-61.

52 Ibid., p. 63.

53 Kaunda to Fox-Pitt, 2 Dec. 1958.

54 Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 63.

55 Ibid., pp. 66-67.

56 Ibid., p. 73. The proposal was elaborated in the 'Joint Statement on Constitutional Changes Made by D.L. Yamba, Esq., MP, and H.M. Nkumbula, Esq., President General of the African National Congress', encl. in K.D. Kaunda to ANC officials, (Lusaka), 28 Aug. 1955, NAZ, HM 70/5/55/2.

57 Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 75.

58 Ibid., p. 81.

one of the Members of the Legislative Council (MLC) deputed to represent African interests in the Northern Rhodesian legislature and the then Member for African Education and Social Services in Governor Benson's cabinet. It was largely due to the influence of Franklin that Nkumbula launched what came to be known as the 'New Look Policy', the first tangible expressions of which were the decision to call off an ongoing boycott in Lusaka late in April 1956 and the choice to take part in semi-official talks with MLC John Roberts, Federal Deputy PM Welensky's right-hand man in Northern Rhodesia and the leader of European settlers in the country. During the meeting with Roberts and other white politicians, Nkumbula pledged Congress to constitutional practice and to working for better race relations in collaboration with European liberals.[59] Nkumbula's moderate turn was greeted with disquiet by party militants and members of the National Executive Council (NEC) alike. Dissatisfaction with the 'New Look' and a more general popular penchant for a 'policy of activism' were not unrelated to growing labour unrest on the Copperbelt and the outbreak of those 'rolling strikes' that culminated in the declaration of a State of Emergency in the colony's industrial heartland in September and the arrest and, in some cases, prolonged 'rustication' of numerous local African Mine Workers' Union (AMWU) and Congress officials.[60]

At the party's general conference of October 1956, Nkumbula was re-elected to the presidency. But neither this nor the coeval elevation to the NEC of such radicals as Mungoni Liso, elected deputy president while under restriction in Mbeza, Namwala, Simon Kapwepwe and Reuben Kamanga, the new treasurer-general and deputy treasurer, respectively, brought internal tensions to an end. Rather, opposition to Nkumbula's leadership grew in intensity throughout 1957, and so, as a direct reaction, did Nkumbula's authoritarian tendencies and programmatic uncertainties. Not only did he seem 'genuinely afraid of an activist policy', but he also 'constantly changed his mind, first from parity of representation to one man, one vote, and then to an acceptance of the government proposals which were opposed by his followers.'[61]

July 1957 witnessed what has gone down in memory as possibly the most glaring example of Nkumbula's increasing capriciousness and irresponsibility. Having attended the Labour Party's 'Commonwealth and Colonial Conference' between May and June, Nkumbula and Kaunda remained in the UK with a view to meeting Lennox-Boyd in the context of the Northern Rhodesian

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[59] Ibid., pp. 88-89. The meeting, for which Sikalumbi fails to provide a firm date, took place early in August 1956; 'African Congress denounce "strong arm" tactics: Nkumbula meets Unofficial MLCs', *Central African Post*, 3 Aug. 1956.

[60] Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, pp. 99-100.

[61] Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 101.

constitutional talks that the Secretary of State for the Colonies had initiated in Lusaka at the beginning of the year. Inexplicably, Nkumbula flew home on the eve of the meeting, forcing the stranded Kaunda to hold an inconclusive discussion with Lennox-Boyd's Minister of State, Lord Perth.[62]

Upon his return to Northern Rhodesia, and while Kaunda stayed in Britain as a guest of the Labour Party, Nkumbula clashed violently with treasurer Kapwepwe, who had served as acting president during his absence and whom Harry now accused of being 'ambitious and want[ing] to take over the leadership of the African National Congress.'[63] Having further weakened his position in the eyes of the militants by calling off the municipal beer-halls boycott with which the Congress had attempted to support its two-man delegation to Britain,[64] Nkumbula sought to regain some lost ground by committing his party to campaigning for a straight democratic franchise for Northern Rhodesian Africans ('one man one vote').[65] At the December annual conference of the party, Nkumbula, 'on noticing so much dissension', tried to force through a constitutional amendment 'providing for election of the president only and he then nominate the rest of his co-workers' in the NEC.[66] While the move was defeated, Nkumbula's leadership was, for the time being, not openly called into question.

Despite the government's draft *Proposals for Constitutional Change in Northern Rhodesia*[67] falling far short of Congress' demand for universal adult suffrage and parity of representation in the Northern Rhodesian Legislative Council, Nkumbula's 'statement on the white paper was found not to be exhaustive enough as to pass for a truly African opinion so the National Executive Council elected a sub-committee of six which issued a memorandum on the white paper much to his annoyance. A feeling of insecurity which had started last year began to grow stronger in him after all this.'[68] After yet another

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62 Kaunda to Fox-Pitt, 2 Dec. 1958; *Zambia shall be free*, pp. 93-94. And cf. Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 111.

63 Kaunda to Fox-Pitt, 2 Dec. 1958.

64 Ibid.; Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 113

65 Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 114.

66 Kaunda to Fox-Pitt, 2 Dec. 1958; Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 116.

67 (Lusaka, 1958)

68 Kaunda to Fox-Pitt, 2 Dec. 1958. The 'statement' to which Kaunda refers is H.M. Nkumbula, 'Statement on the constitutional proposals for Northern Rhodesia', Lusaka (dated '24 April 1958' in the copy available in RH, MSS Brit. Emp. s 365, 103/2, and 'May' 1958 in the copy held in UNIPA, ANC 2/2). The 'memorandum' – also known as the Congress' 'Black Paper' – is H.M. Nkumbula and K.D. Kaunda, 'Comments on the proposals for constitutional change in Northern Rhodesia presented to the Secretary of State for the Colonies', Lusaka, 'May' 1958, UNIPA, ANC 2/2. Written 'for, and on behalf of, the National Executive Council of the

London fiasco late in July 1958,[69] and with opposition to his leadership bursting through to the surface of Northern Rhodesian politics, Nkumbula went beyond his constitutional prerogatives in an attempt to purge the Congress' provincial officialdom of his open antagonists. He also announced he would seek re-election at an extraordinary party general conference to be held in October.[70] With votes of no-confidence in his leadership being passed by a number of provincial executives and open attacks from demoted officials being published in the colony's press, Nkumbula spent the best part of September and October touring the country with a view to ensuring he would command a majority of the delegates at the forthcoming conference.[71]

In the middle of October, Kaunda's return from a long visit to Tanganyika and India provided the anti-Nkumbula faction in the NEC with the hitherto publicly neutral leadership it required. The long-anticipated split finally took place during the NEC session of 24 October, when a number of top officials, led by Kapwepwe and Kaunda, walked out of the meeting, in protest both at the manipulations with which Nkumbula had deprived them of any chance of success in the planned extraordinary conference and at the president's now seeming willingness to take part in the territorial elections to be held early in 1959 under the very restrictive franchise of the so-called Benson constitution. (The final *Proposals for Constitutional Change* [Cmd. 530] had appeared on 10 September.) On 26 October, after a Southern Province-dominated general conference had triumphantly re-elected Nkumbula to the presidency of the ANC, the anti-Nkumbula bloc reconvened in Broken Hill, giving official birth to ZANC, later to evolve into UNIP.

In the general absence of extensive primary sources,[72] and given the openly pro-UNIP climate of opinion then prevailing, these accounts by direct protagonists of the events were to have a disproportionate influence on contemporary and later academic observers, who uncritically adopted their

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African National Congress of Northern Rhodesia', this latter text was made public towards the end of the month (as evinced from 'Treachery, says "Black Paper"', *Central African Post*, 28 May 1958). It was also reproduced as an appendix to Kaunda, *Zambia shall be free.*

69 While making no mention of the episode in his letter of 2 December 1958, Kaunda later charged that Nkumbula, 'resting in bed at his hotel', had missed the opportunity of meeting Lennox-Boyd during his last visit to London before the birth of ZANC; *Zambia shall be free*, p. 96.

70 The ordinary annual conference had been held early in July.

71 Kaunda to Fox-Pitt, 2 Dec. 1958.

72 A remark, however, that does not apply to Fergus Macpherson, who wrote his adulatory biography of Kaunda (*Kenneth Kaunda*) while attached to the Kenneth Kaunda Foundation and who had therefore more extensive access to restricted archival records than his coeval analysts.

perspective and interpretative framework.[73] No doubt, the attractiveness and continuing hold of the narrative summarized above stems also from its linear simplicity. The nation's first prophet was ageing fast and had lost his early sincerity and commitment to the cause; a younger, more radical and committed generation stood ready to complete the job he had initiated. The problem is, this narrative is, at best, ludicrously superficial and, at worst, a deliberate falsification of the truth shorn of any solid evidentiary support. The first mistake incurred into by academic supporters of the UNIP-centred narrative of Zambian nationalism is so macroscopic that, under normal circumstances, it would hardly warrant explicit mention. Bizarrely, the extent to which the political location of the authors of the two primary accounts affected their historical reckoning was never called into question. Kaunda, after all, was the president of ZANC and, later, UNIP. It is unclear why his perspective on the events that led to the formation of his splinter party should be accepted as dispassionately factual before being subjected to close critical scrutiny. And the same is true of Sikalumbi, who wrote his first manuscript during the period of political inactivity that followed his bitter falling-out with Nkumbula late in 1956 and the second while restricted in Namwala as the vice secretary-general of the banned ZANC.[74]

But what really matters is the available counterevidence, for virtually every element of the Sikalumbi-Kaunda *vulgata* can be shown to be either inaccurate or altogether untenable. Sikalumbi describes the statement read by Nkumbula

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[73] Rotberg's account of the split draws almost solely on Sikalumbi's 'Circumstances' and Kaunda's *Zambia shall be free* (*Rise of nationalism in Central Africa*, pp. 275-282, 284-285, 289-291). Cf. also Macpherson, *Kenneth Kaunda*, pp. 175, 178, 187-188, 197, 202, 232-260, & R. Hall, *Zambia* (London, 1965), pp. 176-184. While also relying on Sikalumbi's 'Circumstances' and Kaunda's *Zambia shall be free*, Mulford's narrative is better informed (*Zambia*, pp. 61-76), though, as will be pointed out below, it is still weakened by numerous factual and interpretative mistakes. A recent rehash of the Sikalumbi-Kaunda *vulgata* is to be found in H. Macmillan, 'Nkumbula, Harry Mwaanga (1917?-1983)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/75930; accessed on 2 Feb. 2009].

[74] Sikalumbi, acting deputy treasurer of the Congress since December 1954, explains his exit from the party after the 1956 general conference by pointing to his 'long criticism and disagreement with Nkumbula's policies of finance and party control, and a more recent quarrel due to Nkumbula's change of mind about a decision to buy a printing press.' (*Before UNIP*, p. 105.) Nkumbula, however, would later allege that Sikalumbi's animosity was due to his having lost the election to the post of treasurer-general at the same 1956 conference. ('Franklin backs a new anti-Congress party – Nkumbula', *Central African Post*, 25 Sept. 1957.) And for a reputation of Harry's claim, see 'We weren't defeated – Africans', *Central African Post*, 27 Sept. 1957.

upon his release from prison at the beginning of March 1955 as the first of many demonstrations of the Congress' president new-found pragmatism – an anti-climax in which the 8,000-strong crowd was presented, not with the 'new programme for action' it was craving for, but with an uninspiring series of possible future constitutional arrangements, none of which revolved around the demand for the immediate concession of universal adult suffrage to Northern Rhodesian Africans.[75] A detailed examination of the incriminated speech, however, reveals that such constitutional proposals as Nkumbula did put forward were actually introduced by a lengthy, and by no means 'moderate', indictment of Federation, in particular, and colonial rule, in general.

> I must assure you that we have come back from prison more determined to fight against policies that have subjected you and I to humiliation and servitude. I promise you that if you continue in the spirit that you had shown (…) during our imprisonment we would secure that cherished idea of freedom and national independence. But I don't like to mislead you in thinking that that freedom can be gained with ease. You and I have to suffer for achieving that objective – self-government. It may be that we may only manage to pave the way, and we may not enjoy the fruits of our toil and sufferance. (…).

After likening the racial attitudes of Federal Premier Sir Godfrey Huggins to 'the Nazi method of liquidation, or assassination or imprisonment', and requesting that a 'Secession Clause be inserted in the Federal Constitution' before the Federal review conference of 1960, Nkumbula warned 'the Federationists' of the 'unpleasant situation' that was likely to develop if they did not drop their plans for dominion status and 'deep-rooted racialism'.

Next, the 'fire-eating Orator' who had supposedly lost his fire expounded on his belief that colonial rule was nothing but

> a tyrannous rule in the interests of a single class of colonialists. (…). It is a government manned by the worst of the reactionaries who are representatives of the Imperial Powers, and whose common aim is to hold back the economic and political advancement of the colonial peoples, hence delay their national independence. (…). A colonial government firmly guards against the rising of the legitimate national aspirations of the people. (…). They prevent any education which is likely to produce a class of progressive men and women (…). A colonial government prevents leaders of the people from knowing each other well so as to hinder their common planning for their common action. (…). A colonial government denies the rightful owners of the country the right to participate in the affairs of their country on the pretext that they are barbarians and that they are not ready for such responsibilities.

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[75] Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 65.

This was all the more unacceptable, for, returning to one of his favourite subjects, the Congress president portrayed the bulk of the Northern Rhodesian settlers as

> semi-cultured elements whose attitude and behaviour towards the indigenous peoples are such of [sic] a base character that they rouse racial tensions. (…). They live in gorgeous and lofty houses and bungalows. In their houses they don't even know how to make a cup of tea. All (…) they do is to sit in the soft chairs and shout 'Boy! Tea!!'

However, as shown by history, the 'slaves and barbarians' have always ended up taking over the reins of government from their enervated and loathed masters. And

> I am sure what happened to the colonial Empires of antiquity will, as sure as death, happen to the Colonial Empires of our day. (…). This is inevitable. Can a colonist afford to bury his head in the sand inspite of the inevitability of the rising tide of nationalism among the colonials and do nothing about it to amicably avert the situation?[76]

Speeches such as the above were certainly not intended to consolidate and broadcast a moderate image for the Colonial Office's consumption. Indeed, in refusing to engage with the Congress president late in 1955, Lennox-Boyd, as pointed out by some of his critics at home, thought he was snubbing a dangerous 'extremist'.[77] In this sense, Nkumbula's inability to secure an audience with the Colonial Secretary during his mission to London ought to be viewed, not so much as a 'big political failure',[78] but rather as an indication that Harry's moderate turn of 1955 existed nowhere except in Sikalumbi's mind.

Sikalumbi's treatment of Nkumbula's attitude towards the boycott campaign of April 1956 is similarly cavalier. While it is true that Nkumbula withdrew his initial support for the agitation,[79] this seeming U-turn had much less to do with the *longa manus* of Harry Franklin or the formalization of the 'New Look Policy' than with the acts of 'hooliganism' by which, as admitted by Kaunda

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[76] H.M. Nkumbula, 'Statement and message to the people of the protectorate of Northern Rhodesia (…) given at Chibolya on the 6th March, 1955', UNIPA, ANC 7/90 (also available in NAZ, HM 70/5/55/1).

[77] M.D. McWilliam, 'Colonial leaders', letter published in *The Times* (London), 24 Dec. 1955.

[78] Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 63.

[79] Cf. 'Nkumbula warns of boycott extension', *Central African Post*, 6 April 1956, and H.M. Nkumbula, 'Statement made (…) on the alleged boycott of European and Indian owned shops at Kabwata on the 8th of April 1956', UNIPA, ANC 7/81, with 'Lusaka boycott ends', *Central African Post*, 23 April 1956.

himself on more than one occasion, the campaign was being marred.[80] Moreover, even though he discontinued the Lusaka boycotts 'much to the annoyance' of some Congress members in the capital,[81] Nkumbula was quick to point out that the campaigns taking place in other urban centres, such as Broken Hill, were not affected by his ruling and that the lifting of the Lusaka agitation did not '"imply it will be lifted forever"'.[82]

The disturbances that had accompanied the April boycotts in Lusaka and those that were threatening to engulf the Copperbelt, where mass strikes had broken out in June, raised the prospect of widespread violence, which, Nkumbula knew, would have represented a grave setback for the national movement by providing the colonial government with an excuse for embarking on large-scale repression.[83] This is the context in which to place Nkumbula's much-debated meeting with MLC Roberts and his ensuing backing of Franklin's opinion to the effect that the 'Congress wished to become a respectable body and to work entirely and constitutionally for the development of the country and all its peoples, with the sympathy of liberal minded Europeans and of the Government.' 'I realise' – Nkumbula's own words read – that

> there are many things that Congress must do, which will take a little time. We must control our members, and our branches better. We must control and educate on better lines our extremists. On both sides, both African and Europeans, there is room for better understanding. By this statement, and by bringing Congress into constitutional practice, and by assuring the Africans of this country that the Government of Northern Rhodesia is impartial in improving the conditions under which Africans now live, I am quite confident that race relations will improve to the satisfaction of every decent person in this country.[84]

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80 'Kaunda condemns hooliganism: "Otherwise we have no regrets"', *Central African Post*, 13 Apr. 1956; *Congress Circular*, 31 July 1956. For Sikalumbi's account of the boycotts, see *Before UNIP*, pp. 85-88.

81 *Congress Circular*, 31 July 1956.

82 Quoted in 'Lusaka boycott ends'.

83 Contrary to what is asserted by Sikalumbi (*Before UNIP*, p. 98), labour unrest on the Copperbelt in the summer of 1956 had nothing to do with Nkumbula's 'moderation'. The strikes' immediate cause was the perceived attempt on the part of the Chamber of Mines to undermine the AMWU through the creation of the African Salaried Staff Association. The only leadership which the strikes might be construed as challenging was that of Katilungu, the president of AMWU, whom Fox-Pitt described as a 'right wing type' of unionist, 'satisfied with steady gains in wages and "advancement" in industry' and bent on trying 'to keep out of politics.' T. Fox-Pitt to J. Johnson, (London], 30 July 1956, SOAS Archives, TFPP, PP MS 6, Box 13, File 6/7/3.

84 'African Congress denounce "strong arm" tactics'.

This is as close as one gets to a public formulation of the New Look Policy on the part of Nkumbula. And the impression of the latter policy representing a mere tactical – as opposed to a strategic – diversion is further strengthened by the brevity of Nkumbula's commitment to it. Already in September, and following the arrest of all of the senior Copperbelt-based Congress officials in the wake of the declaration of the State of Emergency, Nkumbula felt he could no longer keep 'his word to constructive and moderate proposals for constitutional reforms in Northern Rhodesia.'[85] The incarceration of Congress officials, the most prominent of whom was Harry's Ila alter ego, Mungoni Liso, shook Nkumbula deeply. It was 'a sad story and I hate thinking about it.'[86] His opinion of Franklin was also undergoing a change, for the latter, as Nkumbula explained to Fox-Pitt, was doing nothing to assist a group of evicted Mazabuka squatters whose plight the Congress President had taken to heart.[87]

By October, the month of the seventh general conference of Congress, even the European press admitted there was precious little life left in the New Look.[88] After condemning the State of Emergency in the most unequivocal terms – 'those men, women and children on whom teargas bombs are being dropped, not to mention those who are detained, shall never forget the tragedy and shall always remember the occasion with (…) fear, bitterness and hatred' – and restating his earlier demands for secession from Federation and 'parity now and a straight democratic franchise in the not too distant future', Nkumbula ended his opening speech to the conference by pointing to the disappointing results achieved by his attempt to 'extend my hand to the Authorities'.

> So far nothing has happened apart from having talks with members of the Legco. Both Europeans and Africans have suspected my move but I am left completely unmoved. (…) if the Europeans are not prepared to allow the African to advance I fail to see how the Blacks and Whites can continue to live together in this country. I cannot help seeing a day of racial strife. If the attitude of the Europeans to hold the Africans back continue no one shall blame us when we work for an entire [sic] African government.[89]

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85 H.M. Nkumbula to T. Fox-Pitt, n.p. [but Lusaka?], 27 Sept. 1956, UNIPA, ANC 5/9.

86 Ibid. This, in itself, gives the lie to Sikalumbi's rather ludicrous allegation that Nkumbula had been warned by 'people in high government circles' of the impending declaration of the State of Emergency and had therefore been advised to steer clear of the Copperbelt in September. 'It evidently was felt that if he went there and was arrested his "New Look" policy would fail (…).' *Before UNIP*, p. 99.

87 Nkumbula to Fox-Pitt, 27 Sept. 1956.

88 'Nkumbula warns of "strife": "Secede in 1960" call to Queen', *Central African Post*, 8 Oct. 1956.

89 H.M. Nkumbula, 'President's speech at the seventh annual conference, October 8th 1956', NAZ, HM 70/5/56/1. Bizarrely, Mulford describes Nkumbula's speech as 'notably moderate'; *Zambia*, p. 62.

On the following day, Nkumbula announced his plan to open subscriptions to sponsor the visit of a Labour MP to Northern Rhodesia.[90] 'We will take this MP to Matero and Chibolya compounds and let him see all this apartheid', he remarked amidst 'plenty of clapping'. 'Once again there was very little of the Congress "new look" in his speech', which, among the other things, attacked Huggins (now Lord Malvern) for

> asking for self-government which is entirely white or, at the most, dotted with one or two men of colour. (…). The fact is that White people are fighting to get self-government for White people only. (…). The Europeans hate (…) the idea an African will be in charge of a department. They will just not have it. But we Africans will not accept any self-government in which Europeans will keep on dominating us.[91]

While the tone of Nkumbula's pronouncements cast serious doubts on the sincerity of his moderate 'conversion', his triumphant re-election to the presidency of the party on the last day of the 1956 conference (Nkumbula received 151 votes, as against Yamba's seven[92]) indicates that disaffection with his leadership was not nearly as significant as suggested by Sikalumbi's account. Moreover, if, as asserted by the same author, it is true that the 'moderate' Nkumbula was in a position to influence elections to the National Executive Council,[93] then it is not at all clear why he should have condoned the formation of a NEC whose militant composition struck a high-ranking colonial official as a clear 'repudiation of any policy of co-operation'.[94]

With the ephemeral New Look thus shelved and with constitutional negotiations for Northern Rhodesia gathering momentum, Nkumbula's public utterances between the end of 1956 and 1957 were, *pace* Sikalumbi and Kaunda, characterized by a new urgency and signal willingness to confront the colonial authorities head-on. At the end of December, he asked rhetorically whether the Northern Rhodesian government needed to witness another 'show of strength' on the part of the Congress before permitting its representatives to meet the touring Colonial Secretary. 'There is malice, misery and frustration which we would like to show the Secretary of State, but he is taken to stooges. The Government are afraid we will give Mr. Lennox-Boyd the truth.'[95] While

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90 James Johnson eventually visited the country under the aegis of Congress in March-April 1957.

91 'Congress bringing out Labour MP on visit: "Let him see all this Apartheid"', *Central African Post*, 10 Oct. 1956.

92 'It was honky-tonk for the "Man of Destiny"', *Central African Post*, 12 Oct. 1956.

93 Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 103.

94 G. Clay, 'Southern Province Intelligence Report. Period Ending 25 October 1956', Livingstone, NAZ, SP 1/3/18.

95 '"Recall Sir Arthur" – Nkumbula', *Central African Post*, 31 Dec. 1956.

still prepared to deplore the violent methods adopted by the beer-hall boycotters of July 1957,[96] a few months later, in what was probably an attempt to force the Colonial Office's hands in the ongoing constitutional debate, Nkumbula hinted at the possibility of revising his long-standing opposition to political violence. On 3 November, Nkumbula told 'several hundred Africans' who had gathered in his Lusaka fiefdom, Chibolya compound, that the forthcoming annual conference of the party would discuss whether

> it is right to abide by the Christian law of turning the other cheek. He added: 'We will discuss the Mosaic law of a tooth for a tooth.' Roars of approval greeted this remark. (…). Mr. Nkumbula continued: 'I am very sorry to have to say this. You can respect the European and bow to him, but he will still say, 'You bloody nigger – get out! This is not a civilised attitude', said Nkumbula, 'but we are told the government of this country must remain in the hands of civilised people. A civilised person is a person who respects neighbours' interests. (…)]. They never think in terms of equality of men. They think in terms of white people, forgetting they are in an ocean of blacks. (…). And I will not forgive any man or woman who respects a person who despises them. We are civilised and this is our country. Let us govern it.'[97]

Dubbed '"near subversive"' by MLC Malcomson (United Federal Party), who also wondered why the Congress president was '"not enjoying a holiday at Government expense"',[98] Nkumbula's Chibolya speech forced Harry Franklin, the putative master puppeteer of UNIP accounts, to conclude that Nkumbula had 'failed to reform Congress'. 'Whether he cannot do it because he lacks courage or energy or ability or will I know not, but apparently he cannot. Therefore Government will.'[99]

Having caused the desired storm and shrewdly asserted his independence (and stolen some of the limelight) from the newly formed inter-racial Constitution Party, Nkumbula felt able slightly to backtrack on the issue of violence, urging his followers at the Congress' conference of December 1957 not to

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96 My life in peril says leader', *Central African Post*, 26 July 1957.

97 'Congress gives a warning on its "no violence" rule. Nkumbula hint: Shall we continue to abide by it?', *Central African Post*, 4 Nov. 1957.

98 'MLC objects to a speech by Nkumbula – "near subversive"', *Central African Post*, 8 Nov. 1957.

99 'Franklin attacks Harry Nkumbula – "He failed to reform Congress"', *Central African Post*, 11 Nov. 1957. By the end 1957, Nkumbula was less close to Franklin than Sikalumbi, who was briefly involved in the manoeuvres leading to the inception of the inter-racial Constitution Party alongside African MLC Chileshe and trade unionist Katilungu. ('Franklin backs a new anti-Congress party – Nkumbula'. See also E. Scott to S. Gore-Browne, Lusaka, 21 Nov. 1957, NAZ, HM 94/7.) Unsurprisingly, *Before UNIP* (p. 115) makes no mention of an episode that would have decisively weakened its author's radical credentials.

> give the Government any excuse to take action which might cause us to be stopped. (…). You are sure of your goal. Don't get yourselves destroyed on the road. We must not get too fast and find ourselves in difficulties. (…). Congress should condemn all forms of violence because violence can spoil quite a lot of things. (…). It is not the right course today.[100]

Nkumbula, Sikalumbi alleges, survived the conference mainly thanks to the timely return from England of Kaunda, who helped him temporarily to patch up relations with his many internal opponents.[101] This may have been so; however, if Nkumbula was a lame duck, the European press in attendance certainly did not notice.

> Mr. Nkumbula said Africans had had no benefits from Federation. 'We must have a government which is a true expression of the people. We don't beg this country from anyone, Sir Roy or anybody. It is your country, it is mine. I say it is the country of the Africans. Anyone can come here and live but the reins of power must be with the people.' Loud cheers and shouts of 'long live Harry' greeted this remark.[102]

If the suggestion that Nkumbula's leadership from 1955 suffered from a crippling fear of colonial authorities and creeping 'spirit of moderation' can be shown to be largely baseless, the charge of inconsistency in his constitutional demands also fails to stand up to critical examination. Throughout 1955 and 1956, the Congress' views on Northern Rhodesia's constitutional development towards self-government remained essentially unchanged. While defending Northern Rhodesia's right to secede from the white-dominated Federation, Nkumbula was at the time prepared temporarily to sideline his earlier preference for full adult franchise in exchange for the immediate concession of parity of representation between European and African representatives in the Northern Rhodesian Legislative Council. Although the details varied slightly between one constitutional memorandum and the next, Nkumbula's envisaged strategy for bringing about parity was the institution either of two separate common rolls – 'one for Blacks and one for Whites'[103] – or of a single 'common roll with reservation of a fixed number of seats for minority groups'.[104] This

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[100] 'Congress will send propaganda men "to tell them in Britain"', *Central African Post*, 13 Dec. 1957.

[101] Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 116. The same point is made by Mulford, *Zambia*, pp. 65-66.

[102] 'Congress will send propaganda men "to tell them in Britain"'. Roy Welensky had taken over the Federal premiership from Huggins on 1 November 1956.

[103] Nkumbula, 'Statement and message'.

[104] 'Memorandum on the representation of Africans and other races in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland and in Northern Rhodesia', encl. in H.M. Nkumbula to A. Lennox-Boyd, London, n.d. (but Nov.-Dec. 1955), SOAS Archives, TFPP, PP MS 6, Box 13, File 6/7/3.

was to be accompanied by the lowering of the common roll qualifications 'to a point where an appreciable [sic] large number of Africans will qualify.'[105]

It was only in the first part of 1957, following his meeting in Lusaka with Lennox-Boyd and on the eve of his departure for London, that the demand for universal adult suffrage re-entered the Congress' arsenal.[106] But Sikalumbi – who mistakenly dates Harry's renewed commitment to 'one man one vote' to late July of the same year[107] – is wrong in presenting as mutually exclusive or inconsistent with one another the request for parity and that for full adult franchise. As in the early 1950s,[108] Nkumbula viewed the former as a means to assuage European fears in the run-up to national independence and the latter as an instrument for African political education. 'One man one vote' was less 'extreme' than it appeared, wrote Titus Mukupo, acting secretary general of the party during Kaunda's stay in the UK, for 'you can have even parity with one man one vote!'[109] A more elaborate statement was jointly put forward by Nkumbula and Kaunda early in 1958:

> The most feasible measure in a plural society where minority groups are economically potential [sic] is the creation of a Parliament in which these minority groups shall be safeguarded by an insertion of a clause in the constitution of reserved seats. Such a constitution will dispel all the fears that may be entertained by them. We are quite certain that this is a better plan than the one which frustrates the majority. Presented with a scheme of reserved seats for the minority, we cannot see any sense in a qualified franchise. (…). The system of reserved seats could continue as long as the minority groups feel insecure in the given society. When the races which inhabit the Protectorate no longer fear each other the clause of reserved seats could be struck out. There will thus be an elected Parliament where considerations of race no longer exist – a Parliament which will be partisan and which will only be divided by differences in policy.[110]

When seen in this light, Nkumbula's constitutional plan of early 1957 was far from representing a confusing U-turn or even a radical break with past policy orientations. Again, Nkumbula's revamped constitutional blueprint would not budge significantly until the last few months of 1958, for in contrast with what is asserted by Kaunda (and mindlessly rehashed by scores of

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105 'Joint Statement on Constitutional Changes'.

106 H.M. Nkumbula, 'Statement on the central African political situation by the national president', (Lusaka), 2 May 1957, NAZ, HM 70/5/57/2.

107 Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 114.

108 See, e.g., 'Executive Committee's interview with Mr. C.R. Attlee MP', Lusaka, n.d. (but 30 Aug. 1952?), UNIPA, ANC 9/49.

109 T.B. Mukupo to K.D. Kaunda, Lusaka, n.d. (but late Sept. 1957), UNIPA, ANC 9/40.

110 H.M. Nkumbula & K.D. Kaunda to A. Benson, (Lusaka), 24 Jan. 1958, NAZ, HM 70/4/58/1 (also available in UNIPA, ANC 2/2).

successive commentators), there are *no* substantive differences between Nkumbula's 'Statement' of late April and the 'Black Paper' of late May.[111] *Both* texts represent outraged rejections of the government's draft white paper, and to argue, as does Kaunda, that the 'Black Paper' was forced down the throat of an unwilling Nkumbula by the NEC is tantamount to suggesting that his slightly earlier, and entirely consistent, 'Statement' was a duplicitous and insincere piece of work – an allegation for which not a shred of evidence is available.

But let's not be misunderstood: Nkumbula, as will be further argued in the next section, did eventually decide to go along with the Benson constitution (while continuing to express his dissatisfaction with its "unworkable" and "unfair" provisions[112]). However, all the available evidence indicates that Nkumbula's volte-face only took place between the end of September and the early part of October 1958,[113] by which time opposition to his continuing leadership had already forced him to suspend a number of provincial officials and call for an extraordinary party general conference. Thus, while contributing to sharpen internal differences, Nkumbula's new readiness to work within the framework of the Benson constitution must not be viewed as the prime cause of the ZANC split.

Let's now backtrack slightly and return to that most famous of Nkumbula's alleged blunders: his 'flight' from London on the eve of his meeting with Lennox-Boyd in the summer of 1957. It is important to dwell on the episode not only because of its prominence in the UNIP-centred narrative of Zambian nationalism, but also because commentators have often treated it as the spark which ignited the simmering fire of discontent within Congress, leading ultimately to Nkumbula's downfall. Kaunda, the only eyewitness, refined his account progressively. While making no mention of any political difference with his president in his homeward-bound letters of June-July 1957, when the duo was together in the UK, in December 1958, Kaunda merely noted that 'Mr.

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[111] See above, fn. 68.

[112] The Legislative Council Debates: Official Report of the First Session of the Eleventh Legislative Council, 8 Apr. 1959, cols. 67-68

[113] At the Congress conference of July 1958, Nkumbula had remarked he had 'never come across any British Colonial Constitution so confused, reactionary and contradictory as the proposed constitutional reforms for Northern Rhodesia.' (H.M. Nkumbula, 'The national president's address to the territorial annual conference', Lusaka, *4-6* July 1958, UNIPA, ANC 2/2.) As late as mid-September, following the publication of the final constitutional proposal for Northern Rhodesia, Nkumbula was still keen to express his disappointment with the Colonial Secretary for not having 'met the demand of the African people for parity in the Executive and Legislative Councils.' 'Nkumbula is upset by the new proposals', *Northern News*, 17 Sept. 1958. Cf. also Mulford, *Zambia*, pp. 72-73.

Nkumbula flew from Britain back home all of a sudden before even meeting the Colonial Secretary.'[114] A fuller version was provided in his later autobiography.

> Two days before we were due to meet the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Nkumbula decided to fly back home. I tried to argue with him about the necessity of his meeting Mr. Lennox-Boyd but he replied by asking me whether I was afraid of meeting him alone. I told him it was not a matter of being afraid but that I was only the humble Secretary-general. He was the President now in Britain with an appointment already made with the Colonial Secretary. It was important for him to hold on only for two more days and then he could leave. But he decided to go back home, and he did. The result was that we did not see the Colonial Secretary and I was told to see Lord Perth, Minister of State for the Colonies. (…) it was my shameful duty to defend my President by fabricating stories of why he had to depart so suddenly (…).'[115]

To be sure, this peculiar narrative itinerary does not necessarily invalidate Kaunda's testimony; yet it is disconcerting that Nkumbula's own explanation of the whole episode should have been completely ignored and, in at least one demonstrable instance, actively suppressed. Upon landing in Lusaka, Harry explicitly told the press he had come back on hearing of the nasty turn taken by the ongoing beer-hall boycott in Lusaka.[116] But there was more to Nkumbula's public claim than met the eyes, for the boycotts, which Harry called off against considerable resistance and never fully successfully,[117] were closely associated with a Congress faction that had employed Nkumbula's absence in the UK to consolidate its position at the headquarters of the party and in numerous urban branches. In his accounts of the split, Kaunda presents Nkumbula's hurried departure from London and subsequent refusal to deal with treasurer and acting president Kapwepwe as essentially unconnected events. Not so Nkumbula himself, who, in a crucial and hitherto unpublished letter to Kaunda, accused his then personal secretary, Munukayumbwa Sipalo, and former acting deputy treasurer-general Sikalumbi of being 'busily engaged in damaging my name. Your friend Kapwepwe seems to be in a doubtful position. Rumour has it that he holds meetings at night and is in touch with Sikalumbi. (…) everything in the office is rotten and Sikalumbi has all along been undermining me (…).'[118] If, as

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[114] Kaunda to Fox-Pitt, 2 Dec. 1958.

[115] Kaunda, *Zambia shall be free*, pp. 93-94. And cf. Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 111.

[116] 'UK will refuse – Nkumbula', *Central African Post*, 12 July 1957; 'My life in peril says leader', *Central African Post*, 26 July 1957. For troubles connected with the Lusaka boycott, see, e.g., 'Boycott: African is beaten up', *Central African Post*, 3 July 1957. Mulford mistakenly places Nkumbula's return from Britain in 'mid-September'; *Zambia*, p. 64.

[117] 'My life in peril says leader'.

[118] H.M. Nkumbula to K.D. Kaunda, (Lusaka), 13 Sept. 1957, UNIPA, ANC 1/1. The late Fergus Macpherson, Kaunda's apologist, was aware of the existence of the

now appears highly probable, a conspiracy was afoot to oust him from the presidency of the Congress, then Nkumbula's departure from London had nothing unreasonable or capricious to it. Nkumbula simply deemed the defence of his leadership in Northern Rhodesia to be of more immediate relevance than his scheduled meeting with Lennox-Boyd.

Having been found guilty of having 'conducted himself in a manner calculated to be subversive to the leadership of the organisation', Sipalo was soon suspended from the party. Kapwepwe, on the other hand, survived Nkumbula's wrath and was for the time being cleared of any wrongdoing by the September NEC.[119] In England, Kaunda continued to believe it was 'utterly impossible' that his old friend Kapwepwe 'would work against the NEC' and indeed praised him 'for showing no resentment that the P[resident] G[eneral] did not approach you immediately he heard those rumours about you.'[120] Mukupo, who during Liso's restriction was emerging as one of Nkumbula's closest allies at the headquarters, understood things differently. In compliance with the Societies Ordinance, the Congress was requested to present the Chief Secretary with its 1956 books of account before 30 October 1957. The arrest in Fort Jameson of deputy treasurer Kamanga, who had been entrusted with the task of finalizing the accounts, had thrown a spanner in the Congress' works. Despite being urgently dispatched to the Eastern Province with the explicit purpose of retrieving the missing books, Kapwepwe was now delaying his return to Lusaka. What puzzled Mukupo was that Kapwepwe 'was fully aware the accounts are req'd on the 30th but instead he's been on tour addressing meetings (…). The feeling one gets is that one cannot entirely dismiss accusations against Mr. Kapwepwe made in the NEC recently. He seems to be doing this quite deliberately.'[121]

Nkumbula's attempt to consolidate his hold over the NEC during the party's annual conference of 1957 was a clear consequence of the growing determination of his internal opponents, whom Nkumbula mistakenly thought he could still bring back into line by means of constitutional tinkering. However, in light of what numerous witnesses have written about Nkumbula's

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missive, for a second copy of it is to be found among his papers at the University of Edinburgh's Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World. (I owe this information to Dr. David Gordon.) By omitting it from his otherwise encyclopaedic biography of Kaunda, Macpherson left himself vulnerable to the charge of deliberate deception.

119 Mukupo to Kaunda, Lusaka, n.d. (but late Sept. 1957).

120 'Mutepa' (K.D. Kaunda) to 'Lad' (S.M. Kapwepwe), (London), 7 Oct. 1957, NAZ, HM 70/1.

121 T.B. Mukupo to K.D. Kaunda, (Lusaka), 28 Oct. 1957, NAZ, HM 70/1.

long-established autocratic tendencies,[122] his efforts to strengthen the prerogatives of the presidency at the expense of the NEC at the end of 1957 are less significant than the fact that they were defeated. In many ways, Harry's attempt to modify the Congress constitution was merely an attempt to formalize and legalize customary practice. What did change was that Nkumbula's hitherto domineering will crashed for the first time on the wall of internal dissent.

A reinterpretation of the ZANC split

When one takes the trouble of interrogating dispassionately the available (and plentiful) evidence, one must come to the following conclusions: (a) Nkumbula's moderate turn from 1955-56 was short-lived and never fully developed. In other words, the 'New Look' of which so much has been made amounted to very little – and so did the influence of Harry Franklin, the supposed *deus ex machina* of UNIP accounts. (b) The alleged inconsistencies in Nkumbula's constitutional demands for Northern Rhodesia between 1955 and the end of 1958 have been grossly exaggerated; what is striking, instead, is their overall coherence throughout a period of rapidly changing political circumstances. (c) His unconstitutional manoeuvres of 1957-58 did not represent a marked departure from his earlier modus operandi; the novel element was that Nkumbula's 'patrimonial' rule over the party was successfully challenged by an uncompromising internal opposition – an opposition that, among the other things, helps to explain what has customarily been seen as the ultimate proof of Nkumbula's unreliability, his alleged 'flight' from official commitments in the UK in the summer of 1957.

Both the character of this opposition and the rationale behind Harry's tortured decision to accept the provisions of the Benson constitution (the one element of the ZANC/UNIP narrative that must be retained) can only be clarified when due attention is paid to the contradictory nature of the social forces and political messages that Nkumbula had successfully welded together at the beginning of the decade. To do that, I maintain, it is essential to interrogate those ANC voices that the UNIP-centred historiography has constantly marginalized and/or suppressed. From very early on, Nkumbula's

[122] Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 103. In 1955, Dixon Konkola, a maverick trade unionist and one of Nkumbula's earliest critics, denounced the Congress president's tendency to regard both NEC officials and provincial presidents as his nominees. 'There is no any other man who controls Congress except a few appointed Provincial Presidents mostly small businessmen, these people have to carry out the policies of one person who appointed them, inspite of protests from the masses for appointments without consulting them.' D. Konkola to S. & C. Zukas, Broken Hill, 16 Dec. 1955, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1.

southern supporters did not shy away from venturing a 'tribal' interpretation of the tensions within the Congress. In August 1957, having learnt of Nkumbula's difficulties in Lusaka and of the threats he had received as a result of his decision to terminate the beer-hall boycotts, a group of Tonga militants came to defence of their president by addressing the following, embittered letter to one of the chief plotters, the Lozi Sipalo.

> We of Choma and Mapanza have been told by the people coming from Lusaka that you and the other man Kapwepwe are the people who are responsible for the bad things that are being said about our President General Mr. Nkumbula. (…). We know that you are supporting those of the Bemba tribe who wish to become the leaders in the matters of the African National Congress. We of the Tonga tribe do not agree that these men should be the leaders in the matters of the Congress and we wish you to know that we of the Tonga and Ila tribes are very strong and that we are not fearing the Bemba tribe and their leaders who are trying to become the leaders of the African National Congress.[123]

For all its crudeness, the view put forward by the Choma 'Action Group' is illustrative of widespread popular perceptions in the Southern Province. During a discussion on 22 July, for instance, local Congress officials in Monze had 'stated that Nkumbula was planning to gain more support among the Tonga as there was a move afoot in Lusaka to ensure that the Bemba would support Simon Kapwepwe as the next President General' The then Provincial President, John Raymond (or Lemon) Nampindi 'said he and other member of the Executive Council suspected Sipalo and Kapwepwe to be planning to overthrow Nkumbula.'[124] Even the restricted Liso, who, as late as early 1958, was still prepared to condemn the 'rampant tribalism' of some Southern Province leaders,[125] ended up viewing the latent split as being motivated solely by 'personal or tribal considerations'.[126]

Southern fears of Bemba hegemony, coupled with Kaunda's implicit suggestion that Kapwepwe was in a position to rein in the Copperbelt beer-halls boycotters who refused to heed Nkumbula's call to bring their agitation to an end,[127] indicate that the challenge faced by Nkumbula stemmed from an ethnic

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[123] 'Action Group Members' to M. Sipalo, Choma, 11 Aug. 1957, UNIPA, ANC 9/40.

[124] E.C Thomson, 'Southern Province Intelligence Report. Period Ending 25 August 1957', NAZ, SP 1/3/18.

[125] E.M. Liso to K.D. Kaunda, Mbeza, 1 Feb. 1958, UNIPA, ANC 7/43.

[126] E.M. Liso to T.B. Mukupo, Mbeza, 22 Sept. 1958, UNIPA, ANC 7/43.

[127] 'Now lad, what truth is there in the allegation that some Congress branches will not obey your orders from the HQ (?) This is alleged to have taken place on the Copper Belt where the President General ordered boycotts should cease but no body paid any heed! If this is true I hope you will emphasize the need for a first class form of discipline.' ('Mutepa' [K.D. Kaunda] to 'Lad' [S.M. Kapwepwe], [London], 7 Oct. 1957.)

and urban core in the party that had been gaining ground since the first wave of boycotts in 1953-54 (see above), and that was less and less prepared to countenance the regionalist orientation of Nkumbula's nationalism and ensuing lukewarm support for such signally urban agitations as the boycotts or fixation with the Land Rights Case.[128] And perceptions of a regional bias in Nkumbula's thought and action may well have been inadvertently strengthened by the anti-Kariba dam campaign, never very far from Nkumbula's mind throughout 1955-58, on account of the large-scale displacement of the Gwembe Tonga that the hydro-electric scheme was expected to – and did eventually – bring about.[129]

There is certainly room to view Nkumbula's confusing reshuffles in the months preceding the split as lending support to this interpretation of events. While I do not have the names of all the party's officials demoted or sacked by Nkumbula in the summer of 1958 and of their replacements, those I do have are revealing. One of the two Kapwepwe loyalists whom Nkumbula removed from the executive council of the Western Province (i.e. Copperbelt) in the latter part of August was the Bemba-speaking Jeremiah Mulenga, provincial president. The other, provincial secretary Jonathan Chivunga, hailed from the Eastern Province, but had a long background as a Copperbelt-based trade unionist. As a punitive measure, the latter was transferred to the Southern Province – a post that he, understandably, refused to take up – and replaced by Moses K. Shankanga, an old associate of Nkumbula hailing from Mumbwa, in the Central Province.[130]

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[128] In mid-November 1958, Nkumbula cryptically remarked that ZANC 'was not a new organisation, but that it had been started secretly by the present leaders in 1953.' (A. St. J. Sugg, 'Southern Province Intelligence Report for the Period Ending 20 November 1958', NAZ, SP 1/3/18.) And in 1955, he was apparently worried that Kapwepwe might '"destroy (his) Congress"' during his jail term. R. Hall, *Zambia* (London, 1965), p. 176 (quoting a personal communication from Kapwepwe).

[129] Nkumbula's anti-Kariba writings are too numerous to enumerate here. As examples, see H.M. Nkumbula to A. Lennox-Boyd, Lusaka, 4 March 1955, UNIPA, ANC 7/90 ('Petition to Her Majesty's Government on the Kariba Gorge Decision'; also available in NAZ, HM 70/2/55/1); and 'Petition Concerning the Evacuation of the People from the Zambezi Valley', London, 17 November 1955, encl. in H.M. Nkumbula to 'Dear Friends', Lusaka, 12 February 1956, NAZ, HM 70/2/55/3.

[130] 'Nkumbula reveals the names of men alleged to be in overthrow group', *Northern News*, 28 Aug. 1958. Mulford, *Zambia*, p. 70, describes Shankanga as a 'cousin' of Nkumbula. This, however, does not appear to have been the case, unless the word 'cousin' stands for 'fellow Bantu Botatwe'; interview with Bruce Munyama, Lusaka, 7 Nov. 2005. Shankanga did tour the Copperbelt early in September, but his activities were hampered by Chivunga, who continued to regard himself as the rightful provincial secretary. 'Backing for Nkumbula', *Northern* News, 9 Sept. 1958; 'Yield leadership, Nkumbula urged', *Northern* News, 11 Sept. 1958.

Where the Copperbelt led, its ethnic hinterland, the Northern Province, followed suit, with Nkumbula being soon thereafter likened to 'second-hand suit which the nation does not intend to resew or patch' by the Kasama-based provincial general secretary of the Congress, J.C.M. Ng'andu. Ng'andu, who also charged that 'Nkumbula only bothered to visit Northern Province to canvas for votes',[131] was far from being a lone voice in Kasama, for his opinions of Nkumbula were shared by the entire provincial executive, particularly Robert Makasa, the provincial president, and J. Malama Sokoni, the provincial financial secretary.[132] In what must have appeared to many as a glaring demonstration of ethnic solidarity, the next Congress leader to join the chorus of anti-Nkumbula protest was the then provincial president of the Central Province, Justin Chimba, another Bemba-speaker with a long experience in Copperbelt politics and trade unionism.[133] Around 1 October, the entire Central Province's executive council passed a vote of no-confidence in Nkumbula, criticizing especially his ongoing purges and right to seek re-election at the forthcoming extraordinary general conference.[134] In so doing, the Central Province was following the lead of the Eastern Province, where Chimba had himself served as provincial secretary in 1956-57 and where, as early as 23 August 1958, yet another Bemba politician, the Kasama-born and Kitwe-educated acting provincial secretary, Frank Chitambala, had persuaded part of the provincial executive openly to censure Nkumbula's leadership.[135]

Of course, it would be disingenuous simply to portray (as much of the European press did at the time) the split within Congress as the result of a Bemba tribal onslaught. For what Northern Rhodesia witnessed in 1957-58 was rather the clash between two ill-defined and ill-definable interest blocs structured around both ethno-linguistic criteria (Bemba-speakers vs. Bantu Botatwe) and different regional modes of incorporation in the colonial economy

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131 'ANC "old leader is finished"', *Central African Post*, 22 Sept. 1958

132 A.B. Mutemba to E.M. Liso, Kasama, 17 Oct. 1958, UNIPA, ANC 7/107.

133 'Nkumbula attacks Chimba', *Northern News*, 27 Sept. 1958. In the early 1950s, Chimba had been a member of Simon Zukas' Ndola Anti-Federation Action Committee. In 1954-55, he was one of the leaders of the General Workers' Trade Union (J.H. Chimba to S. Zukas, Ndola, 13 Jan. 1954, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1/54/3) and senior trustee in the Northern Rhodesia African Trades' Union Congress; D. Konkola to S. Zukas, Broken Hill, 10 May 1955, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1/55/12.

134 'Central province ANC censures Nkumbula', *Central African Post*, 1 Oct. 1958

135 For Chitambala's background, see *Africa who's who* (London, 1996), pp. 323-333. Upon Chitambala's expulsion, the vote of no-confidence he had engineered was reverted by a 'Provincial Conference' held in Fort Jameson on 13 September. J.J. Mwanza & P.T.J. Nyoka, Resolutions of the 'Provincial Conference', Fort Jameson, 13 Sept. 1958, encl. in P.T.J. Nyoka to K.D. Kaunda, Fort Jameson, n.d., UNIPA, ANC 2/19.

(roughly: waged workforce in the Copperbelt and its vast Northern hinterland vs. rural-based agricultural producers in the Southern and Central Provinces). In this latter respect at least, the militant – if, given the prominence of nationalist discourses and claims, always subterranean – ethnic ideologies that underlay the ZANC/UNIP split were closely interwoven with contemporary economic circumstances.

The gauntlet thrown down by Bemba politicians and their allies from at least 1957 made Nkumbula more than ever dependent on the continuing support of the Southern Province.[136] I contend that an active campaign of civil disobedience, the only possible means radically to modify the 1958 constitutional proposals, would have resulted in the rapid alienation of this crucial region, whose comparatively well-to-do, self-improving peasant farmers were much less likely to be led down the costly road of potentially violent political agitation than such wage-earning, unionized labour migrants as gravitated around the Copperbelt. In this sense Nkumbula's constitutional U-turn in October 1958 and, more generally, the 'slowness' of which his internal opponents accused during the months leading to the split, were closely related to the demands placed upon him by his local power-base, whose backing he could not afford to lose at a time in which his leadership was under so serious a threat.

Conclusion

By way of conclusion, it is probably in order to sum up the principal arguments of this long paper, which, I believe, presents a more sophisticated reading of African politics in late-colonial Zambia than did previous personalistic explanations of the breakdown of nationalist unity. From about 1950, Nkumbula's nationalism was built around a clearly discernible ethno-regional component – one that served him admirably to consolidate his power base among the Bantu Botatwe of the Southern and Central Provinces, but one that proved increasingly unappealing to representatives of the other social and ethnic forces comprised within the Congress. While this latent tension between distinct social interests and corresponding political projects remained muted during the anti-Federation agitation, the boycott campaign of the mid-1950s worked towards sharpening internal differences within the party. In 1957, this antagonism finally burst through to the surface of Northern Rhodesian politics. Thereafter, it was only a matter of time before the conflict crystallized in the formation of two separate political parties. Once formalized, the rift between the

[136] It is clearly not coincidental that the Southern province was the first region visited by Nkumbula upon his hurried return from the UK in July 1957. Thomson, 'Southern Province Intelligence Report. Period Ending 25 August 1957'

two nationalist traditions would prove all but impossible to heal: a central focus of political life during Zambia's multi-party First Republic, it survived beneath the surface of one-party politics in the 1970s and 1980s, and, it is tempting to argue, continues to shape the course of Zambian contemporary democracy.

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Kalonga Gawa Undi X, Nationalists and the quest for freedom in Northern Rhodesia in the 1950s[1]

Walima T. Kalusa

Introduction

In his influential study published in 1996, Mahmood Mamdani, one of Africa's leading analysts today, categorically argues that the absorption of traditional authorities into centralised colonial states in British-ruled Africa severely eroded their political prestige and influence.[2] Mamdani's polemic is neither new nor peculiar to his area of study. Several earlier writers shared this view. Some of these latter scholars also broadened the argument by insisting that, in an attempt to regain their lost glory and prestige, chiefs under Indirect Rule after the Second World War turned themselves into natural allies of urban-based, African nationalist elites, whose ultimate goal was to obliterate colonialism and wrest power from their unwilling colonial masters.[3] From this perspective,

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1 This chapter derives its material from my *Kalonga Gawa Undi X: A biography of an African chief and nationalist* (Lusaka, 2010). In this chapter, the names Northern Rhodesia and Zambia are used interchangeably.

2 M. Mandani, Citizen and subject: Contemporary Africa and the legacy of late colonialism (Princeton, 1996).

3 See, e.g., S.N. Chipungu, 'African Leadership under Indirect Rule in colonial Zambia', in id., ed., *Guardians in their time: Experiences of Zambians under colonial rule, 1890-1964* (London and Basingstoke, 1992), pp. 50-74.

African traditional authorities became lynchpins in liberation movements. They accordingly fought side by side with nationalist political actors in the crusade to free themselves from foreign domination and to forge their own socio-economic and political identity and destiny.

Academic discourse that projects African chiefs as keen allies of the nationalist movements that swept across the continent in the late 1940s and 1950s makes compelling reading, but it tells only half of the story. It is grossly inaccurate to speak of traditional rulers in imperial Africa as a homogenous entity with common attitudes towards either colonialism or nationalism. Chiefs, as the leading Ghanaian historian Adu Boahen skilfully demonstrates in his exploration of African perspectives on colonialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, held fundamentally contrasting ideologies towards colonial rule,[4] and, by extension, nationalism itself. Some chiefs certainly welcomed Indirect Rule, for its establishment conferred upon them additional authority and power, a situation that sparked endless succession disputes and prompted small ethnic groups to reclaim the political independence they had lost to their more powerful neighbours before colonial rule.[5] Collectively, indigenous rulers in this category perceived colonialism as a means to bolster their power over their own rivals and followers. Understandably, such leaders were slow to support the anti-colonial, nationalist struggles that engulfed a wide swathe of the continent in the post-war era.

But other chiefs, for varying reasons, firmly endorsed the nationalist crusade against Western political hegemony. They, therefore, allied themselves with Western-educated and mostly urban-based nationalist elites who spearheaded the struggle for political freedom in most parts of the continent. In between these categories of rulers were traditional leaders who at first refused to be swept off their feet by the suffocating wind of nationalism but later turned into its ardent apostles. It is commonplace to think of chiefs in the last two categories as little more than malleable pawns in the hands of nationalist elite. This chapter takes issue with this perspective. It suggests chiefs-cum-nationalists who were attracted to the politics of decolonisation in the 1950s usually did so largely in response to growing popular political militancy in their areas. They thus enlisted in nationalist crusade to retain the loyalty of their increasingly politically restive subjects. But such leaders were not unaware that nationalism itself posed no small a threat to the future of the chiefly office. From the onset, they were well attuned to the authoritarian nature of the type of nationalism most African leaders of independence movements espoused in the

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4 A. Boahen, African perspectives on colonialism (Baltimore, 1978).

5 H.S. Meebelo, Reaction to colonialism: A prelude to the politics of independence in Northern Zambia, 1893-1939 (Manchester, 1971), p. 203.

1950s and beyond.[6] Like colonialism itself, this incipient authoritarianism threatened to erode the political power, no matter how restricted, that chiefs enjoyed under British Indirect Rule.[7] This chapter submits that chiefs in Northern Rhodesia who converted to the nationalist ideology in the 1950s did so cautiously and struggled to defend their influence not merely from colonial rulers but also from the increasingly autocratic African nationalists.

To protect their power and influence, chiefs adopted anti-colonial strategies that sometimes remarkably diverged from those pursued by urban-based political elites. While the latter, for example, sought to emasculate European political supremacy through obliterating *all* colonial institutions, including the Native Authorities over which traditional rulers presided, the latter were quick to mobilise some of these very institutions, not only to wage war against alien subjugation, but also to preserve their own authority. Apart from provoking the wrath of European rulers who depended on colonially-inspired institutions to roll back the suffocating tide of African nationalism in the 1950s and 1960s,[8] chiefs' propensity to deploy colonial institutions in the combat against foreign misrule sowed seeds of discord and tensions that frequently set them on a collision course with nationalist activists.

To illuminate these tensions, this chapter specifically explores the relationship between Kalonga Gawa Undi X, the paramount chief of the Chewa-speaking people in colonial Zambia's Eastern Province and the elite-dominated African National Congress (ANC) and the Zambia African National Congress (the forerunner of the United National Independence Party, UNIP) from 1953 to 1959. It argues that the Chewa ruler's attitude to the nationalist cause was neither forged nor dictated by the educated African elites. Aware of the dictatorial tendencies within both political parties with their arm-twisting strategies and hostile rhetoric against colonisers and chiefs alike,[9] Kalonga

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6 For an interesting analysis of the genesis of authoritarianism in Zambia's United National Independence Party (UNIP), see G. Macola, 'Harry Mwanga Nkumbula, UNIP and the Roots of Authoritarianism in Nationalist Zambia,". In: J.-B. Gewald, M. Hinfelaar & G. Macola, eds, *One Zambia, many histories: Towards a history of post-colonial Zambia* (Leiden and Boston, 2008), pp. 17-44; also available in G. Macola, *Liberal nationalism in Central Africa: A biography of Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula* (New York, 2010), chapter 4.

7 Under this system of rule, government-recognised chiefs from the late 1920s onwards presided over Native Authorities, Native Courts and, after 1936, Native Treasuries. They received salaries, a portion of 'native tax' and fees for cattle-dipping and beer-brewing, all of which reinforced their authority. Moreover, traditional rulers interpreted customary law, arbitrated their subjects' disputes and even sent offenders to jail.

8 See Chipungu, 'African Leadership'.

9 See for example, *Voice of UNIP*, July 1964.

Gawa Undi X maintained an anti-nationalist posture throughout the early 1950s. It was only towards the end of that decade that he, for reasons examined later, threw in his lot with the leading nationalists, notably Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula and Kenneth Kaunda. But the traditional ruler did so on his own terms. To this end, he forged his own anti-colonial strategies that enabled him to play a crucial part in the theatre of nationalist drama without, however, sacrificing his own authority, influence and power on the altar of African nationalism. Thus, whereas Nkumbula, Kaunda and other leading political actors sought in the 1950s to obliterate colonial administrative apparatuses in rural areas in their urgent quest for independence, Kalonga Gawa Undi X regarded these very institutions, over which he exercised control, as an instrument of contestation against British control. To the chagrin of nationalist politicians, he transformed the local government under his sway into a formidable arm of the anti-colonial crusade, as we shall see.

In refusing to embrace anti-colonial strategies pursued by the political elites and in fashioning his own, the Chewa traditional ruler sought to retain the support of his people and also to carve out a space in which he could retain his power both before and after independence. This view finds support in the spirited but unsuccessful opposition Kalonga Gawa Undi X exhibited in the mid-1960s against the draconian policies of the Kaunda-dominated regime designed to buttress the authority of the post-colonial state while deliberately encroaching upon chiefly prerogatives, prestige and power.[10]

The birth of a chief

Kalonga Gawa Undi X (nee' Obister Chivunga Phiri) did not follow what Giacomo Macola has described as a 'classic" nationalist trajectory.'[11] Born on 1 January 1931 at Chambobo village, near the present-day Zambia-Mozambique border, the future chief spent his early childhood in eastern Zambia's Katete district and, from the onset, was groomed to become a chief under the tutelage of his uncle and benefactor, Kalonga Gawa Undi IX Chimphungu, from whom the twenty-two-year old heir would inherit the Chewa chieftainship on 3 March 1953. Aware that British colonial authorities preferred to enthrone Western-educated chiefs in their bid to improve the administrative efficiency of African rulers, Chewa royals led by Chimphungu sent young Obister to Catholic schools at Mnthipa and Naviruli, in Katete, in the late 1930s, and, in 1949, to the government-controlled teacher training college at Chalimbana in Lusaka. Yet these royals' major preoccupation seems to have been to prepare him for his

[10] See Kalusa, Kalonga Gawa Undi X.
[11] Macola, 'Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula', p. 19.

future chiefly responsibilities and duties. For this reason, they lost no opportunity to inculcate in the future ruler devotion for Chewa rituals, customary law and history. By the time Kalonga Gawa Undi X inherited the throne from his uncle, he was evidently well versed in local history, jurisprudence and culture, which later evidently won him the respect of his subjects and colonisers alike.[12]

The decade in which Kalonga Gawa Undi X assumed the chieftainship was a politically exciting period in Central Africa as a whole and in colonial Zambia in particular. At the centre of the mounting political excitement was the establishment in 1953 itself of the Central African Federation by European settlers with the connivance of the British government against strong African opposition. Africans perceived the Federation as little more than a political gimmick devised by settlers to entrench their political supremacy over Africans and to secure a dominion status or self-government from Britain when the Federal constitution would be reviewed in 1960. In an effort to pre-empt this development, they rallied behind the African National Congress, a political party formed in the late 1940s. Revitalised under the leadership of Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula in the early 1950s, the ANC initiated an unprecedented campaign of strikes, demonstrations and boycotts of white-owned businesses to compel the British government to dissolve the much-hated Central Africa Federation.[13]

To de-campaign the Federation into extinction, the ANC and, later, the Zambia African National Congress, which broke away from the ANC in 1958, targeted their anti-colonial rhetoric virtually at all colonial institutions linked to the system of Indirect Rule.[14] Of prime importance among these institutions were the Native Authorities through which white administrators in the colony had been ruling and making demands on Africans and their resources through local chiefs since the 1920s.[15] From the onset of the Federation onwards, Nkumbula with his party officials repeatedly cajoled traditional leaders to dissociate themselves from Native Authorities, pouring endless scorn on those

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[12] Interview with Mama Nyangu, Queen Mother to Kalonga Gawa Undi X, Mkaika Palace, 13 November 2005. See also P.M. Lawson to District Commissioner, 19 November 1963, National Archives of Zambia (hereafter NAZ), Lusaka, Eastern Province (hereafter EP) 1/1/12.

[13] This topic is exhaustively dealt with by D.C. Mulford, *Zambia: The politics of independence, 1957-1964* (Oxford, 1967).

[14] The topic of Indirect Rule in colonial Zambia has been extensively studied by K. Datta, 'The Policy of Indirect Rule in Zambia (Northern Rhodesia), 1924-1953', PhD thesis, University of London, 1976, and B.C. Kakoma, 'Colonial administration in Northern Rhodesia: A case study of administration in Mwinilunga District', MA dissertation, University of Auckland, 1971.

[15] Chipungu, 'African Leadership'.

chiefs who rejected the clarion call and abundant praises on those who complied.[16] To make rural areas ungovernable the nationalist elites further implored traditional rulers to refrain from enforcing colonial laws or supporting the efforts of European authorities aimed at stimulating peasant commodity production in the 1950s.[17] In so doing, they hoped to transform chiefs into anti-colonial agents who would subvert colonial power and hence help the elites bringing the colonial state to its knees.

Some European authorities in Zambia's Eastern Province in the early 1950s often dismissed the influence of the ANC in the area as inconsequential.[18] However, as other more perceptive functionaries observed, the party had by that period struck a responsive chorus in most parts of the province. The Provincial Commissioner, Eastern Province, for example, noted in his annual report of 1954 that the first two years of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland had been marked by rising African preoccupation with anti-Federation politics throughout the province. He attributed this situation to local ANC adherents who, the PC added, had never ceased to vent their dislike and suspicion of the Federation even after its formal establishment.[19] By the mid-1950s, the ANC had indeed succeeded in winning several converts in the province to its gospel of nationalism. Among the converts were headmen in some chiefdoms under the paramount chief's jurisdiction.[20] Their growing participation in party politics expectedly raised eyebrows among European functionaries in the province. Fearing that this development would compromise efficiency in local administration, apprehensive officials began to employ 'strong arm treatment' against the ANC, arresting and incarcerating its adherents.[21]

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[16] See Northern Rhodesia, African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1957 (Lusaka,1958).

[17] For a fuller analysis of this topic, see M. Dixon-Fyle, 'The Seventh Day Adventists (S.A.D.) in the Protest Politics of the Tonga Plateau, Northern Rhodesia', *African Social Research* 26 (1978); J.C. Momba, 'Peasant differentiation and rural party politics in colonial Zambia', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 11 (1985); S.N. Chipungu, *The state, technology and peasant differentiation in Zambia: A study of Southern Province* (Lusaka, 1992).

[18] Northern Rhodesia, African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1951 (Lusaka, 1952), p. 48.

[19] Northern Rhodesia, African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1953 (Lusaka, 1954), p. 62; see also Northern Rhodesia, African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1954 (Lusaka, 1955).

[20] Katete Tour Report No 2 of 1956, NAZ, SEC 2/708; Katete Tour Report No. 1 of 1956, NAZ, SEC 2/709.

[21] Fort Jameson Tour Report No 11 of 1952, NAZ, SEC 2/ 694; Northern Rhodesia, *African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1953* (Lusaka, 1954), p. 62; Katete Tour Report No. 2 of 1956, NAZ, SEC 2/708.

In spite of the rising tempo of ANC activity within his chiefdoms and the involvement of a few of his own subordinate chiefs in the anti-colonial fray in the early 1950s, Kalonga Gawa Undi X's initial reaction to the nationalist ferment was a mixture of pure hostility and glaring indifference. Barely three years in office, he penned a letter to his subordinates in which he castigated Nkumbula together with ANC party activists in the Eastern Province as 'narrow and bad-minded' upstarts who 'lit fire and left it to people to suffer the consequences of putting it out.'[22] The paramount ruler strongly warned the chiefs not to be swayed by what he regarded as the subversive, anti-government propaganda of the ANC, insisting that such rhetoric would retard the economic development of the colony. He concluded the missive by imploring his fellow traditional leaders, whom he identified as the only legitimate rulers of the people, 'to work together as one body with [the] Government of Northern Rhodesia' in finding solutions to the socio-economic difficulties that beset the territory.

The roots of the Chewa ruler's animosity to the African National Congress lay deep in the hegemonic nature of the type of nationalism that the party's top brass came to be associated with. From the onset of his leadership at the helm of the ANC, Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula, for one, ran the political party autocratically. Not only did Nkumbula, as his biographer has recently noted, take unkindly to any form criticism; he also arbitrarily dismissed his detractors within the party, supplanting them with his own loyalists.[23] Nkumbula's undemocratic leadership, which precipitated the breaking away of ZANC/UNIP from the ANC in 1958,[24] was as abhorrent to the Chewa paramount chief as was the party's anti-colonial rhetoric. For these reasons, the paramount chief refused to endorse Nkumbula's leadership. He was thus not one of the 120 chiefs who in 1953 signed a petition against the Federation at the insistence of the ANC leader.[25]

Perhaps even more unacceptable to Kalonga Gawa Undi X were the arm-twisting tactics of the ANC. To his disappointment, the ANC and later ZANC/UNIP organised boycotts, strikes and demonstrations and perpetrated both verbal and physical violence against their political rivals in the quest for freedom. Oral accounts indicate that even after the paramount chief enlisted in

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[22] Paramount Chief's Christian Message to (Chewa) Chiefs, 28 November 1956, NAZ, EP 1/1/36; *Kuunika*, No 3 of 1957, NAZ, EP 1/1/36. See also Northern Rhodesia, *African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1956* (Lusaka, 1957), p. 52.

[23] See Macola, 'Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula'.

[24] But for a recent study that downplays personalistic interpretations of the ANC-ZANC/UNIP split, see Giacomo Macola, in this volume.

[25] M. Larmer, 'History of Zambia, 1924-1964'. In: E.P. Murphy, *A history of the Jesuits in Zambia: A mission becomes a province* (Nairobi, 2003), p. 258.

the anti-colonial crusade, he continued to regard these tactics as uncalled for and, perhaps, demeaning to the chiefly office and status.[26] His revulsion against the ANC's rhetoric and tactics was, moreover, reinforced by Nkumbula's unwillingness (or perhaps inability) to rein in ANC activists who poured endless epithets on anyone, including traditional authorities, who either pursued alternative political trajectories or held views that contradicted those of the party.[27]

It is in this overall context that we may appreciate the overt antipathy that the Chewa paramount chief displayed against Nkumbula and the ANC in the early 1950s. Kalonga Gawa Undi X perceptively saw the autocratic tendencies of the party as something that portended a greater threat to the authority and power of the chiefly office than perhaps even colonial rule itself. Unsurprisingly, he consistently implored his subordinate chiefs and subjects to cooperate wholly with colonial authorities in proscribing African nationalism. Indeed, his anti-nationalist posture earned him numerous accolades from European administrators in the province. In 1956, for insistence, the Provincial Commissioner eulogised Kalonga Gawa Undi X as a model illustration of the continuing wisdom, prestige and authority of an African chief.[28] But the chief's opposition to the ANC equally earned him the wrath of, and numerous death threats from, the party's zealots within and outside the province.[29]

In the early 1950s, the anti-nationalist activity of the paramount chief seems to have partly arisen from his deep, if erroneous, conviction that the welfare of the colonised could be more effectively advanced within the framework of colonial rule. This called for utilising rather than dismantling its institutions. In his letter quoted above, he particularly singled out Western education as the 'most indespensible (sic) factor', which he implored his followers to embrace unreservedly. To the Chewa chief, colonial education held the key with which his followers would unlock their creative potential and find solutions to difficulties that stood in their path to socio-economic development. Only 'EDUCATED COUNTRIES', he argued in somewhat lame English in 1956, 'make the best answers to development.' Armed with modern education, the Chewa, Kalonga Gawa Undi X continued, could within the context of colonial rule more creatively plan their socio-economic development. In this way, he hoped that his followers could set on the path to a higher standard of living, civilisation and modernity. He accordingly urged his subordinate chiefs to

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26 Mama Nyangu, interview cited.
27 Ibid.
28 Northern Rhodesia, African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1956.
29 See Northern Rhodesia, *African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1958* (Lusaka, 1959), p. 48.

cooperate wholly with European authorities and missionaries in their efforts to send 'as many boys and girls to [European-controlled] schools as possible.'

Kalonga Gawa Undi X and political activism

Kalonga Gawa Undi X's faith in colonialism as an instrument for African social and economic advancement came to an end in 1957, when he joined the ANC and shortly afterwards switched his allegiance to ZANC following its split from Nkumbula's party. The radical shift in his perception of colonialism, like his engagement with nationalism in the late 1950s, was no less the consequence of the studies that he underwent in Britain in 1956-1957 than the result of the rising popular political militancy among his subjects that confronted the traditional ruler upon his return from overseas in the latter year. The growing political militancy in Chewa chiefdoms issued from the spread of the nationalist struggle from the urban areas, where it had long been largely confined, to virtually all areas in the colony, as Nkumbula and other nationalist leaders mobilised mass support to exert more pressure upon European settlers now more than determined to hold on to political power.[30] This unprecedented development was as much fuelled by the political concessions that Roy Welensky wrested from the British government in 1957 as by the enactment by his government of the Federal Amendment and Federal Assembly Acts both of which were calculated to frustrate African political advancement.[31] Similarly, rising rural political agitation was lubricated by the 'expectations of independence' enlivened by the glowing promises (still unfulfilled today) that nationalist leaders and activists in rural areas made to their supporters to sustain the momentum of the freedom struggle.[32] Consequently, by 1957, when the chief returned to the Eastern Province from Europe, nationalism had engulfed even the remotest parts of his chiefdoms.[33]

It is within the context of the growing politicisation of Chewa chiefdoms in the late 1950s that we may partly appreciate why Kalonga Gawa Undi X enlisted in the nationalist movement after his return from Britain. With the rising political temperature in areas under his jurisdiction, which sometimes

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30 See C. Gertzel & M. Szeftel, 'Politics in an African urban setting: The role of the Copperbelt in the transition to the one-party state'. In: C. Gertzel, ed., *The dynamics of the one-party state in Zambia* (Manchester, 1984), pp. 118-162.

31 For details on this topic, see Mulford, *Zambia*, pp. 51-52.

32 See G. Macola, '"It means as if we are excluded from the good freedom": Thwarted expectations of Independence in the Luapula Province of Zambia', *Journal of African History*, 47 (2006).

33 Interview with Joseph Galeta Chikuta Mbewe, former freedom fighter and former Minister of State in the Kaunda regime, Mkaika Palace, Katete, 13 November 2005.

erupted in fatal clashes between ZANC and ANC party workers, his earlier policy of indifference and hostility to the nationalist struggle was no longer tenable. Undoubtedly, remaining hostile or indifferent to the nationalist cause would have cost him the support and the loyalty of the increasing number of his followers who converted to nationalism. As a perceptive white official noted in 1957, Kalonga Gawa Undi X, like other chiefs who embraced nationalism, could ill-afford to alienate the support of this expanding number of followers by remaining indifferent to, or maintaining an antagonistic stance towards, the politics of decolonisation. Thus, even at the risk of vexing the colonial administration or even inviting dethronement, the chief, in the colonial officer's terms, began to play to the public gallery.[34]

Significant as the foregoing observations may be to our comprehension of what propelled the Chewa paramount leader to embrace nationalism in the late 1950s, we should not discount the centrality of his studies in England to shaping his political consciousness. Sponsored by the colonial state in Northern Rhodesia, his studies in local government at South Devon College, Torquay, in England, may indeed be said to have marked a turning point in his political thought This was partly because the studies placed a great deal of emphasis on the democratic principles of local government in Britain. This apparently brought into sharp focus in the mind of the young ruler the despotic nature of colonial rule in British Africa, where European officials abused their monopoly of power to impose or depose chiefs, and, more ominously, denied the subjects of empire a voice in running the affairs of their own country by excluding them from law-making organs including the colony's Executive Council.

Equally crucial in shaping the political consciousness of the traditional ruler were his social experiences in Europe. The absence of organised racism there meant that Kalonga Gawa Undi X experienced no institutionalised racial discrimination during his visits to England, Rome and the Vatican.[35] Like other black people from racially segregated parts of the world, he was particularly struck by the fact that Africans in Europe could eat in restaurants, sleep in hostels patronised by whites, and visit any place.[36] The chief himself was invited to spend his Christmas vacation between 21 December 1956 and 14 January 1957 with the White Fathers in Heston, Middlesex, and, later, with Father J.P. Moran (on leave from Chipata, Northern Rhodesia) and his family in Murray, Ireland. He also attended a garden party at Buckingham Palace with the

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34 Northern Rhodesia, African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1957.

35 Kalonga Gawa Undi X, 'Speech during the Golden Jubilee Celebrations', Mkaika Traditional Headquarters, 3 March 2003 (in the author's possession).

36 These experiences were shared by other blacks who visited Europe in the 1950s and 1960s. See for example, A.J. DeRoche, *Andrew Young: Civil rights ambassador* (Washington DC, 2003), pp. 7-8.

reigning Queen of England.[37] These experiences left a profound impact on the chief from colonial Zambia, where indigenous people were excluded from 'European Only' spaces, denied individual and civil liberties, and treated as second class citizens in the land of their birth.

The protagonist's attitude to colonial rule was, finally, shaped by the social connections he cultivated with people he met in Europe from various other parts of the British Empire. His new acquaintances, Kalonga Gawa Undi X would often recall many years later, were united in their antipathy towards British domination and hegemony. This abhorrence of colonialism seems to have come in particularly sharp relief in 1957 in Cardiff, South Wales. There, the paramount chief met on a course sponsored by the British Council thirty-four other students from fifteen British colonies and ex-colonies. Among his new acquaintances were chiefs who, to the astonishment of Kalonga Gawa Undi X, were as vehemently opposed to imperial domination on the colonial periphery as they articulated sophisticated economic and political ideas.[38] To the utter dismay of the still conservative Chewa traditional ruler, they also demanded for the immediate dissolution of the British Empire, some of them openly wondering why the inhabitants of Central Africa had not yet taken up arms to drive out their white tormentors who had engineered the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

One of the most outspoken critics of the Federation in Britain who apparently etched the most lasting impression on Kalonga Gawa Undi X was Maurice Katowa, a fellow chief from Northern Rhodesia. A former teacher, Katowa had been installed after the Second World War as Chief Mapanza of the Tonga people of Choma, in Zambia's Southern Province. Mapanza surprised the colonial administration when he joined the ANC and became an indomitable opponent of the Federation in the early 1950s. In retrospect, his involvement in ANC politics was a double-edged tactical manoeuvre. Through his active participation in party politics, Chief Mapanza sought to lend his chiefly influence and prestige to the liberation movement. On the other hand, his political activism was certainly calculated to attenuate ANC opposition to government-inspired agricultural schemes that the chief perceived as beneficial to his people, but which the ANC and later the United National Independence Party (UNIP) strongly opposed as part of their anti-colonial protest.

By the time Maurice Katowa joined his Chewa counterpart at Torquay, the former had already risen to the post of Branch Secretary of the ANC in Choma, notwithstanding constant threats of dethronement from the colonial state. Chief Mapanza's political activism, combined with his ambitious development

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[37] Kalonga Gawa Undi X, 'Speech' and *Kuunika*, No 3 of 1957.
[38] Joseph Galeta Mbewe, interview cited.

agenda, had by that time yielded impressive results in the form of modern social services like health care centres and schools built near his palace. By the end of the 1950s and early 1960s, Mapanza indeed presided over one of the wealthiest chiefdoms in the whole territory.[39] The Tonga ruler's long and impressive list of accomplishments as chief, nationalist, and agent of modernity, coupled with the colonial officials' failure to remove him from office for his political activism, seems to have convinced Kalonga Gawa Undi X that traditional authorities in Africa could not only play a meaningful role in the struggle for political independence. They could, equally importantly, champion the welfare of their subjects outside the framework of colonial rule.

The significance of the social connections and of the education Kalonga Gawa Undi X received in Europe in shaping his political consciousness cannot be over-emphasised. Soon after the return of the paramount chief from England in December 1957, an admiring white administrative functionary who met him at Fort Jameson (now Chipata) observed that the chief returned from Europe with a 'much wider [social, economic and political] outlook'. Perceptively, the official attributed this to the chief's 'overseas education.'[40] His observation was soon confirmed. Before the year ended, the Chewa ruler 'strayed into the field [of nationalist] politics' by joining the ANC, a move that earned him the wrath of colonial functionaries in the province.[41] A year later, when ZANC split from the ANC, the paramount chief switched his allegiance to the new political party. Likewise, after ZANC reconstituted itself as UNIP in 1959 under the leadership of Kenneth Kaunda, the chief became one of the earliest adherents and active supporters of the new party.[42]

The meta-narrative of decolonisation politics in pre-independent Zambia has often attributed UNIP's ability to lure chiefs and commoners alike into its fold from the ANC to what was perceived as the 'moderating influence' Kenneth Kaunda allegedly exercised upon his more autocratic lieutenants within UNIP.[43] But even though Kaunda often cast himself as Mahatma Ghandi's disciple of non-violence, his nationalist agenda was no less hegemonic than that of Harry Nkumbula. As one scholar observes, Kaunda's emphasis on obedience, unity and unflinching loyalty to the party in the face of political competitors, including the ANC, enabled his own followers to pursue politics of exclusion that left no space for alternative political views or tactics.[44] As such, UNIP nationalism, together with its arm-bending tactics, was indistinguishable from

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39 Chipungu, *The State*, chapter 5.
40 Northern Rhodesia, African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1957, p. 55.
41 Northern Rhodesia, African Annual Report for the Year 1958, p. 50.
42 Joseph Galeta Mbewe, interview cited.
43 For a critique of this discourse, see Macola, 'Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula'.
44 Ibid.

ANC nationalism. UNIP's exclusionary politics not only threatened to eclipse the influence of the ANC. Such politics also posed a major threat to the continuity of the authority of traditional rulers, a fact that came true barely two years after Zambia's independence, when the Kaunda-dominated regime passed the Local Government and Local Courts Acts that, respectively, dismantled Native Authorities and Native Authority Courts over which African chiefs had presided since the late 1920s.[45]

It is due to the threat that African nationalism posed to the future of the chiefly office that the Chewa chief's eventual endorsement of firstly the ANC and later ZANC/UNIP was infused with profound caution. Determined not to sacrifice his authority to nationalists, Kalonga Gawa Undi X devised strategies that enabled him to contribute actively towards the struggle for freedom without, however, compromising his own influence and power. This observation finds support in his insistence to contest colonialism through its own institutions, over which the chief himself presided. Ironically, it was these very institutions which British authorities in colonial Zambia hoped to mobilise to curb African nationalism and, even more ironically, which leading African political elite, including Nkumbula and Kaunda, wanted to dismantle as part of their wider combat against British political control.

The earliest inkling that Kalonga Gawa Undi X would carve his own instruments with which to contest colonial subjugation appeared in the late 1950s, when European functionaries in the colony intensified their pressure to annihilate African nationalism in rural areas. To do so, the functionaries began to recruit state-controlled institutions to counter nationalism. In rural areas, this meant converting Native Authorities and Native Courts into instruments for proscribing nationalism.[46] The state hoped to turn Native Authorities and chiefs into its anti-nationalist allies in two main ways. First, it persistently implored them to enact orders under which they could ban nationalists from areas under their sway and also suppress any political activities they deemed unlawful. Native Authorities together with their courts were thus increasingly pressed to arrest, to prosecute and to imprison ANC and UNIP 'agitators'. Second, the colonial government dismissed or threatened to dismiss Native Authority personnel and chiefs with pro-nationalist sympathies.[47]

To fill the vacuum created by dismissals, the government began to appoint to the Native Authority system traditional rulers and councillors not on the basis of their royal connections, as was in keeping with the tenets of Indirect Rule, but rather on the strength of their academic qualifications, or, more accurately, their

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45 For more details on this issue, see Kalusa, *Kalonga Gawa Undi X*.
46 See Chipungu, 'African Leaders'.
47 Ibid, pp. 50-73.

subservience to the colonial state. In either case, this was a clear violation of the principles of Indirect Rule that at least theoretically placed a premium upon royal affinity in the recruitment of Native Authority staff and chiefs.[48] The policy of staffing the Native Authority system with pro-government sympathisers sometimes unavoidably led to the appointment of chiefs whose royal connections were at best doubtful and at worst non-existent.

While some traditional rulers in the Eastern Province gave in to this official blackmail and evidently began to harass ANC and ZANC/UNIP,[49] Kalonga Gawa Undi X defied state pressure on chiefs to suppress nationalism. He perceived the colonial state's drive to fill Native Authorities with pro-government sympathisers as a deliberate means by which white administrative officials sought to frustrate African political aspirations. To emasculate this policy, Kalonga Gawa Undi X took advantage of the law that permitted paramount and senior chiefs in the territory to nominate appointees to Native Authorities. He began to insist on royalty as the prime criterion for employing Native Authority chiefs, clerks, assessors, messengers (*kapasos*) and the councillors who headed various departments (education, health, agriculture, etc.) in the Superior Chewa Native Authority located at his Nyaviombo palace in Chipata and in the sub-Native Authorities at Kagoro and Chipili in Katete.[50]

The insistence by the paramount chief to appoint royals to the Chewa Native Authority system should be thought of as a well calculated double-edged strategy. Through this strategy, Kalonga Gawa Undi X firstly hoped to undercut the European administrators' propensity to fill Chewa Native Authorities with stooges. Additionally, by insisting on royalty as the most important qualification for employment in the Native Authorities, the traditional ruler sought room for himself to appoint converts to the nationalist ideology. In this way, he succeeded in filling most of the vacancies in the local government under his control with personnel committed to suppressing colonial hegemony. As a sequel, chiefs and headmen whose nationalist credentials were beyond reproach became the most conspicuous figures in all the three Chewa Native Authorities, a point that colonial administrators in the province conceded in 1958.[51] As the administrators were fully aware, it was these men who provided the backbone of nationalist leadership at grassroots level in most parts of the

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48 Comments by Provincial Commissioner on Katete Tour Report No 1 of 1956, NAZ, SEC 2/709. See also Chipungu, 'African Leadership', pp. 53-54.

49 Comments by Provincial Commissioner on Katete Tour Report No 4 of 1957, NAZ SEC 2/707.

50 Northern Rhodesia, African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1957.

51 Ibid; see also Katete Tour Report No. 10 of 1958, NAZ, SEC 2/711. In the same file, see J. E. Madocks (District Commissioner) to Provincial Commissioner, 17 December 1958.

Chewa nation in the late 1950s and early 1960s.[52] It is ironical, then, that European functionaries in the Eastern Province expected Native Authority employees under Kalonga Gawa Undi X to be the vanguard against the spread of ANC and ZANC/UNIP's 'subversive propaganda'.

Kalonga Gawa Undi X did more than saturating the local government with converts to the tidings of nationalism. He also successfully lobbied for the discontinuation of the practice under which the colonial state paid Native Authority staff, including chiefs, half of their subsidies, while the Superior Chewa Native Authority at Nyaviombo met the remainder. As the Chewa Superior Authority became more prosperous from the late 1950s onwards, the paramount chief supplanted this practice with a scheme through which the Native Authority employees' emoluments were wholly paid by the Superior Authority itself.[53] The implications of this fiscal reform were far-reaching. In addition to securing a measure of fiscal independence from the state for the Chewa Native Authorities, the reform largely neutralised European officials' tendency to withhold subsidies from personnel and chiefs whom European administrators saw as either inefficient or, more importantly, pro-nationalist sympathisers. This inevitably subverted the propensity by European administrators to use monetary blandishments to dictate the political ideology and praxis of those who worked within the Native Authority system under the Chewa chief.

In the latter part of the 1950s, Kalonga Gawa Undi X similarly thwarted a decentralisation scheme designed by white officials in the province to devolve to the sub-Native Authorities at Chipili and Kagoro executive and fiscal powers hitherto vested in the Superior Chewa Native Authority in Chipata, over which the paramount ruler presided personally.[54] The rationale behind the proposed scheme, white officials in Chipata argued, was to enhance the administrative efficiency of the two sub-Authorities. But had the scheme been implemented, it would have also drastically reduced the authority of the Supreme Native Authority, consequently eroding the power, prestige and the influence of the Chewa paramount leaders.[55] By successfully defending the executive and financial powers vested in the Supreme Native Authority at Nyaviombo, Kalonga Gawa Undi X reinforced his own power, successfully ensuring that the sub-Native Authorities at Kagoro and Chipili fell in line with his desire to give constitutional issues top billing at their meetings. It is little wonder, therefore, that although he seldom presided over sub-Native Authority meetings at Chipili

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52 Northern Rhodesia, *African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1958*, p. 50; see also, Katete Tour Report No. 12 of 1957, NAZ SEC 2/710.

53 Northern Rhodesia, African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1958, p. 50.

54 Northern Rhodesia, African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1958, p. 50.

55 Ibid.

and Kagoro due to his onerous political and chiefly commitments, both Authorities kept the anti-colonial flame burning throughout the late 1950s and the early 1960s.

Kalonga Gawa Undi X's reforms or objections to state-sponsored reforms may at face value appear to have been cosmetic. However, by stocking the local Native Authority system with pro-nationalists and by winning for them some measure of monetary independence from the indifferent colonial state, Kalonga Gawa Undi X strengthened the fabric of the local government in the crusade to crush foreign oppression and subjugation. This enabled him to transform the Native Authorities he controlled into a veritable instrument of anti-colonial protest. This argument is borne out by the fact that the meetings of the Chewa sub-Native Authorities in Katete, like those of the Superior Authority at Nyaviombo, became a forum at which Chewa rulers articulated their intense opposition to the Central African Federation, to the controversial 1958 constitution concocted by Governor Arthur Benson to delay African political advancement, and, lastly, to the Monckton Commission appointed by the British Government in 1960 to gather African opinion on the future of the Federation.[56] Unsurprisingly, this confounded the European authorities' efforts to reduce the functions of chiefs to maintenance of law and order, collection of taxes, and proscription of the nationalism.[57] Indeed, the active role the Chewa overlord himself played in opposing foreign rule inevitably soured relations between him and European authorities.

The extent to which the chief succeeded in strengthening the hand of the Chewa Native Authority system in the fight against alien rule is not too difficult to gauge. Successive European officials in the province between 1958 and 1960 frequently reported that the Chewa Native Authority meetings at Chipili, Nyaviombo and Kagoro always amounted to bitter opposition to territorial and federal constitutional proposals of the colonial state, incessant verbal abuse against European functionaries who upheld colonialism, and above all, unceasing campaign for the dissolution of the Federation and for black majority rule.[58] In 1958, these officers also lamented that all the three Native Authorities under Kalonga Gawa Undi X regarded themselves 'as in competition with, rather than as a part of the central administrative machine.'[59]

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[56] See Northern Rhodesia, African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1960 (Lusaka, 1961).

[57] For details on the colonial government's drive to restrict the functions of Native Authorities to these roles in the 1950, see Chipungu, 'African Leadership; see also his, 'Accumulation from within: The Boma class and the native treasury in colonial Zambia," In: id, *Guardians in their time*.

[58] Northern Rhodesia, African Affairs Report for the Year 1957, p. 48.

[59] Northern Rhodesia, African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1958, p. 50.

Clearly, then, the Chewa paramount chief transformed the Native Authorities under his control into a veritable vehicle for the destruction of colonial power and for the construction of black power and authority. He therefore distanced himself from the colonial government's agenda to suppress African nationalist aspirations. It is ironic that Kalonga Gawa Undi X executed his nationalist activity through state-engineered institutions, for, at the risk of repetition, European officials deployed these very institutions to abate the wind of African nationalism. Indeed, the chief's contestation of alien rule through its institutions triggered endless threats of deportation from European administrators both in the province and Lusaka from the late 1950s on.[60]

If the nationalist activity of the Chewa traditional ruler provoked the wrath of colonial rulers, his persistence in waging war against colonialism through the Native Authority system did not mesh well with the nationalist politics of both the ANC and ZANC/UNIP. Both parties saw his deployment of Native Authorities in the nationalist fray as something that weakened the cohesion of the liberation movements and, more significantly, as an indicator of the ruler's goal to pursue an alternative political project. Thus, even though his loyalty to ZANC/UNIP was certainly beyond doubt after 1958, Kalonga Gawa Undi X, nonetheless, continued to receive insulting letters from over-zealous cadres of the party, some of whom also composed and sang songs that derided him as 'Roy Welensky's kitchen-boy.'[61] To the embarrassment of Kenneth Kaunda, UNIP cadres did not merely dismiss Kalonga Gawa Undi X as a mere stooge of the colonial state. They also, but in vain, attempted to block the traditional leader from travelling to England to take part in the constitutional talks at Lancaster House in 1959-1960.[62]

The commitment of the Chewa traditional ruler to the nationalist liberation cause and, at the same time, to preserving the authority and prestige of the chiefly office became even more evident in the demands that he and other chiefs presented to the British government at the constitutional conference. Like ANC and UNIP officials at the talks, chiefs Kalonga Gawa Undi X, Chitimukulu of the Bemba, Mapanza of the Tonga and Ikelenge of the Lunda demanded for black majorities in the Legislative and Executive Councils, for severing the colony's ties with the Federation, and for holding the territory's constitutional conference before the Federal Constitutional Review at the end of the year.[63] Made under intense opposition from colonial authorities, these proposals predictably elated Kenneth Kaunda. 'It is all so wonderful', opined the visibly

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60 Kalonga Gawa Undi X, 'Speech'.
61 Roy Welensky was the Federal Prime Minister in the late 1950s and early 1960s.
62 Joseph Galeta Chikuta Mbewe, interview cited.
63 Mulford, *Zambia*, p. 169.

jubilant party president in a letter to a leading Chewa nationalist. 'I pray', the UNIP president continued, 'that no amount of pressure will be too strong for them to resist. They have made a very good move and I am sure that they will not be disappointed when we take over.'[64]

But Kaunda's jubilation was short-lived. Before the end of constitutional talks, the chiefs, determined to retain their power and their voice in the governing of future independent Zambia, rejected out of hand his call for an outright universal suffrage. They further successfully lobbied for the creation of a House of Chiefs through which traditional authorities would not only send to the government their recommendations on matters of public interest, but also scrutinise bills from the Legislative Council.[65] Predictably, their reluctance to back UNIP's demand for universal suffrage at the constitutional conference exasperated the party together with its president. It was in order to express his ire with the paramount chiefs that Kaunda probably refused to return to Northern Rhodesia with them on the same aircraft after the talks in England.[66] This was notwithstanding that he and other top nationalists had actively lobbied for the participation of chiefs in constitutional deliberations in London prior to the conference in order to demonstrate to the sceptical British government the degree of cohesion their political parties had attained.

It may be obvious from the foregoing narrative that the relationship between Kalonga Gawa Undi X and the African nationalists in the 1950s was fraught with tensions and discord. What is remarkable, though, is that these tensions never reached a boiling point until a few years after independence. That no open conflict erupted between Kalonga Gawa Undi X and the nationalists stemmed from the fact that the latter came to recognise the indispensability of the chief to the mobilisation of mass support for the nationalist struggle in Chewa-speaking areas. A revered ruler among his subjects, Kalonga Gawa Undi X did more than Nkumbula and Kaunda combined to expand the number of supporters in his chiefdoms for the nationalist political parties. His success in winning the souls of his subjects for the ANC and later for ZANC/UNIP lay in his ingenious use of the vast network of the personal, social and political relations that the paramount chief had cultivated since 1953 to attract new political converts into the nationalist fold. It is recalled that the chief exploited this network to persuade commoners, headmen and other chiefs within and outside Chewa areas to join in the struggle for independence. Among the Chewa traditional rulers Kalonga Gawa Undi X won for ZANC/UNIP were chiefs Mwangala and

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64 The quotation is from ibid., p. 170.

65 For more details on the creation of the House of Chiefs, see Cabinet Office Circular No. 39 of 1964, NAZ EP 1/1/54.

66 Joseph Galeta Chikuta Mbewe, interview cited.

Zingalume, whose boundary dispute the potentate had earlier resolved. Others included members of the Chewa royal family, among whom were the paramount chief's own cousins, nieces and nephews, etc.[67]

The total effect of all this was that Kalonga Gawa Undi X, together with other traditional leaders in the province, effectively embedded and articulated the liberation cause within the framework of prevailing personal, social and political relations. This inevitably eased local assimilation and comprehension of the nationalist anti-colonial agenda. From the late 1950s onward, this went a long way in capturing local political imagination and support for ZANC/ UNIP. As a corollary, Kalonga Gawa Undi X transformed chiefdoms under his sway into ZANC/UNIP strongholds. A colonial official admitted as much in 1958, when he remarked that the anti-colonial protest in Chewa chiefdoms had reached even the remotest villages, where, the official added, constitutional debates outweighed all other concerns among the majority of the local people.[68] As would be expected, top ZANC/UNIP leaders feared that antagonising the paramount chief would cost them a large following among the Chewa.[69]

There were other ways in which the Chewa sovereign became an asset to the anti-colonial protest despite his reluctance to jettison his own strategies for those of nationalist political parties. His ability to articulate the nationalist cause in the local language and to embed the cause within existing social relations meant that he familiarised the nationalist agenda so that it became comprehensible and hence made cultural sense to people at grassroots level. A respected ruler, he also bestowed on the independence movement a degree of credibility and respectability that captured local imagination perhaps much more than any urban-based 'agitators' could do. This view is all the more convincing given the ephemeral nature of the latter's political activities in the countryside, coupled with their inability to speak local languages.

Conversant with local political rhetoric, intrigue and idioms, Kalonga Gawa Undi X was better placed to articulate and popularise the nationalist cause through familiar or familiarised grammar. In this vein, he explained with greater clarity and persuasion why, for example, the white settler's constitutional proposals were unacceptable, why ZANC split from the ANC in 1958, and why it was important to do away with alien rule, to support the freedom struggle, and to pay subscription fees to the liberation movement. Such clarity was rewarded. It is no wonder, then, that as the 1950s drew to a close ZANC/UNIP found it easier to raise funds for the party within Chewa-speaking areas. In 1959, for

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[67] Interview with Edward Nyirongo, grandson of Kalonga Gawa Undi X, Mkaika Palace, 13 November 2005.

[68] Northern Rhodesia, African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1958, p. 48.

[69] Joseph Galeta Chikuta Mbewe, interview cited.

example, the party through the efforts of Kalonga Gawa Undi X successfully appealed to his subjects for funds to enable him to go to England to explain to the British government why Africans in Northern Rhodesia were demanding independence. So successful was the campaign that by the time the chief left for England, he had sufficient funds for accommodation, upkeep and return airfare.[70]

Conclusion

The meta-narrative of nationalism in pre-independent Zambia and elsewhere in British Africa has all too frequently cast traditional rulers who fought for independence alongside Western-educated, nationalist elites in the 1950s as no more than malleable pawns in the hands of the elites. According to this perspective, chiefs were eager to wrest the political autonomy that they had lost under Indirect Rule, and they, therefore, saw their own interests as inextricably intertwined with those of nationalists who in the 1950s struggled to dismantle colonial power and hegemony.

This chapter casts serious doubts on this popular portrait. It suggests that although some African chiefs certainly joined hands with independence movements, they did so not to become junior partners to nationalists, but as part of their well-thought-out strategy to retain the support of their subjects who turned en masse to nationalism in the 1950s. As the Chewa traditional ruler's real, lived experiences demonstrate, chiefs were not oblivious to the fact that nationalism, like colonialism itself, posed no small danger to the future of chiefly authority and power. This danger lay deep in the autocratic foundations of the type of nationalism that nationalist leaders across the continent espoused during and after the struggle for political freedom. Keen to preserve their cherished political autonomy, chiefs-cum-nationalists formulated their own anti-colonial strategies and tactics that enabled them to actively contribute to the struggle for independence without necessarily sacrificing their own interests on the altar of nationalism. These strategies included transforming local government institutions such as Native Authorities over which chiefs presided into instruments of contestation against colonialism. This was calculated to create a space in which traditional authorities could preserve their power and autonomy from the undemocratic rule of African nationalists.[71] Chiefly endeavours to wage the anti-colonial crusade through their own strategies confounded the exclusionary politics of the nationalist elites, pitting traditional rulers against nationalist political parties with their leaders. Once the latter

[70] Gawa Undi X, 'Speech'.

[71] My insights here are shaped by J.L. Giblin, A history of the excluded: Making family a refuge from state in twentieth-century Tanzania (Oxford, 2005).

ousted European colonisers from power in the 1960s, they, as demonstrated at greater depth elsewhere, moved quickly to suppress whatever little administrative and judicial authority chiefs had enjoyed under Indirect Rule.[72] In post-colonial Zambia, traditional rulers attempted but failed to counter the erosion of their power with clenched fists and outrage. Their earlier apprehension that nationalism would turn out to be the sword of Damocles hanging over their necks and their grip on power thus became a living nightmare that still haunts chiefs in Zambia to this day.

[72] Kalusa, Kalonga Gawa Undi X.

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The realization of a catholic social doctrine in the context of the rise of nationalism in northern Rhodesia in the 1950s

Marja Hinfelaar

Introduction

Until the late nineteenth century, the Catholic Church was regarded as the antithesis of the modern European nation-state. As Joll noted, 'throughout the last years of Pius IX, who died in 1878, the Church seem to have been the embodiment of the conservative desire to resist change and to oppose the main intellectual, political and social trends of the day (…) hostile not only to the emerging socialist movements but also to the liberal state.' It was only in 1891 that the Church began to respond to ongoing social and political transformations. In that year, Pope Leo XIII issued an encyclical – *Rerum Novarum* – dealing with the 'rights and duties of capital and labour'. Inter alia, the encyclical stated that

> (t)he elements of conflict are unmistakable; in the growth of industry and the surprising discoveries of science; in the changed relations between masters and workmen; in the enormous fortunes of individuals and the poverty of the masses; in

> the increased self-reliance and closer combination of the working population; and finally in general moral deterioration.[1]

He therefore urged governments to insist on the following: the protection of basic economic and political rights, including the right to a just wage and to organise associations or unions to defend just claims; the right to private property; and the rights of labour over capital. Positioning itself between capitalism and socialism, the Church commented on a number of issues relating to the negative consequences of industrialization, capitalism and communism, and called upon the governments' moral responsibility to put policies in place that would prevent workers 'from listening to dangerous revolutionary leaders and from putting the whole social structure in jeopardy.' Pope Leo XIII's statement is regarded as the mainspring of the so-called Catholic Social Doctrine, which was announced and spread by means of successive papal encyclicals throughout the twentieth century.

In this paper I would like to place the realization of a Catholic Social Doctrine in the context of the rise of nationalism in Northern Rhodesia in the 1950s. This will serve to illuminate: the origins of such Catholic social movements as the Catholic Action, the Legion of Mary and the Young Christian Workers; the emergence of 'public' Catholic elites; and the circumstances attending to the production of the first Catholic pastoral letter, a forerunner to those that would play such a prominent role in post-colonial Zambia. Indeed, it can be argued that the missionaries' implementation of this social doctrine, which had had a very limited application in Europe, enabled the Catholic Church successfully to reposition itself vis-à-vis the emerging independent nation. A precondition for this development was the sidelining of a political theology that had led to the creation of ethnic Christian 'kingdoms' within the various denominations' own spheres of influence and its replacement with a national church that could speak out with one voice on public matters. This was achieved with through the formation of a Catholic Secretariat in the early 1950s and the establishment of a Northern Rhodesia Catholic Bishops' Conference, a platform to discuss current issues, in 1959.

Yet contrary to what some Catholic researchers claim, the development and implementation of the Catholic Social Doctrine cannot be taken as a 'singular piece of narrative history.'[2] To appreciate the seeming contradictoriness of Catholic responses to nationalism, it is necessary to acknowledge the existence of intellectual differences among the missionaries, based on nationality,

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1 Quoted in James Joll, *Europe since 1870: An international history* (Harmondsworth, 1983; 3rd ed.), p. 47.

2 D. Auret, Reaching for justice: The catholic commission for justice & peace 1972-1992 (Gwelo, 1992).

generation and individual characteristics.[3] Indeed, as will become clear, within the Catholic hierarchy there was no consensus on all these matters, despite the seemingly united standpoint expressed in the pastoral letters. In this paper, I will illustrate these points by focusing mainly on one specific Catholic missionary denomination, the Society of Missionaries for Africa, better known as the White Fathers.

While the study of nationalism in Africa has paid ample attention to the role of the Catholic Church, partly as a result of the presence of a number of prominent scholars with a Catholic background,[4] studies addressing the relationship between missionary activities and African nationalism in Zambia have largely focused on the role played by Protestantism and its allied welfare societies.[5] Yet, as will be argued in this paper, to comprehend the prominent status attained by the Catholic Church after Zambia's Independence, it is crucial to comprehend the Catholic Church's political position in the 1950s.

Missionary response to international developments

In order to evaluate the missionary reaction to emerging secular ideologies, I want to take the reader back to the General Missionary Conference of Northern Rhodesia of Broken Hill (15 to 21 July 1931).[6] Despite the fact that the conference openly associated itself 'with the political aspirations of the Black rather than the White',[7] the proceedings of the gathering typified a number of central missionary apprehensions or 'fears':

1. *The fear of secular education*
   'We are quite confident that religion must be in the first place, and there is danger that it may be forced into the second place by those who are keen on secular education. Religion may be forced into the background (…) but I (Rev. Bishop May) feel certain that as long as the present Government is in charge of the situation those fears will be found to be groundless.'[8]

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3 R. Gray, *Black christians and white missionaries* (New Haven and London, 1990), p. 92.

4 R. Gray, A. Hastings, V.Y. Mudimbe are some of the scholars I have in mind.

5 See A. Ipenburg, *All good men: The development of Lubwa Mission, Chinsali, Zambia, 1905-1967* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1992); H. Meebelo, Reaction to colonialism (Manchester, 1971).

6 Evangelisation: Being the report of the General Missionary Conference of Northern Rhodesia. Held in Broken Hill, July 15-21, 1931 (Lovedale, 1931).

7 J.R. Fell, 'Foreword: What the conference has done', in ibid., p. 6.

8 'Reply by the right Rev. Bishop May, D.D', in ibid., p. 20.

2. *The fear of nationalism*
   'The very names associated with this movement are important – Michael Collins, Mustapha Kemal, Lenin, Trotsky, Ghandi and Sun Yat Sen … We, as people whose task it is to speak for the Kingdom, must ask ourselves whether such a movement is Christian or if there is a place within Christianity for such a movement.'[9]
3. *The fear of industrialization*
   'In China industrialism is coming with irresistible onrush upon an unprepared people. But the most amazing industrial development in our own day in the whole world is taking place within a few miles of Broken Hill. A few years ago the Copper Belt was just a primeval bush; to-day people of both races are being drawn together there in vast numbers.'[10]

From the conviction that 'without Christian faith there will be no evolution of the Native's good qualities, but a revolution caused by the display of his passions',[11] the new course of evangelization expressed itself as follows: 'The most important thing is that we should integrate our Missionary movement with the other great movements of the world in order that they shall become means of extending the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.'[12]

The conference is remarkable as the addresses show an intense attentiveness to such international political developments as, the missionaries felt, had the potential to threaten the stability and uncontested hegemony of Christianity in Northern Rhodesia. In the 1930s, African nationalism arguably was still an abstract notion, but when it became a reality in the late 1940s and 1950s, how did missionaries react in light of the above apprehensions? As Bolink rightly pointed out, while missionaries in 1931 still strongly felt the need to defend their African flock, their position became increasingly more ambivalent over the next few decades 'due to the rapid development of the mining areas, the increase of the European population, the growing racial tension, and the national and political awakening of the Africans after the second World War.'[13]

Urbanization and the creation of a Catholic lay 'defence force'

The missionaries' initial resistance to urbanization, as Peel noted, should be understood in the context of their experience in their home countries, which had originally been 'profoundly and exclusively Christian' but were now seeing the

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9 A.M. Chirgwin, 'Christian missions in relation to World movements', in ibid., p. 21.
10 Ibid, p. 22.
11 J. Spendel, 'The first approach to the Pagan native', in *Evangelisation*, p. 26.
12 Chirgwin, 'Christian missions', p. 24.
13 P. Bolink, Towards church union in Zambia: A study of missionary co-operation and church-union efforts in Central Africa (Franeker, 1967), p. 138.

authority of religion being weakened 'by urbanization (…) by secular working class movements and by the growth of secular knowledge and science.' As a response, Peel continues, 'the missionaries aspired to create in Africa a piously observant Christian society like that which they believed pre-industrial Europe had had.'[14] A Christian theocracy was indeed the model the White Fathers had adhered to while evangelizing the Northern Province, where they successfully created a great number of Roman Catholic enclaves.[15] In the missionaries' eyes, labour migration posed a serious threat to these carefully constructed Christian 'kingdoms', both as a result of the loss of their leaders – the catechists and teachers who had played such a crucial role in expanding the mission in the first place – and of the threat of 'godlessness' in the towns, which, in the missionary mind, had the potential to 'contaminate' the rural areas as migrants returned. Labour migration and urbanization, in short, undermined their model of mission, which had hitherto focused solely on the rural population surrounding the mission stations.[16]

Already in 1920, the White Fathers were concerned that over 3,000 of 'their' Christians were scattered in neighbouring countries (Congo, Tanganyika, South Africa).[17] The beginning of large-scale industrial mining within the territory brought the problem of labour migration closer to home; it led to the establishment of more permanent urban communities and, as a result of shorter distances, the more frequent coming and going of migrants. The coming and going of migrants was regarded as a threat by the White Fathers, who described these urban dwellers as 'too often arrogant, areligious and amoral, estranged from their own people, and with their minds full of revolutionary and Marxist-Leninist propaganda.'[18] Preoccupied by Protestant rivalry and the perceived anti-Catholicism of the British colonial government, the missionaries also feared that the assumed immoral behaviour of Catholic migrants in the towns would reflect poorly on the Catholic Church as a whole: 'Our flock of

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[14] J.D.Y. Peel 'The christianization of African swociety: Some possible models', In: E. Fasholé-Luke, R. Gray, A. Hastings & G. Tasie, eds, *Christianity in independent Africa* (London, 1978), p. 450.

[15] R.I. Rotberg, Christian missionaries and the creation of Northern-Rhodesia, 1880-1924 (Princeton, 1965), p. 33.

[16] A. Shorter, Cross & flag: The 'White fathers' during the colonial dcramble, 1892-1914 (Maryknoll, N.Y., 2006), p. 172.

[17] Zambia White Fathers Archives (ZWFA), Lusaka, ANR/13, 1920-1921: Bangweolo Vicariate.

[18] ZWFA, ANR/53, 1938-1939: Lwanga vicariate. Ideas about communism must have filtered through from South Africa.

Lubemba, how do they behave in this milieu where Mammon reigns in undisputed mastery?'[19]

These qualms, however, did not lead to the establishment of White Fathers mission in the towns. Until the early 1930s African Christians on the Copperbelt, of any denomination, were left to their own devices. The White Fathers resisted the prospect of expanding their mission to town. Taylor and Lehmann have argued that the absence of priests on the Copperbelt, contrary to missionary expectations, resulted in the formation of thriving Church communities, giving African Christians the opportunity to take the initiative and leadership.[20] This was certainly true for the protestant community on the Copperbelt, which in 1925 established its own 'Union Church in the Copperbelt.' Examples of Catholic initiatives in this direction are few, but informative. Gray gives the example of a catechist from Luapula who was sent to the Copperbelt to assist in the transport of provisions. He decided to stay in town for the next 17 years, during which time he built a flourishing Catholic community, helped by other voluntary catechists.[21] We can also read that in 1927 Catholic workers had come to an agreement with the management of the mining companies to build temporary church-cum-schools.[22] When, in 1929, the White Fathers van Sambeek and Etienne visited the Copperbelt for a fortnight to assess the situation, they 'were amazed' to note that despite the absence of their own catechists and the 'uncoordinated' nature of evangelical efforts, 'many Bemba speaking Christians from the North were still behaving properly, especially those who had managed to come with their families (…)'[23]

In 1931, Italian Franciscan missionaries opened a mission on the Copperbelt, working on the premises that urbanization was an irreversible process and had the potential to contribute to the success of Catholic evangelization. In 1934, Fr. Mazzieri, in an address entitled 'Are the mines a disaster or a benefit for our immigrant Christians?' spoke of urban life as a 'potential cure' for certain 'native' vices: 'a life of order and work (…) makes [the African] a strenuous worker; even physically he becomes stronger. He learns hygiene and cleanliness, his social feelings improve (…)' Another benefit, as the White

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19 The missionaries believed for instance that the protestants conspired to blame the Bemba Catholics for the outbreak of the 1935 Copperbelt strike; M. O'Shea, *Missionaries and miners: A history of the beginnings of the Catholic church in Zambia with particular reference to the Copperbelt* (Ndola, 1986), p. 265.

20 Quoted in ibid., p. 74.

21 R. Gray, 'Christianity'. In: A.D. Roberts, ed., *The Cambridge History of Africa. Vol. 7: From 1905 to 1940* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 177.

22 J.V. Taylor & D.A. Lehmann, *Christians of the Copperbelt*: *The growth of the church in Northern Rhodesia* (London, 1961), 37.

23 ZWFA, ANR/29, 1929-1930: Bangweolo Vicariate.

Fathers had noted with pride, is that 'the (protestant) mine authorities acknowledged that the Catholic church effectively acted as a bulwark against Bolshevism'.[24] Most crucially, towns turned out to be successful places for expansion: 'many of them meet hundred of Christians whom they see praying and singing on Sundays; so many pagans who had no knowledge of the Christian religion come in touch with Christianity, and this may be, with the Grace of God, a good opportunity for the propagation of the Gospel.'[25] In fact, in 1931, 2,550 African Catholics were counted on the Copperbelt. Significantly, out of the 295 baptisms recorded in 1932, 261 originated from White Father missions in Northern Province.[26]

The Catholic missionaries' concern about the rise of communism and 'unbelief' in the Copperbelt was informed by developments elsewhere, in which 'Bolshevism' posed a serious threat to the Catholic Church from the 1920s onwards.[27] The Vatican's response to this confrontation was to activate and emancipate their members through the Catholic Action, a world-wide lay organisation whose adherents were trained and organised to take on political responsibilities and confront atheism. This movement was launched in Northern Rhodesia in the 1930s, and it encouraged its members to make 'enquiries' on religious and social topics, for instance on 'farming, beer drinking, communism and pagan customs.'[28]

Catholic Action was followed by other movements, such as the Young Christian Workers. In 1949 the White Fathers were informed that the main purpose of a workers movement was 'to show the working classes that there are other solutions than the ones proposed by Marxism (…) communism will automatically die out when the present state of injustice, inequality, exploitation and mistrust disappears.' In the context of the empire, it was noted that workers' rights at the missions had to be enforced, arguing that 'the colonial times are over. The legitimacy of colonization is openly challenged. The word "colonial" has become a dirty word. It is high time for the Catholic Church to move away from the colonial mentality and attitude.'[29]

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[24] O'Shea, *Missionaries and miners* (1986), p. 112.

[25] Fr. Mazzieri, 'Are the mines a disaster or a benefit for our immigrant Christians?' (1934), quoted in O'Shea, *Missionaries and miners*, p. 289.

[26] Ibid., p. 270.

[27] A. Hastings, 'The churches and democracy: Reviewing a relationship'. In: P. Gifford, ed., *The Christian churches and the democratisation of Africa* (Leiden, 1995), p. 39.

[28] ZWFA, Box Fort Rosebery-General, Catholic Action by Y. Goulet.

[29] 'The main missionary problem today'. In: *CIPA, Notes and Documents*, 6 (July 1949).

Missionaries were likewise influenced by Cardinal Suensens of Belgium, who wrote extensively on the work of the Legion of Mary movement and its effectiveness in China, where some Christian communities had withstood the coming of Communism. This model was successfully copied in Northern Rhodesia, and the Legion of Mary gained prominence in the 1950s.[30] While there is little evidence of communist activity on the Copperbelt or the colony as a whole, the missionaries believed the lay movements to be an important deterrent against the forces of 'unbelief':

> There is also a revival of pagan practices and beliefs, especially in time of hardships and trials, as well as new anti-Christian doctrines (bolshevism, sects, etc). We rely a lot on Catholic Action and the newly introduced *Legio Mariae* to thwart the Devil's efforts to bring down the Church, which has grown so much in size and strength (…).[31]

Indeed, as Gann observed, missionary insecurity about the hold of Christianity among the urban population was due to the fact that at the end of the 1950s almost a quarter of urban Africans professed no religion of any sort; as a result 'the "denomination of the spiritually uncommitted" formed the biggest of all in the townships of the Protectorate, a great bloc of people who one day might follow a new Messiah.'[32]

Nationalism and the catholic elite 'defence force'

Whereas primary missionary education had naturally contributed to a degree of differentiation, the Catholic Church was late in realizing the need for such higher education as could produce a Catholic leadership at a national level. This is especially true when compared to the educational ambitions and results of its erstwhile rivals, the Free Church of Scotland, Before the 1940s, pressure on the Catholic Church to increase the educational level of their schools and to secularize its contents came from two directions: as a requirement by the British administration and as a result of competition with Protestant schools. At the end of the 1940s, however, the Catholic Church took the initiative in opening schools in urban areas, since, in the words of Carmody, it finally 'had begun to identify with the new men and women, who on the whole were urban-oriented. Although the church had started its days amongst the peasants in Kayambi and

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30 H. Hinfelaar, *History of the Catholic Church in Zambia* (Lusaka, 2004), p. 175.

31 ZWFA, ANR/55, 1939-1945: Bangweolo Vicariate. The supposed godlessness of the Europeans in the Copperbelt was countered with the moral regeneration movement; O'Shea, *Missionaries and miners*, p. 192.

32 L.H. Gann, *A history of Northern Rhodesia: Early days to 1953* (London, 1964), p. 455.

Syantumbu, it had also accompanied many of the emerging elites to the Copperbelt towns, Livingstone and Lusaka.'[33]

The opening of a teacher training college at the Jesuit Mission of Chikuni, in the Southern Province, at the behest of government in 1953 played an important role in the establishment of a national Catholic identity. According to Elias Chipimo, one of its former pupils who originated from the Northern Province, 'it helped to give their students a sense of being Zambian Catholics rather than Bemba or Lozi Catholics, thus paving the way to national consciousness.'[34] The White Fathers might have lacked institutes of higher education in their area; but their seminaries had an indirect impact on elite formation, as many former Lubushi seminarians found white-collar jobs in town.[35]

African leadership was also promoted through the actions of individual Catholic leaders, who were favourably disposed towards the notion of African advancement. Missionaries in Northern Rhodesia, for instance, were influenced by the message of the Apostolic Delegate to South Africa, who, in 1949, had recommended that it is 'of paramount importance for the Catholic elite to be present in the public life of the nation in other words in politics and the Civil Service.'[36] Mgr. Pailloux, who was appointed as Prefect Apostolic of Fort Rosebery on 1 March 1953, was one of the Catholic leaders who took nationalist aspirations seriously. A White Father diarist, for instance, noted that Pailloux 'is not afraid of expressing his opinion about the rights of African. He has his own ideas about the way the Mission should be conducted in a fast changing political situation.'[37] His innovations included the involvement of African priests in all deliberations, changing the *lingua franca* of the White Fathers from French to English, and the production of a vernacular newsletter *Bonse Pamo*. While most Bishops were uncomfortable with the political involvement of their Catholic teachers, Pailloux actively encouraged educated laymen and women to take part in the constitutional debates and political development of the country. He also urged them to join the Catholic Welfare Society set up by the Jesuit Father, Patrick Walsh, in Lusaka. The newly established Catholic Welfare Society instructed its young members 'to play an influential role in trade unions and political movements.'[38] The outspoken Fr.

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33 B.P. Carmody, Education in Zambia: Catholic perspectives (Lusaka, 1999), p. 87.

34 Ibid., p. 88.

35 Interview Brian Garvey, former White Father and University of Zambia lecturer, Leeds, 19 January 2001.

36 'The Catholics have a duty to take part in public life', in *CIPA, Notes & Documents*, 4 (July 1949).

37 ZWFA, Kabunda Mission Diary, 1 March 1953 (translated from French by Fr. Maurice Gruffat).

38 Hinfelaar, *History of the Catholic Church*, p. 168.

Walsh had a more direct way of gaining political influence among the new leaders by organising political seminars for former Catholic students like Lawrence Katilungu and Pascal Sokota. Walsh for instance invited Douglas Hyde, a convert from Communism and a staunch Catholic politician in the UK. In the course of time, Fr. Walsh became a close confident of Kenneth Kaunda.

In time, these Catholic leaders came to influence Catholic proclamations. Sokota, a former mission schoolteacher who was nominated to the Northern Rhodesia Legislative Council in 1951, provided evidence of the anti-Federation stance of Africans. His report was used by the Catholic education secretary to impress upon the Bishops that the Catholic population was against the introduction of Federation. This, in turn, influenced the production of the first pastoral letter. Lawrence Katilungu was another influential Catholic leader, being the founder member of the African Mineworker's Union in 1948, the leader of the Trade Union Congress in the 1950s and acting president of the African National Congress in 1961 during Nkumbula's detention. Katilungu's involvement in Walsh's political group, however, was short-lived, as he died in a car accident in November 1961.[39]

Speaking with one voice: The production of pastoral letters

In 1953, the Catholic Church felt compelled to take a position vis-à-vis the imposition of Federation as its enduring silence had been interpreted by the nationalists as a pro-Federation stance. As the Bishop of Abercorn observed: 'Catholic Africans are reproaching us for not taking up their defence in the struggle (…) The more so as quite a number of Protestant missionaries have declared themselves openly against Federation (…)'[40] Political neutrality in the 1950s, in the words of Gann, was no longer an option, as 'a new generation of mission educated Africans was growing up (…) who occupied key positions in African society as teachers, storemen, and civil servants.' Missionaries were wary that many of these leaders regarded Church membership as a purely nominal affair and were inclined towards 'skepticism or agnosticism.'[41]

In light of the above, it is not surprising that the first pastoral letter produced in 1953 by the Catholic Ordinaries of Northern Rhodesia centred on the rights of urbanised and educated Africans. Designed to instruct the Catholic clergy on how to deal with the 'critical' situation, the statement began by cautioning the

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[39] Hugh Macmillan, "Lawrence Chola Katilungu", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/94725, accessed 11 November 2010.

[40] Vicar Apostolic to Apostolic Delegate, Mombasa, quoted in Carmody, *Education in Zambia*, pp. 83-84.

[41] Gann, *History of Northern Rhodesia*, p. 420.

clergy against engaging in open political activities: ‘As a question of principle, it is well to recall the very strong prohibition included in Can. 139, with regard to the participation of the clergy in the political affairs of any Country or to misuse the influence of the Catholic Action movement, for purely political purposes.’ The statement then expressed the overall purpose of the pastoral letter:

> But as human beings, and as citizens of N. Rhodesia, (the Africans) have the legitimate right to hold their own political views on the problem at stake, and, as long as Federation is not an accomplished fact, they have also the right within the limits of true moderation and through constitutional means to endeavour to postpone and even prevent the formation of the proposed Central African Federation.

It went on to explain the social rights of Africans in light of previous papal encyclicals, and it defined what the Catholic Church regarded as ‘the dignity of man, irrespective of race to which he belongs.’ Sources of authority were extensively referred to and included the Biblical scripture and the teaching of the popes. Specifically for Northern Rhodesia it addressed the issues of ‘separate churches for Africans and Europeans’, ‘the unconscious dislike of those poorer than us’, ‘disdainful attitudes’ both in Europeans and ‘highly educated’ Africans, the colour bar and ‘unmannerliness.’ It devoted a section on what the Church regarded as universal human rights in any given society:

> The right to life.
> The right to the necessities of life, and to a decent living.
> The right to worship.
> The right to the normal development of his faculties.
> The right to private property and ownership.
> The right to sojourn and movement.
> The right to marriage and family life.
> The right to give his children the education of his choice.
> The right to associate with his fellow men.

The practical application of these rights, the ordinaries argued, meant that Africans must be offered the best educational opportunities. Equally important was the removal of the industrial colour bar as ‘access to skilled and responsible jobs, as well as the rate of salaries must not depend on the colour or the race of the worker, but solely on his industrial efficiency and professional conscientiousness’. The pastoral letter clearly mirrored the aims of the European Catholic Social Doctrine in addressing the concerns of the working

class, which, arguably, still represented only a small part of Northern Rhodesia's Catholic population.[42]

In the process of national convening, the ordinaries were forced to recognize the need for a national body to represent the missionary congregations at a national level, not only with the aim to comment on public affairs, but also to be able to combine forces in the field of education, health and media. This resulted in the establishment of a Catholic Secretariat in Lusaka in the early 1950s. 1959 saw the establishment of the Northern Rhodesia Catholic Bishop's Conference, with the following stated objective: 'to provide the ordinaries with facilities for discussion and united action in matters which affected the common interest of the Catholic Church in Northern Rhodesia.'[43]

The papal encyclical *Fidei Donum* (On the Condition of Missions), published in 1957, was particularly aimed at Africa. While lending the Church's support to the impending attainment of independence on the part of African nations, the author, Pope Pius XII, also warned against the inherent dangers of decolonization:

> seeds of trouble are being sown in various parts of Africa by the proponents of atheistic materialism, who are stirring up the emotions of the natives by encouraging mutual envy among them and by distorting their unhappy material condition in an attempt to deceive them with an empty show of advantages to be won, or to incite them to seditious acts. Such is our anxiety that the peoples of Africa should attain to an ever increasing and genuine prosperity, both civic and Christian.

Fidei Donum preceded and inspired Northern Rhodesia's second pastoral letter of January 1958, which mostly dealt with the issue of racial disparity. The statement reflected the widening horizon of the Catholic hierarchy, who more confidently defended the Bishops' right to speak out on public matters according to the established social doctrine:

> It is unnecessary for us to prove our authority to instruct you in the context of social affairs. Our mandate is that the Church was ordered by Jesus Christ, her Founder, to 'Go (...) preach the Gospel to the whole of creation.' (Mark 16:15)[44]

The statement replicated earlier pronouncements on the universal rights of human beings, but placed an additional emphasis on 'corresponding duties', which were defined as follows: to exercise the virtue of charity and justice,

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[42] 'Pastoral letter addressed to all catholic missionaries and members of the African clergy in Northern Rhodesia's 1953'. In: J. Komakoma, ed., *The social teaching of the catholic bishops and other christian leaders in Zambia: Major pastoral letters and statements, 1953-2001* (Ndola, 2003), pp. 32-63.

[43] ZWFA, Appendix to the Bishops' Standing Committee, Minutes, Jan-Feb 1960, Draft Constitution of the Northern Rhodesia Catholic Bishops' Conference.

[44] 'Joint Pastoral Letter of the Catholic Bishops of Northern Rhodesia addressed to the Catholics of all Races', in Komakoma, *Social Teaching*, pp. 64-74.

which meant to respect and to grant rights of others, and to love all other men, rejecting the message of the 'apostles of hatred'. The Bishops expressed a desire for a multi-racial country, stating that 'the mere physical juxtaposition of African, European and Asian zones is but a perversion of the term "multi-racial society."' While rejecting classification according to race, the Bishops denounced the Marxist ideal of a classless society as 'impossible of attainment,' disbelieving that 'absolute equality' among men will ever exist. In 1959 a joint communiqué by the 18 bishops of the Federation, Northern and Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, was issued, which spoke out against racial discrimination and expressed its concern about the curtailment of missionary activities in the territory. In reply, Roy Welensky stated that 'Government were doing all in their power to promote inter-racial harmony', expressing his willingness to meet the Bishops 'to explain the objectives of Government.'[45]

A pastoral letter that never saw the light of day sheds light on the type of disagreements between the bishops. In 1960, Archbishop Kozlowiecki contemplated issuing a pastoral letter concerning 'immoral public pronouncements of some African leaders some of whom were Catholics, statements like: "Europeans must get out", "we will call for communist aid"', etc'. He argued that if the church did not challenge such statements 'leaders of public opinion would grow bolder and further mislead the masses.'[46] This suggestion was immediately dismissed by two members of the committee, who sensed that 'at this juncture when political passions are aroused in all quarters it would be bound to be misunderstood, and the Press publicity given it to it would make thing worse.'[47] Instead it was proposed to tackle the issue at a congregational level.

Contradictory catholic reactions to nationalism

The Church response to rival ideologies in Northern Rhodesia mirrored developments in Europe, namely a recognition of the potential threat of 'atheistic philosophy of communism' and the need to put forward an alternative to remain an influential force in society. However, we also have to bear in mind that not all missionaries shared the same outlook. Some were simply confined to

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45 'Project for a British Central African Federation', in *CIPA Notes and Documents*, 19, January 1960.

46 ZWFA, Minutes of the Northern Rhodesia Bishops' Standing Committee, 30 Jan. – 1 Feb. 1960.

47 Present were His Grace the Most Rev. Archbishop Kozlowiecki, S.J., Right Rev. Bishop F. Courtemanche, W.F., the Right Rev. Monsignor R. Pailloux, W.F., Father Killian, OFMCap, the last two being the most likely to have countered the Archbishop's proposal.

the microcosm of the mission stations, which often resulted in observing the world from a narrow, mostly ethnic base. On the other side of the spectrum, other missionaries started to draw on wider ideologies, including socialism, envisaging the prospect of playing a significant national role. Despite the creation of a so-called Catholic defence force and a stronger national Catholic Church body, the majority of missionaries remained anxious about the outcome of nationalism. This was part of a general trend, as Mudimbe noted:

> Despite the fact that the Church had trained most of the nationalist leaders and intellectuals ... many a missionary did not welcome the outcome of ideologies of otherness and did not at all like doctrines of African independence. Besides political fears, there was a feeling that these new theories were opening a new era and meant the end of missionary initiatives in Africa.[48]

As a result we have to be mindful that pastoral letters and Bishops' statements do not necessarily represent the opinion of all missionaries. While some clergy were highly suspicious of any political activity, missionaries like Pailloux and Walsh encouraged the Catholic elite to become more politically involved. The White Fathers were themselves divided. Bishop Marcel Daubechies of Kasama, for instance, was not sympathetic towards the nationalist movement and complained that there were not enough educated teachers to counteract the influence of nationalist parties, which, according to him, were tainted with Communism. As Hinfelaar observed 'there was a lack of agreement about how to deal with the first wave of genuine nationalism and little inclination to resort to a dialogue.'[49]

The missionaries' fears were not without foundation, especially if we go by the lived experience of the White Fathers in Northern Province. The missionaries at the time were confronted with the loss of large numbers of converts to the emerging Lumpa movement, led by its prophetess, Alice Lenshina, and the *Mutima* (Sacred Heart) church, a Catholic breakaway movement led by the charismatic Emilio Mulolani, an ex-seminarian. In addition, tension between nationalist movements and missionaries gradually built up. White Fathers going on 'tour' in the 1950s encountered increased resistance from the villagers, as one priest wrote in exasperation: 'It seems they mix the whole thing of Congress, Regina, Basungu, school and church.'[50] At the same time, many missionaries failed to take the nationalist aspirations seriously, which, Rotberg observed at the time, reflected a general mood:

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[48] V.Y. Mudimbe, The invention of Africa: Gnosis, philosophy, and the order of knowledge (Bloomington, 1988), p. 59.

[49] Hinfelaar, History of the Catholic Church, p. 182.

[50] ZWFA, Mulanga Mission Diary, August 1955.

While the tinder of racial antagonism everywhere in Central Africa was bursting into flame, white officials, businessmen, missionaries, and settlers assured me that the animosities so apparent in 1959 reflected recent conditions and particular political mistakes only. They blamed ambitious African agitators and a few irresponsible white 'communists' for fueling and setting alight the conflagration that then appeared to have spread south from Ghana and Kenya to enflame Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.[51]

This frame of mind might explain why some missionaries persisted in attacking the credentials of the nationalist movement. One can still trace a good number of heated exchanges between priests and local nationalist party leaders in which the former accused the latter of promoting communism. The African National Congress was not shy to defend itself: 'your circular (in Bemba) gives the impression that the African National Congress is controlled by Communists (…) we know and are convinced that our African National Congress is more Christian than any party in this country (…)'[52] These types of conflict and misunderstanding can also be shown in a small exchange of ideas between imprisoned nationalist leaders and a visiting White Father. The priest talked to 20 people who came from his parish and was shocked to hear the following:

> They said: 1. God does not exist because nobody has ever seen him 2. Jesus never came to earth 3. there are no sins committed, everything is permitted 4. why if there is a God he does not punish the Europeans (?). 5. Catholic priests are liars because they keep a lot of secrets. 6. the pagan religion is better than the Catholic one. Formerly people were happy now they are thrown in gaol.[53]

On the basis of these observations the priest concurred with the prison superintendent that 'Communism doctrine' was taught in the prison. Yet, a great number of Bemba Catholics attended his religious service, while others told him that 'they pray alone now but would come to pray with us as soon as they had Independence.'

Tensions in the Northern Province between Catholic priests and local political leaders persisted into the early 1960s and continued to revolve around the missionaries' alarm at the presumed anti-Christian nature of nationalism. This led a local ANC leader to write the following: 'Your Lordship, we are sorry that you are living in such great fears. You are living like you do now because you don't want to closely examine the African Way of movement. Our

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[51] R.I. Rotberg, *The rise of nationalism in Central Africa: The making of Malawi and Zambia, 1873-1964* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), p. vii.

[52] Kasama Archdiocese Archives (KAA), Kasama, J.C.M. Ng'andu (Provincial General Secretary, African National Congress) to Right Rev. Mgr. Pailloux, Kasama, 22 October 1957.

[53] ZWFA, 1-M-hi-34 Fr. P. Sanders, Diary of a visit to Marandellas Gaol, 1963.

way is clear and Christlike. There is nothing between us but God who gave Africa to the Africans.'[54]

Yet, other examples point to an increased political sensitivity on the part of a number of missionaries. Both Gann and Hinfelaar observe that as a result of the experiences of World War II a new generation of missionaries started to question 'the values of a civilization, which, they thought, had produced such horrors, and which some began to contrast with the real and supposed virtues of "pre-literate" man.'[55] Examples of White Fathers' defiance include the missionaries of Mulilansolo mission, who entered the government's blacklist for harbouring fugitive nationalists leaders like Simon Kapwepwe and for their refusal to cooperate with the police in its investigations of the disturbances of 1961:

> the head constable asked the superior what he would do if a man, UNIP, or any other lawbreaker, came into his house. The superior answered that he, as a missionary and priest, only cared about people's attitude towards God, and never inquired about their political aspirations (…) Moreover, let it remain clear that a priest has his professional secrets, just as a medical doctor has. A priest cannot spread all the confidences, entrusted to him as a priest, of which anyway he has no definite proof (…).[56]

This same generation of White Fathers also no longer regarded 'paganism' as a threat. As Mudimbe observed:

> from the 1950s onwards new orientations appeared for the indigenization of the Church (...) the 'pagan culture' is considered and analyzed as an abandoned field in which God's signs already exist. A new vocabulary arises and new forms of evangelization: Africanization, indigenization, naturalization, adaptation of Christianity.[57]

Perceived threats to Christianity had undergone a redefinition and were branded as 'pastoral issues', caused by social injustice. The apparent breakdown of the Christian family life was now explained by 'years of cultural alienation and labour migration'.

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54 KAA, Ng'andu to Pailloux, 22 October 1957.

55 Gann, History of Northern Rhodesia, p. 386; Hinfelaar, History of the Catholic Church, p. 67.

56 ZWFA, Mulilansolo Mission Diary, 'A form of answer on the letter of P.J. Walsh, S.J. Secretary of the Archbishop, 2 January 1962'. On request of the Federal Government, Bishop Furstenberg transferred the priests to other stations, see H. Hinfelaar, *Bemba-speaking women of Zambia in a century of religious change (1892-1992)* (Leiden, 1994), p. 146.

57 Mudimbe, *Invention of Africa*, p. 56.

Conclusion

On the eve of Independence in Zambia, the Catholic Church underwent another ideological shift that found expression in the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). Crucially, it confirmed the Catholic Church's appropriation of a public role:

> Catholicism served as the focus point of the Enlightenment critique of religion. It fought capitalism, liberalism, the modern secular state, socialism (...) in brief, it had been the paradigmatic form of antimodern public religion. In the mid 1960s however the RC church inaugurated a process of official *aggiornamento* to secular modernity and accepted the legitimacy of the modern age. Yet, it refuses to become a private religion. It wants to be both modern and public.[58]

In Northern Rhodesia, this process of public engagement started with the production of the first pastoral letter in 1953, which was informed by the long-established Catholic Social Doctrine in the Vatican. While the Catholic Church was the largest denomination in Northern Rhodesia at Independence, it had limited influence on the formation of political elites as compared to the smaller protestant churches. In addition, the Catholic clergy was politically divided and as a consequence failed to take an outspoken political stand. However, the establishment of large, generally well-organized, lay movements translated into a tangible influence at grass root level. At a public level, the pastoral statements, a common feature of post-colonial Zambia, made the Catholic Church highly visible.

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[58] J. Casanova, *Public religions in the modern world* (Chicago and London, 1994), p. 9.

6

Odd man out: Labour, politics and Dixon Konkola[1]

Kenneth P. Vickery

If there were a Zambian History Trivia Contest with the question 'who was the first president of UNIP? (i.e., the United National Independence Party, which led Zambia to independence in 1964 and ruled the country for the next 27 years), I would imagine rather few – even in Zambia itself – would answer 'Dixon Konkola'. True, Konkola's tenure as the party head lasted only a few weeks; but his relative obscurity seems more a product of the country's 'master narrative', emphasizing the ultimate winners (typical, of course, of many national histories). Some standard texts do not mention Konkola at all, and he is certainly not featured in those which do. Yet in the middle 1950s it would not have been outlandish to have bet on Konkola as the future president or prime

[1] I wish to thank the Leiden conference organizers and editors of this volume, as well as several persons who assisted me with research in Zambia and/or made valuable comments on this article, among them Mwelwa Musambachime, Ian Phimister, and Bizeck Phiri. I am especially grateful to Giacomo Macola, who offered encouragement and insight at several junctures, and generously shared with me numerous valuable and relevant documents gathered in the course of his own research. Remaining errors are mine alone.

minister of the country (an ambition which almost surely crossed his mind as well). Like Joshua Nkomo and Roy Welensky, Konkola used a base in the trade unions on the Rhodesia Railways as his springboard to political prominence, albeit not nearly so great or long-lasting as theirs. His bouts with mental illness add an intriguing dimension to his career. My object in this article is to provide a fuller portrait a man who was a significant 'player' in Zambia's last decade as a British colony.

The trajectory of Konkola's early life echoes that of so many figures of the nationalist era. He was born in 1920 near Mporokoso, in Zambia's Northern Province, and according to one of his autobiographical summaries his father's family was 'associated with the Bemba Royal Family.'[2] Perhaps so, but it is fair to say that aside from a passing reference to a desire to write a treatise on the 'role of the chief' under modern conditions (and, certainly, journeys home on occasion), Konkola evinced little interest in the 'traditional' or rural sides of the struggle in Northern Rhodesia. He became, rather, a thoroughly urbanized man, and stayed that way. A very bright student, he was educated at Mbereshi mission in Luapula among other sites, and became a teacher (what else? – again, typical of many nationalists). His main teacher training and first teaching experience was at Nyadiri mission near Umtali, in Southern Rhodesia; one imagines that exposure to Southern Rhodesia's generally harsher settler regime affected his later views, though I have found no direct reference to such.[3] Konkola returned to Mbereshi and taught there for a time. Dissatisfied with the salary, in the late 1940s, he made his way to the Copperbelt and to Lusaka. There he learned of a new program of the Rhodesia Railways to train African 'welfare officers' – one of the reforms the Railways made in the wake of the major African strike in 1945, and organized under the new African Affairs Department.[4] Accepted as a candidate, he went to Bulawayo, the Railways headquarters and of course again in Southern Rhodesia, for a year-long training course. Among his instructors was the pioneer of such positions on the Railways, and of course of Zimbabwean nationalism as well, Joshua Nkomo.[5]

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2 'A Brief Autobiography of Dr. Dixon Konkola 1920-1991', 16/1/1991, National Archives of Zambia (hereafter NAZ), Lusaka, HM 91/3

3 Kaunda, for example, recounts in his early memoir being confronted with Southern Rhodesian pass laws for the first time. K. Kaunda, *Zambia shall be free* (London, 1962), p. 26.

4 On the 1945 strike, see K.P. Vickery, 'The Rhodesia railways African strike of 1945, Part I: A narrative account' and 'Part II: Cause, consequence, significance', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 24 (1998) and 25 (1999).

5 Material on Konkola's earlier life comes from: 'Brief autobiography' and 'life history of the late Dr Dixon Chikonde Konkola', prepared for his funeral, 23/12/1997 (Konkola died 20/12/1997), both in NAZ, HM 91/3; author interview with Konkola, Lusaka, 8/3/1989; and Konkola notes prepared for author, 7/3/1989.

According to Konkola, Nkomo was not at this point much involved with either trade unions or politics, and cautioned Konkola to be likewise. Nonetheless Konkola was impressed with his 'energy' and 'activity', and with his mind[6]; 'one thing I knew about him he was against Europeans, but was an intellectual.'[7]

Konkola's own ability impressed the African Affairs Department officials, who assigned him to begin welfare work in Northern Rhodesia, based at the Railways' northern hub at Broken Hill (Kabwe). He settled in, married Evelyn Chanda, also a teacher, and began a promising career. The welfare officer was responsible for enriching the non-workplace life of railway workers and their families. Among Konkola's tasks were organizing sporting events, boy-scout groups, debating clubs, weekend dances, and radio broadcast discussion circles; visiting sick or injured workers in hospital; and writing letters for illiterate railwaymen. In February 1951 David Fyfe, one of Konkola's superiors in the AAD and another of his former instructors in Bulawayo, toured the North and presented a very favorable report: Konkola 'is doing excellent work and has the respect of Africans and Europeans'; he 'performs his duties conscientiously.'[8] On another tour in November 1951 Fyfe observed that 'Konkola appears to be extremely popular with all sections of the African community and all welfare activities I attended show a good standard of work.'[9]

In the latter report Fyfe was actually refuting unattributed allegations that Konkola was 'not devoting sufficient attention' to his job.[10] The diversion creating the supposed problem may be readily imagined. For Konkola had already been drawn to the nascent trade union activities at Broken Hill, specifically the African Railway Workers Trade Union (ARWTU), founded in 1950. Years later Konkola stated that he had attempted to follow Nkomo's injunction to be apolitical (though Nkomo had by this time utterly abandoned it himself, becoming head of the Southern Rhodesian railway union): 'I tried to resist. They recruited me.'[11] Perhaps so, though he was likely an easy target: a man of Konkola's evident ambitions probably realized how very limited the opportunities to rise would be in the bureaucracy of a settler colonial railway system. In any case, the recollection fits with a persistent pattern of Konkola's personality: wanting to be wanted, to be appreciated, to be recognized.

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6 Author interview with Konkola, 8/3/1989.
7 Konkola notes prepared for author, 7/3/1989.
8 'Trip Report: Broken Hill and Ndola: Welfare Officer, 21-28 February 1951', 1/3/1951, NAZ, HM 56/5.
9 'Tour of Northern Rhodesia: 31/10-10/11/51 Welfare Officer', NAZ, HM 56/5.
10 Ibid.
11 Author interview with Konkola, 8/3/1989.

In fact Konkola quickly assumed the presidency of the ARWTU. Fyfe's next report – only five months later, in April 1952 – is completely different in its tone and conclusions. His whole object was apparently to get the goods on Konkola without him knowing it: 'I realized that my visit would serve no purpose if I gave Konkola any indication that I was checking up on him as he would then most likely stage a programme for my benefit.'[12] Going to the welfare office the first morning, Fyfe found Konkola absent. The assistant officer, Jonathan Chibambo, 'appeared anxious to get something off his chest, and it did not take long before he launched into a tirade against KONKOLA. He claims that he cannot carry out his duties properly because KONKOLA, regards himself the senior of the two and has been interfering with various activities he has been trying to carry out.'[13] Fyfe observed that the papers, letters, etc. on Konkola's desk were 'pure union matter.'[14] Konkola arrived in due course and over the next three hours the meeting was interrupted several times by Africans quite clearly on union business. One was John Sichalwe, the union's real founder and its general secretary, who complained to Fyfe that the Railways Administration favored a pliant Nkomo over more assertive Northerners like himself and Konkola; Fyfe found his remarks 'impertinent.'[15]

Fyfe reported that over the next two days he found welfare work at a virtual standstill. The last straw was Konkola's absence on the final day of Fyfe's visit, because he was attending an ARTWU meeting with the NR government's labor commissioner – his seventeenth unpaid day off for union business in the past eight months, according to Fyfe. At the end of the day he read Konkola and Chibamba the riot act, and said 'both appeared very shame-faced but when asked … whether they had anything to say for themselves, KONKOLA's reply was "not now"'[16] But Fyfe had little doubt that Konkola would later 'present a formidable case for himself with the theme being victimization.'[17]

> I am satisfied that for the past few months he has been doing practically no welfare work at all. It is the general consensus of European opinion that SICHALWE by himself is actually quite an amenable African whereas DIXON KONKOLA is dangerous at all times. I agree with this, although I think it is because KONKOLA is more unspoken.
>
> He started off as one of our best welfare assistants but is so politically biased today that he can be of little use to the Department any longer. The Presidency of the ARWTU is also incidental or rather a means to an end, that end being an all-African

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12 'Trip Report: W.O.: 23-25 April 1952: Broken Hill', NAZ, HM 56/5.
13 Ibid. Upper case original.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid.

> Government for Northern Rhodesia with himself as a Cabinet Minister at least. With such a viewpoint one can perhaps appreciate the relative unimportance with which he views his railway work.[18]

The writing was on the wall for Konkola, and the year 1952 would mark a turning point for him. When Northern railwaymen conducted a largely unsuccessful strike in the following month of May 1952, Konkola was sacked from his welfare position. He was now financially dependent on his wife and on the constantly precarious and inadequate union resources; at one point he considered doing some petty trading locally. He lost his railway house, and moved into the kitchen of a friend (Ben Kapufi); both wives cooked outside, but he understandably dreaded the onset of the rains.[19] Whatever else may be said of Konkola, there is no doubt that he paid his dues in terms of material deprivation. Nonetheless, at this point he was full of resolve: 'I have no fear to face my future boldly … people [in the union in Broken Hill] do not want to loose [sic] me.' In one of a series of remarkable letters to the legendary Lithuanian-born white 'agitator' Simon Zukas – then in a Northern Rhodesian jail, and about to be deported – Konkola praised Zukas' martyrdom, and by implication his own: 'It gives [more] joy to suffer for humanity than it is to enjoy the wealth and pleasures of the world as an oppressor.'[20]

Soon to be re-elected ARTWU president 'in spite of all sorts of propaganda to make me suffer',[21] Konkola – and Sichalwe – planned a trip to Southern Rhodesia, where they hoped to pry railwaymen away from Nkomo's more conservative Rhodesia Railways African Employees Association. Their reputation preceded them. They were detained at Victoria Falls for four days and then deported. Konkola was declared a prohibited immigrant by Southern Rhodesia, and would remain one for several years. His status as such became a contentious issue, especially after he was elected president of the merged Northern and Southern railway unions in 1955; it meant the union head could not travel to the Railways headquarters in Bulawayo. Ironically, perhaps, his banning order was signed by Southern Rhodesian Minister of Justice Robert Tredgold, author of the commission reports after the 1945 African railway strike – reports which first called for direct representation for African railwaymen, and which were often cited by union officials as liberal benchmarks. The banning prompted Nephas Tembo, among the most radical of Northern Rhodesia's rising nationalists, to label Tredgold 'another aspirant fascist': 'he likes unorganized labor which is easy to exploit.'[22]

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18 Ibid.
19 Konkola to Zukas, 26/7/1952, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1.
20 Konkola to Zukas, 29/5/1952, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1.
21 Konkola to Zukas, 26/7/1952.
22 Tembo to Zukas, 17/7/1952, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1.

Increasingly political, Konkola confided in Zukas that 'we are aiming at big things. We may not live to find that they are done but our children must find the laid foundation. We will never remain (…) beggars, slaves of the ruling class (…) our AIM is SELF Government within the Commonwealth.'[23] That was Welensky's aim as well, of course; the question was who made up the 'self' in self-government. Welensky's project of creating a Central African Federation as a step in the direction of settler self-government had by this time become *the* issue for Africans with any political consciousness at all, and Konkola had thrown himself into the thick of it. He became active in the Northern Rhodesian African National Congress, the premier nationalist organization, and a bit later (August 1953), would be elected Deputy Secretary (arguably the third-ranking position). He looked forward to the day when Congress leader Harry Nkumbula would be prime minister. By April 1953 he wrote to Zukas (now in exile in London) that 'we are now entering an era of action, self sacrifice and lasting endurance.' He felt Congress' 'Days of Prayer' work boycott that month had gone rather well (Zukas disagreed); it seemed to whet his appetite.[24]

And indeed, with Federation imminent, Konkola took his activism to another level, embracing action on a wider variety of popular grievances. In June 1953 he organized a boycott of Broken Hill's only butchery, where Africans were prohibited from entering the front door and often waited for hours at the back. At a certain point Konkola led a procession to government offices where he and five others were arrested for 'unlawful procession and failure to disperse.' In the view of nationalist chronicler and future UNIP stalwart W.K. Sikalumbi, this was 'the first real political procession held in Northern Rhodesia.'[25] Konkola was sentenced to six months in prison (some sources say nine). Seen as something of a hero in Broken Hill, he and others prompted Edward Mungoni Liso, a major Congress stalwart, to proclaim that 'the people now say that the prison is a recreation hall.'[26]

Maybe; but maybe not for Dixon Konkola. In 1954, after his release in late 1953, Konkola realized a long-cherished dream and traveled to Britain for study

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[23] Konkola to Zukas, 9/11/1952, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1.

[24] Konkola to Zukas, 10/4/1953, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1; S. Zukas, *Into exile and back* (Lusaka, 2002), pp. 66, 78, 96.

[25] W.K. Sikalumbi (ed. H.W. Langworthy), *Before UNIP* (Lusaka, 1977), p. 30. And indeed Sikalumbi (p, 26) gives the Broken Hill Congress branch – led by Konkola – credit for leading the way in 'end[ing] the talking stage' in the anti-colour bar campaign. Kapasa Makasa, another UNIP leading light, would later refer to Broken Hill as 'the hot bed of national politics (…) the centre of political activity against the colonial oppressors.' Makasa, *Zambia's march to political freedom* (Nairobi, 1981), p. 99. Welensky was sometimes dubbed 'the uncrowned king of Broken Hill', but for a time Konkola could make a fair claim to the title as well.

[26] Mungoni (Liso) to Zukas, 10/7/1953, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1.

with trade union institutes there. He stayed with Zukas, who thought that Konkola 'was in bad shape mentally and took his short imprisonment as a stigma. From his letters I could sense a growing defeatism in him.'[27] Zukas, in this passage from his autobiography, seems to be telescoping the chronology: the defeatism comes, but only after a two-three year period when it could be said that Konkola reaches his career peak. Still, Zukas may well be right that the prison experience had left some lingering effects.[28] In the shorter run, though, Konkola's experience in Britain seems to have invigorated him. He told N.H.B. Longhurst, the African Affairs Department's 'Controller of Africans' (a revealing title) in the North that he was 'amazed to find how much had been mechanized' on the British railways, and looked forward to such progress in Africa, to ease the physical burden on African railwaymen.[29] He got his first direct exposure to the international left, the vocabulary of which would increasingly turn up in his speeches and statements. While Konkola was overseas, Northern Rhodesia outlawed communist literature; at the time Longhurst had noted 'a general air of expectancy as to what will be found in Konkola's luggage when he returns (…)'[30] And indeed Konkola's bags suspiciously went missing on his return journey, though he reported nothing removed when they were recovered. Longhurst was unsure 'whether or not he had a communistic brainwash.'[31] In any case, Konkola constantly beseeched Zukas and others to send him information, publications, etc. And he was stimulated to pursue further, more purely academic study, which he eventually attempted.

Konkola was determined to reassert himself in the leadership ranks of both trade union and nationalist movements. He had considerable success, though increasingly embroiled in somewhat Byzantine rivalries with major figures like Nkomo, Nkumbula, and Lawrence Katilungu, head of the African Mine Workers' Union and of the African trade union consortium. When, shortly after his return from abroad, Konkola traveled to Lusaka to meet with Northern Rhodesia Congress officials, he emerged somewhat puzzled: 'the welcome (…) was not what I expected, somewhat cold.'[32] It is not clear whether Nkumbula was present and part of that chill, but soon enough the two would be at loggerheads.[33] By the turn of 1955-1956 Konkola was defending himself against

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27 Zukas, *Into exile*, p. 97.

28 Zukas repeated this point in a conversation with the author, Lusaka, May 2008.

29 Longhurst to Chief Officer, African Affairs Dept., 18/10/1954, NAZ, HM 56/3.

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

32 Konkola to 'Miss Marjorie Hill' (but Zukas; Hill a conduit), 20/10/1954, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1.

33 Macola (this volume) notes that Konkola was 'one of Nkumbula's earliest critics.'

a whole range of what he considered Nkumbula's calumnies. Even before his imprisonment back in 1953, he claimed, Nkumbula had charged that Konkola, along with luminaries like Justin Chimba, Edward Mungoni Liso, and Robinson Puta 'could not lead Congress because they were in contact with Communists.'[34] Later, Konkola said, he was labeled in straightforward fashion 'an informant and a Communist.'[35] Accused of misusing Congress funds, Konkola argued that 'we collect the money' but turn it in and get nothing, while Nkumbula 'has used more money for himself than anyone else (…)' (not the first nor last such allegation against Nkumbula, whatever the validity). Konkola denied he 'had ever used Congress Branch to fight my enemies.' (As we shall see, concern with his 'enemies' becomes increasingly central to Konkola.) 'As for personal ambition I do not understand what it means because I have never undermined him except he started undermining me first and spread allegations that I was in touch with outspoken people (…)'[36] Obviously, Konkola's position in the African National Congress was precarious – he felt Nkumbula's whole plan was 'to get rid of me'[37] – but he was still a figure to be reckoned with in the movement.

Within his own union, the intrigue also began shortly after his return, when he was reelected railway union president in a split vote by its council; however 'the moment his back was turned', the vote was rescinded. In Longhurst's perhaps questionable analysis, Konkola blamed the 'intellectual group' – messengers, interpreters, welfare assistants etc. – and 'stoutly maintains that the rank and file insist that Konkola be the "baas" of the Union and no one else.'[38] There was also a faint overtone of regional/ethnic competition – a 'southerner' (meaning in this case someone from Livingstone) – briefly replaced him. Konkola skillfully rallied his base and prevailed, returning to the presidency; Longhurst called him 'cunning and astute.'[39] The long shadow of Nkomo was also a factor. The possibility of combining the Northern and Southern railway unions had been on the table at least since 1952, and there is no doubt Konkola feared an Nkomo putsch resulting in his own demotion. He confided to Zukas his resentment of Nkomo, saying that union staff had told him of 'Nkhomo's (sic) boast that he has conquered and that people have more confidence in him than in any other.' [40]

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[34] Konkola to Simon and Cynthia Zukas, 16/12/1955, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1.
[35] Konkola to Simon and Cynthia Zukas, 24/1/1956, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1.
[36] Konkola to Simon and Cynthia Zukas, 16/12/1955.
[37] Konkola to Simon and Cynthia Zukas, 24/1/1956.
[38] Longhurst to Chief Officer, African Affairs Dept., 18/10/1954.
[39] Longhurst to Chief Officer, African Affairs Dept., 11/12/1954, NAZ, HM 56/3.
[40] Konkola to Zukas, 12/10/1954, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1.

There was no easy sailing – the union's finances, for one thing, were chaotic and paltry, and on more than one occasion Konkola pronounced the organization nearly bankrupt. Yet with an impressive perseverance he kept it alive, telling Zukas 'I feel a little confident that I shall be able to rebuild the Union. [Even though] I have many enemies even among my own people.'[41] And enemies he did have, though perhaps not so many, or so great, as he imagined; he tended to be obsessive concerning them. But there were real divisions. For instance, an arbitration verdict (the Hoffman Award) in late 1954, in which he was not involved since he had been overseas, gave longer-term workers a considerable raise, but gave the newer ones – a majority – nothing. This represented a perhaps genuine effort to promote 'stabilization' of the work force, but presented obvious problems for a union leader – especially if it was true that Konkola's support base was greater amongst the rank and file.

With such obstacles, then, the more remarkable that Konkola was able, in the year 1955, to take some major steps which elevated his own status and power. In January he noted the 'likelihood' of Katilungu losing the presidency of the NR Trade Union Congress, which brought together all the major unions. In March he criticized Katilungu as 'rightwing' and called the TUC under his leadership 'fantastically weak.' In April he said the following month's TUC elections 'may be very interesting', and in the election aftermath described them as 'very successful indeed.'[42] As well he might: Konkola had been elected the umbrella body's new general president. Kaunda chided him for not informing the Congress executive of his move in the TUC[43]; Konkola, however, may well have been intentionally carving out his own political space. And he immediately began steering the TUC in a more overtly political direction.

Things were moving fast. In July 1955 delegates from both the Northern and Southern Rhodesian railway unions met in Broken Hill and approved an historic merger: the single Railway African Workers Union was formed, finally paralleling the unified, pan-territorial management of Rhodesia Railways. Konkola was elected RAWU's first president. One is tempted to say that he triumphed only because Joshua Nkomo had recently left the Southern union, henceforth to devote his energies exclusively to nationalist movements *per se.* Perhaps so, but it remains noteworthy that a representative of Northern railwaymen – outnumbered three to one by their Southern brethren – should prevail. Finally, Konkola shared none of Nkomo's compunctions about wearing

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41 Konkola to Zukas, 22/2/1955, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1.

42 Konkola to Simon and Cynthia Zukas, 17/1/1955, 24/3/1955, 17/4/1955, 10/5/1955, all in NAZ, HM 75/PP/1.

43 H. Meebelo, *African proletarians and colonial capitalism* (Lusaka, 1986), pp. 422-423.

both trade union and political hats; in this period as well he promised in passing to 'also put Congress [meaning the African National Congress] on its feet.'[44]

At this point, then, Konkola, having replaced Katilungu as the only man heading both a major union *and* a union federation, and still active in the African National Congress, was arguably as prominent as any African in Northern Rhodesia – only Nkumbula and Kaunda could be considered in the same breath. And unlike them, only Konkola had an organizational structure, the new railway union, which spanned the Rhodesias. The parallel with Welensky is striking: both Broken Hill residents growing up in railway unions, both with a Northern base but heading organizations centered in the South (the Central African Federation and United Federal Party in Welensky's case). Among the many obvious differences, of course, was that Welensky could come and go and in fact now resided in Southern Rhodesia; Konkola was still a prohibited immigrant there. His union's efforts to get him in led to a meeting of Bulawayo-based staff with none less than Garfield Todd, the Southern Rhodesian Prime Minister, in March 1956. Todd held firm at this point, claiming the ban was not directed against the union nor a matter of race; many more whites than blacks had been "'PI'd', mainly for communist associations (like the immigrant British communist locomotive driver Taylor).[45] All this despite the fact that Todd's own private secretary had concluded a few months earlier that 'Konkola has the reputation of being an agitator but during the last year or so, and possibly as a result of a term of imprisonment, has become more reasonable.'[46]

Terms like 'agitator' and 'reasonable' betray a certain perspective, of course. What *were* Konkola's ideology and objectives in this period? He could certainly wax radical, and in general was to the left of his fellow nationalists. On several occasions he called for the creation of a 'socialist programme' or 'socialist state'.[47] Sikalumbi states that Konkola organized 'a type of socialist party' in Broken Hill, which advocated 'one man, one vote' – a stance going beyond the official Congress position at the time. Sikalumbi at one point puts 'Socialist Party' in upper case[48] – the only reference I have seen to such – but it seems more accurate to consider it a 'caucus' or bloc within Congress. Meebelo calls

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44 Konkola to Simon and Cynthia Zukas, 3/2/1955, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1.

45 Record of a Meeting held at Northward, 7/3/1956, NAZ, HM 56/3.

46 G.B. Clark, Acting secretary to prime minister and cabinet office, SR, to Sec. for Transport and Communication of Federation (Welensky's office) and Sec. to PM and Cabinet Office of Federation (Huggins' office) 26/8/1955, NAZ, HM 56/11.

47 Meebelo, *African proletarians*, p. 430; RAWU, 'Programme and Policy', presented by Konkola, 30-31-7/1955, NAZ, HM 91/2.

48 Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, pp. 109-114.

Konkola a 'radical socialist' when discussing his TUC work.[49] Perhaps we should not read too much into such labels; it was not unusual in these times for even quite conservative African nationalists (like, say, Senghor) to advocate some sort of socialism. The notion that Konkola was a full-fledged 'communist' was surely overblown. For the most part Konkola pressed nuts-and-bolts, kitchen table issues for African workers: wages obviously, but also hours and overtime, housing, and ending the paternalist ration system in favor of cash-in-lieu. He tirelessly pointed out the biased nature of 'disciplinary' procedures against Africans, which he blamed for the appalling turnover rate on the railways (many 'offenders' were simply dismissed). He eloquently critiqued the job color bar and called for unfettered African advancement into jobs reserved for whites. He definitely did *not* call for anything like the removal of the European, however: 'He is but a rich man. We do not want him to earn less we want Africans to earn more.'[50] He stressed solidarity: 'workers have the same problems everywhere in this protectorate, whether they are white or black.'[51] In the end, it seems fair to say Konkola envisaged a sort of workers' democracy, led by a classic labor party; 'socialist' in the sense that the UK's Labour Party was one.[52]

And this in turn reflects his internationalism, which was deepened by a second stint in Britain during the latter part of 1956, marked by more study and exposure to British and international trade union activity. Konkola genuinely wanted to improve himself, get a real education – he took at least one course at London's Queen Elizabeth College – and made tentative plans to pursue a proper university degree, his dream. Even so, he remained engaged from afar with events unfolding at home, writing a number of letters protesting the state of emergency declared over labor disputes on the Copperbelt in September 1956. Konkola impressed people; Commander Thomas Fox-Pitt, who had worked in the Northern Rhodesian colonial service before returning to Britain and emerging as a prominent sympathizer with the African cause (he would return to Zambia after independence) judged Konkola 'to be the only rival to Harry Nkumbula as leader of the Congress.'[53] During this trip abroad Konkola seems to have been particularly inspired by the United Nations Organization;

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49 Meebelo, *African proletarians*, p. 432.

50 State of Emergency in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland', September 1956, NAZ, HM 92/3

51 Meebelo, *African proletarians*, p. 385.

52 Meebelo says that Konkola wanted the TUC's Political Committee, which he headed, to be 'modelled on the British Labour Party and was to become a socialist party which would take over the administration of the country.' Ibid., p. 431.

53 School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Thomas Fox-Pitt Papers. PP MS 6, Box 13, File 6/7/3. I owe this reference to Giacomo Macola.

one letter on the emergency – long, eloquent, and compelling – went to UN Secretary General Dag Hammerskold.[54] He was especially taken with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. After his return he frequently displayed the Declaration during speeches, and claimed to have deposited a copy in the Livingstone Museum.

From late 1954 to early 1957, then, Konkola established – or reestablished – himself as a formidable figure on the Northern Rhodesian scene. The period marks the apogee of his career. Yet not all was well. During his absence in Britain, Nkumbula had booted him from the post of ANC Deputy Secretary; by mid-1957 he was sacked altogether from the Congress Executive. Sikalumbi attributes this to Konkola's 'socialist' organizing.[55] Perhaps so, but in any case, other factors cast a growing pall over his life. Konkola was never able to put himself on a sound, or even adequate, financial footing. On his return from his first trip abroad he told Zukas he was 'completely out of funds' and would have to postpone a visit 'home' to his rural extended family.[56] Shortly later he marked the birth of another child somewhat ruefully: 'We have been blessed with a new baby boy, perhaps the last for poor Dick' – since he could not pay for even the child's essentials.[57] *When* he was paid, which was irregularly, he earned from the union, for example, L18 per month in 1955[58] – more than a journeyman African railway worker, certainly, yet compare it to the L80-plus made by a white engine driver. In August of that year he wrote: 'I am totally broke financially, with a number of debts hanging over my neck. I have known what poverty means and also what debts are.'[59] More significant, perhaps, is that Konkola took these problems personally; they seemed to feed his sense of martyrdom: 'I always say that I am one of the most unfortunate fellows, having gone into [the] Trade Union movement as a sufferer (…).'[60]

We have already encountered Konkola's concern, or obsession, with 'enemies', which could verge on paranoia. Of course, as someone has said, you're not paranoid if they really are out to get you, and 'agitators' like Konkola had every reason to believe the colonial state would like to put them away, as it already had once before in his case. In a bizarre incident, his former union secretary wound up, severely beaten, on Konkola's doorstep at 4 am one morning. Konkola got him to an ambulance but was definitely shaken: he

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54 Konkola to UN Secretary-General, 10/11/1956, NAZ, HM92/1. In same file is letter to the NR Governor, 21/9/1956.
55 Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 114.
56 Konkola to 'Miss Marjorie Hill', 20/10/1954.
57 Konkola to Simon and Cynthia Zukas, 17/1/1955.
58 Longhurst to Chief Officer, African Affairs Dept., 23/11/1955, NAZ, HM 56/3.
59 Konkola to Simon and Cynthia Zukas,12/8/1955, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1.
60 Konkola to Simon and Cynthia Zukas, 7/6/1955, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1.

thought that if the man had died the 'police would have been on me and my whole family. Thank God this is not so.'[61] But the malevolence directed toward him by others in his union and political movements is usually far less clear, and his response more disconcerting. Even with regard to obvious friends and allies, there emerges a personality who felt neglected, unappreciated, unrecognized. The most intimate record we have is the correspondence with Zukas, and certainly these traits turn up there, often directed at Zukas himself. In almost every letter Konkola chides Zukas for not writing to him enough: 'I must write inspite [sic] of your silence' is typical.[62] The complaint is not without some basis; unless letters are missing, Zukas did *not* write nearly so frequently. But again, the emotion seems to become magnified: 'I don't know why Jack [an official with the International Transport Workers Federation] and you could so neglect me, after all the comradeship.'[63] He protested too much. Sometimes, his condemnation of those failing to accord him the deference he felt he deserved could lead to claims which were, frankly, fantastic: 'I made Congress what it is … I am not afraid I have done a lot. I do not claim for anything but to respect my personality and also my leadership. I am no small a man [sic]. I lead more than a million people in Trade Unions (…).'[64]

Sometime in early-to-mid 1957, the bottom fell out. It is not clear what the proximate cause was, or if there was one. But in short order Dixon Konkola experienced something close to a private and public collapse. On the 25 June, he wrote to the Rhodesia Railways General Manager as follows:

> Dear Sir,
>
> I wish to inform you that I have decided to resign from the Railway African Workers Union and have applied for voluntary exile from this country. I would have liked the United Nations to find me a country where there are no Trade Unions and no Trade Union leaders so that we could all go there and live there.
> (I am waiting for the union council meeting in July to discuss it), but I am decided to go away, and I have already written to United Nations by registered mail about this (…) I am informing all my Branches about my exile and the reasons for this.
> I do hope that you will be kind enough to answer my previous 4 letters before I leave this country in my exile.
>
> I am sir
>
> Yours faithfully,
> Dixon Konkola

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61 Konkola to Simon and Cynthia Zukas, 24/1/1956.
62 Konkola to Simon and Cynthia Zukas, 19/9/1955, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1.
63 Konkola to Simon and Cynthia Zukas, 7/6/1955.
64 Konkola to Simon and Cynthia Zukas, 16/12/1955.

General President[65]

Earlier in the week, Konkola had called at the office of the Regional Controller of Africans in Broken Hill. The Railways official sent his own report to headquarters:

> He appears to be completely down in the dumps and informed me that he was is such a state, financially, as to be desperate. He has two prosecutions for debt pending and appears to be resigned to his fate whatever it may be.
> In a very pathetic manner he told me that he has written to the United Nations Organizations applying for sanctuary in any country which will accept him and even mentions his desire to be given a lonely island somewhere in the middle of the sea where he can be alone with his wife and family. He kept on talking about voluntary exile from the land of his birth, etc. etc. Whether or not his creditors and/or the NRG [Northern Rhodesia Government] will accept this is of course an entirely different matter.

Always sympathetic, the Railways' acerbic General Manager, J.W.S. Pegrum, wrote (with his ubiquitous red pencil) in the margins of the letter, next to Konkola's talk of fantasy exile, 'Suggest X-mas island.'[66]

Next up was Nkumbula. Konkola wrote to him on 8 July, marked confidential and private. At the top of the letter, as in a title line, is 'Defamation of DKonkola'. He informed Nkumbula that he had resigned from the railway union and from the Trade Union Congress, and as Nkumbula had probably heard, he rejected Nkumbula's nomination of him to be on the executive council of the African National Congress made in January 1957 (a nomination which seems to contradict his belief that Nkumbula wanted to be rid of him). 'I have also applied to the Secretary General of United Nations Organization for voluntary exile from this country because of political persecution.' He asked, in lawyerly fashion, for a slew of documents relating to 'the following statements which you have been making against me or which your agents have been making against me.' A barrage of questions followed concerning 'campaigns (which) were organized all over the country against me', including: 'what campaigns were organized by members of your staff at Broken Hill this year during the NRTU Congress annual election conference?'; 'What statements did you make regarding me at a meeting in B. Hill during the visit of Mr. J. Johnson Labour MP?'; 'When Ben Kapufi last visited your office what did you mean by "getting rid of me"'?; 'What activities are going on against me in London?' Konkola ends the main text by saying he needs these documents 'before I leave in exile. At any rate I am seeking legal advice on your activities which have now killed my political career completely.' He closed with 'best wishes to

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[65] Konkola to Railways General Manager, 25/6/1957, NAZ, HM 56/11.

[66] Letter from Regional Controller, encl. in Chief Officer, AAD (Cordell) to General Manager, 26/6/1957, NAZ, HM 56/11.

Kennie and to yourself.' [67] 'Kennie' was obviously a reference to Kenneth Kaunda (perhaps spelled in a belittling manner), then still with Nkumbula's Congress but soon to break away and, of course, become Zambia's first president.

Well. What followed for Konkola is very shadowy indeed. But this was the time – probably July or August 1957 – in which he was committed (or committed himself) to the Ingutsheni mental hospital in Southern Rhodesia.[68] He had finally gotten into Southern Rhodesia, though hardly in the way he had envisaged. When I interviewed him three decades after the fact, he was understandably reticent about the experience (and I was naturally not inclined to press him). He said he simply 'wound up' at Ingutsheni, offering no further detail. He did deny emphatically that he had been 'mad' – a reference to those who later called him that.[69]

Konkola's stay at Ingutsheni was not a long one, and he returned to Broken Hill. In late February 1958, Nephas Tembo, hardly a Konkola supporter, wrote to Zukas, personally concerned about Konkola. Tembo was even less a Harry Nkumbula supporter, and that is part of the context here: 'He [Nkumbula] has broken down Dixon's happiness badly. Physically Konkola is very thin and pale. He eats little or nothing. He spends the rest of his days in seclusion, mostly in his house, reading. Nkumbula called him all bad names. "This little five foot communist" are some of his devastating words.' Now, said Tembo, Nkumbula was trying to destroy Muno Sipalo (another nationalist) 'as he has succeeded in ruining Konkola. But Sipalo is made of sterner stuff! Dick is not.'[70]

Konkola, it would seem, was definitely down. But remarkably, not out. And within months he would launch the first of several comebacks. By June 1958 his local branch of the railway union at Broken Hill was calling for his return as president; Ndola branch seconded the idea. And return he did. By August, Konkola, back in the saddle as RAWU president, called on Pegrum, the General Manager, on the latter's Northern tour. He lobbied Pegrum hard to be allowed in to Southern Rhodesia (obviously the Ingutsheni affair had been an exception)

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67 Konkola to Nkumbula, 8/7/1957, NAZ, HM 70/1.

68 The closest to a precise date for Konkola's commitment to Ingutsheni which I have seen comes from testimony of C.E. Cousins, the NR Labour Commissioner, before a SR parliamentary committee on 10 October 1957: 'Dickson (sic) Konkola as a personality is no longer president of the (railway) Union, he is in Ingutsheni, I think. He has been certified (i.e., declared in need of mental health treatment).' This suggests that his commitment had occurred some time in the recent past. Garfield Todd papers, File 71, seen at the home of Judith Todd.

69 Author interview with Konkola, 8/3/1989.

70 Anonymous (but N. Tembo) to Zukas, 27/2/1958, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1.

in light of upcoming Joint Industrial Committee negotiations. Pegrum, according to an office minute, 'said that Konkola was very pleasant, but he sensed a veiled threat that if he were not allowed in the relations between the Administration and R.A.W.U. would become more difficult. Negotiations are likely to be protracted and decisions made by the local officials might possibly be over-ruled by himself as President. Mr. Pegrum felt that it would be in our interest to persuade the Southern Rhodesia Government to allow Konkola in.'[71] And Konkola *was* let in, though on the condition that he not address any public meetings. The negotiations went smoothly, and at the end Pegrum 'congratulated the Union representatives on the manner in which they conducted their negotiations.'[72]

Apparently emboldened, Konkola began to feel his way back into nationalist politics. The time, in a way, was ripe. Kaunda and others had finally split from Nkumbula's ANC and formed the Zambia African National Congress (ZANC), known for short as 'Zambia', which seized the initiative. Konkola was one of those who walked out on Nkumbula – signaling the split – at a meeting of the ANC executive in October 1958. And he was not only present at the meeting which launched ZANC on October 24 (later chosen as the date for Zambian independence in 1964) but was chosen, according to Sikalumbi, to be part of the initial organizing committee, with Kaunda and Kapwepwe. Yet, only three weeks later at the new party's first full conference, after being elected deputy president, Konkola abruptly resigned.[73] Kaunda states that Konkola quit because he was piqued at not being chosen president.[74] Sikalumbi is a bit more charitable, saying Konkola felt he was a 'square peg in a round hole' because he favored full republic status and not just independence within the Commonwealth[75]; nonetheless, Sikalumbi dated his great 'disappointment' with Konkola to that day, 8 November.[76] Probably with hindsight, Sikalumbi in his book says 'it was speculated then whether Konkola would oppose the newly formed ZANC and carry out a propaganda campaign against its members.'[77] Only wait, one might say.

Is it conceivable that Konkola's hesitation stemmed from a fear of more prison time, which might have been predicted for the avowedly more militant ZANC leadership? For such imprisonment duly ensued, and in short order: in March 1959 ZANC was banned, and most of the senior leadership wound up in

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71 Note by Deputy GM, Strictly Confidential, 12/8/1958, NAZ, HM 56/18.
72 Minutes of JIC, 20-21 Aug 1958, NAZ, HM 56/18.
73 Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, pp. 122-125.
74 Kaunda, *Zambia*, pp. 98-99.
75 Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 125.
76 Sikalumbi to Sikota Wina, 4/9/1959, NAZ, HM 76/PP/1.
77 Sikalumbi, *Before UNIP*, p. 125.

detention, scattered to remote posts about the country. In July, according to Sikalumbi, Konkola wrote him a long letter 'suggesting that I should ask government to consider my detention erroneous. In other words, I should impress upon them that I was not a leader so that they let me free. I have even failed to see how I could reply (to) him.'[78] Sikalumbi was insulted; he felt he was being told to take a cowardly way out.

In the relative vacuum after ZANC's banning there emerged a virtual political-party-go-round. Not surprisingly Konkola was a part of it. Even before the ZANC ban he enjoyed the briefest of reunions with the ANC; upon its predictable collapse Nkumbula commented privately that 'Konkola left the lunatic asylum too early', while conceding that 'were it not for his health he would make a very useful ally.'[79] About May of 1959 Konkola founded his own party; Rotberg calls it the United African Congress, but other sources name it as the United National Congress Party. He invited Zukas, still in exile, to take an executive post in absentia, but the latter demurred: 'I declined this offer because I had by then lost confidence in Konkola as a leader.'[80] Meanwhile, others, including Dauti Yamba and Pascal Sikota, started the African National Freedom Movement, and this party merged with Konkola's to form the United National Freedom Party. Soon enough Paul Kalichini, also with a base in trade unionism, began the African National Independence Party, and *these* two merged to form, yes, the United National Independence Pary – the UNIP of lore. In perhaps the last gasp of lingering respect for his nationalist credentials, Konkola was made the first president; Kalichini became vice president. In Rotberg's view, the 'leaders consciously played a caretaker's role; they wanted to keep the embers of nationalism warm until the time when Kaunda could walk from prison into the presidency of their party.'[81]

Not so fast, please. There is plenty to suggest that that was not Konkola's agenda at all. Sikalumbi had confidence in Kalichini, who had 'visualized the situation by calling himself and all his officers interim.' Konkola was another matter: 'If things come to the T (note a big but; Sikalumbest we shall I hope, all accept what offices these new men will assign to us – BUbi's words in original) will comrade Konkola now reconcile with our Ken, Munukayumbwa and

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78 Sikalumbi to Kombe, 17/7/1959, NAZ, HM 76/PP/1.

79 Nkumbula, 'Kalulu-Konkola Criticism Replied', n.d. (but late May 1959), United National Independence Party's Archives, Lusaka, ANC 9/42. I am grateful to Giacomo Macola for this reference.

80 Zukas, *Into exile*, p. 113.

81 R.I. Rotberg, The rise of nationalism in Central Africa: The making of Malawi and Zambia, 1873-1964 (Cambridge, MA, 1965), p. 308.

Simon?' – i.e. Kaunda, Sipalo and Simon Kapwepwe, ZANC's top leaders.[82] That was not at all clear.

One by one, ZANC luminaries in detention weighed in on Konkola in letters to Sikalumbi. They did not mince words, and like Nkumbula did not hesitate to refer to his personal troubles culminating in Ingutsheni. C. Mwananshiku: 'The only motive behind this unity is that brother Konkola is trying to get rid of brother Ken (Kaunda) who is at moment closed in PRISON bars (…) really, I will fail myself to go with anyone in political life whose mentality has remained unaltered since the stone age like brother Konkola. It is not too long that you will forget how this ex-Ingusheni (sic) with his unsensibility (sic) disappointed us at our first conference at Broken Hill.'[83] Several denounced Konkola as a 'shiftist' (an interesting coinage) or 'waverer', out only for himself. Kapwepwe wrote: 'You know this that Dick is firstly sick and secondly without any disfavor our brother is a shiftist (sic) who can change from any organization to another organization as long as all those organizations can receive him as a president (…) I don't think Ken (Kaunda) and (Munu) Sipalo would agree to work under Dixon Konkola (…)' As for himself, 'I am openly opposed to Dick being my president!'[84] Nephas Tembo, characteristically, was the most acerbic of all. In a letter to Kalichini on behalf the ZANC 'Guiding Committee' in detention in Mongu, and copied to Sikalumbi, he blasted Konkola:

> A leader must have qualities of sound moral principles and tenacity. Konkola is a shiftist that you know. He deserted you on the birth of Zambia (that is, ZANC). He has resigned from four organizations within a short space of two years. He is a gentleman who passes from a state of incompetence to one of positive imbecility. He is inconclusive, idiotic, imbecile and frankly suicidal! Any human being with five senses knows that Dick is a mental case.
>
> We here in detention and thousands of our supporters at home will never be under Dick's leadership. He is a wavering (sic).
>
> You have let us down, Paul. You have insulted Ken, Munu and all detainees by accepting Dick's leadership (…) do you think Ken, Sipalo and Simon, on their release from detention will be under Dick's leadership? Never! That would be the day![85]

Sikalumbi chided Tembo for his intemperate language, but agreed that 'each and every one of us would not wish Mr. Kalichini to accept shiftists (sic) leadership.'[86] Raph Kombe was more sympathetic, even affectionate in a

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[82] Sikalumbi to Secretary of Guiding Committee (of ZANC), 12/8/1959, NAZ, HM 76/PP/1.

[83] Mwananshiku to Sikalumbi, 17/8/1959, NAZ, HM 76/PP/1.

[84] Kapwepwe to Sikalumbi, 20/8/1959, NAZ, HM 76/PP/1.

[85] Tembo on behalf of 'Guiding Committee' of ZANC in detention in Mongu to Kalichini, 20/8/1959, NAZ, HM 76/PP/1.

[86] Sikalumbi to Tembo, 10/9/1959, NAZ, HM 76/PP/1.

pitying way: 'Gosh! What dealings should you have with Dick on political grounds (…) Pity, our brother is crazy indeed, wants to use you for his political ends, this what I call political maniac and you can call it what you want. I like that man and I am grieved that he is like that and there is nothing we can do about it.'[87]

In August 1959, only weeks after UNIP's founding, Konkola was sacked by the 'interim' UNIP executive. Charge and countercharge appeared in the press. Konkola claimed he had not been invited to the meeting which ousted him, while the party's secretary general retorted that Konkola had in fact 'monopolized one-third of the time' before simply being asked to step outside while the executive voted, 8 to 3, to replace him with Kalichini. 'My advice to Konkola is: honesty is the best policy', he told the press.[88] In a party circular Sikalumbi said Konkola had been removed 'because he did not comply with policy of the Party'; Kapasa Makasa, another UNIP loyalist, later wrote that it was due to 'political wavering.'[89] It is likely that the policy Konkola 'wavered' over was the call for him to act the part of stand-in for the 'real' leadership.

Konkola's return to the presidency of the railway union in 1958 had been a personal triumph, an impressive righting of his ship after Ingutsheni. 1959 was another matter. During the same months as his ultimately unsuccessful participation in the maneuvers of nationalist party politics, his fortunes with his mother union again entered a downward spiral. To be sure, he had his hands full: large numbers of the biggest branch at Bulawayo had declared open rebellion against RAWU (though their main target was Maripe, the general secretary, rather than Konkola himself). Perhaps Konkola made efforts to address the breach personally, but there is no evidence suggesting this (whether he would have been admitted into Southern Rhodesia to do so was of course also problematic). As early as March, according to a European railway administrator, Konkola raised the eyebrows of two senior union officials by insisting, in a meeting, on referring to a committee he was informed did not exist; the two 'said they had never heard of it and looked skeptical and disapproving as Konkola repeated his assertion.'[90] Closer to home in Broken Hill, things came to a head in July. The possible distraction represented by his political ambitions showed itself in his plan to make the RAWU offices also the headquarters of his short-lived United National Freedom Party; the railways

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87 Kombe to Sikalumbi, 17/8/1959, NAZ, HM 76/PP/1.

88 Central African Post, 7/9/1959.

89 Circular by Sikalumbi to all ex-Zambia detainees, 28/9/1959, NAZ, HM 76/PP/1; Makasa, *Zambia's march*, p. 115.

90 Demands of African railway workers trade unions. Formation of Joint Industrial Committee. Extract from AAD CO's line tour notes: Northern Rhodesia: 17-26/3/1959, NAZ, HM 56/18.

promptly promised to arrest for trespass any non-railway personnel.[91] When Konkola called a meeting of the Broken Hill branch to seek a vote of confidence (and showed up with Barry Banda of the UNFP), it was boycotted. There ensued an embarrassing, and physical, tug-of-war over union equipment. Konkola was evidently charged at one point with possession of a union typewriter and bicycle; this coincided with an unrelated case concerning a personal debt.[92]

A bit later Konkola was voted out as president of the railway union by its council, by one vote according to his own account.[93] Booted in short succession from the leadership of both UNIP and RAWU, Konkola seemed again to have hit rock bottom. One might assume that, as Sikalumbi put it in a letter where the words are bold, as if gone over with extra ink: 'Dick is finished.'[94] Not quite. It is not clear how Konkola spent the years 1959 to 1962; in the latter year he reappeared on the political scene, with a certain kind of vengeance – but also with a fraction of his previous clout, and a radically different ideology. In a hollow replay of the party formation frenzy of 1958-59, Konkola founded two would-be parties, the United National Republican Party and the Central African People's Union. Mulford and others call both of them 'fronts' of the United Federal Party, Welensky's party.[95] The *Central African Mail* reported that Konkola also claimed financial support from Moise Tshombe,[96] head of the Congo's secessionist Katanga province, obtained during a lengthy stay there.

Under the "banner" of the UNRP he ran – unopposed – and was elected to the last parliament of the Central African Federation which was dissolved in 1963. Konkola became a member of the Federal Assembly on the basis of 22 votes, to go along with 25 for another candidate; this represented 1.37% of the eligible electorate, which must be some sort of record; Mulford writes that most of the votes 'had reportedly been extracted from members of the candidates' extended families.' The whole idea of Konkola in the Federal parliament seems, on its face, rather incredible, but probably should not be: one-time nationalist icons like Katilungu, Yamba and Godwin Mbikusita Lewanika also served in

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91 Amalagamation of RRAWU and the ARWTU. Strictly Confidential Note, 1/7/1959, NAZ, HM 56/12.

92 Confidential Notes, Railways African Controller, Broken Hill, 7/7 and 9/7/1959, NAZ, HM 56/12.

93 D. Konkola, 'Railways African workers trade union Northern and Southern Rhodesia and Bechuanaland protectorate. History 1939-1963', lecture given at University of Zambia, 30/7/1992, NAZ, HM 91/3.

94 Sikalumbi to Kombe, 22/8/1959, NAZ, HM 76/PP/1.

95 D.C. Mulford, Zambia: The politics of independence 1957-1964 (Oxford, 1967), p. 243.

96 *Central African Mail,* 9/1/1962. I am indebted to Giacomo Macola for references from the *Mail.*

the Federal Assembly. Konkola had joined the lamest of lame-duck parliaments: the Federation was clearly collapsing (it was dissolved in 1963); all the African nationalist parties boycotted the federal election, as did the right-wing white parties, which judged Welensky & Co. far too liberal (the Rhodesian Front was coming to power at this point in Southern Rhodesia).

In any case, by this time Konkola had certainly turned rightward by a large number of degrees. He was now openly *anti*-communist, and also anti-United Nations; he stated in parliament that during his time in Katanga and had observed the UN crush 'democracy' there.[97] A politician who, like so many others, had cut his teeth opposing the Federation, he now rued its approaching demise (and praised Welensky by name). A large problem, he felt, was that the Federation had done too little to explain or demonstrate its advantages to Africans; partly due to nationalist propaganda, the people 'are not convinced that the Federal Government [still] exists.'[98] For instance, when the 'Cha Cha Cha' protests disrupted local fish supplies in the Northern and Luapula provinces, people did not realize that the fish which filled the vacuum came from Kariba – a Federal project.[99] In general, Konkola advocated working from within, taking advantage of openings – and parliamentary seats – as they appeared: 'Half a loaf is better than nothing at all.'[100] To his credit, he pressed for more African seats and called for Africans to hold some Federal ministries, even if such a proposal meant that 'I may be regarded as an extreme sort of person'[101] (not very likely by this point). And, for virtually the only time in his career, he advocated on behalf of rural interests, calling for infrastructure development in his Northern/Luapula constituency.

Konkola saved his strongest venom for UNIP. In his maiden speech in parliament he referred to UNIP 'intimidation' no less than five times.[102] In a form letter to old-timers of the halcyon African National Congress days, he invoked a generational appeal (although he was only four years older than Kaunda): 'I know you have been let down by youngsters, who have labeled you with many names but I am sure you will not allow boys to run the affairs of the country (…) consider the future of those who have made homes in the country particularly those minority races who shall be victims of communism preched

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97 Federation of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland. Debates of the Federal Assembly. Third Parliament, First Session. Columns 74-75, 27/6/1962.
98 Ibid., Column 1320, 1/8/1962.
99 Ibid., Column 1319, 1/8/1962.
100 Ibid., Column 1323, 1/8/1962.
101 Ibid., Column 320, 3/7/1962.
102 Ibid., Columns 73-77, 3/7/1962.

[sic] by UNIP thugs (…) We do not want another Ghana or Egypt here.'[103] By far the most inflammatory action vis-à-vis UNIP came during the Northern Rhodesian territorial elections in 1962. A pamphlet entitled 'You Have Been Warned' was widely distributed to white voters. Konkola's name was on the cover, though it was printed in Salisbury and, in Mulford's assessment, 'was obviously the product of the U.F.P.'s professional publicity organization.'[104] According to the *Central African Mail* Konkola acknowledged that it was sponsored by the United Anti-UNIP organization,[105] which briefly brought together members of the UFP, the ANC and lesser lights (by this time) like Konkola. The brochure played on Europeans' worst fears, detailing real, alleged, and imagined instances of UNIP's treachery: 'UNIP stands condemned by its record of violence and double talk.'[106] The *Mail* reported that Konkola had briefly gone into hiding after the pamphlet's appearance, and that UNIP was considering legal action against him.[107] The election and its aftermath, of course, marked a turning point in Northern Rhodesian/Zambian history: after its flirtation with the UFP, Nkumbula and the ANC cast its lot with UNIP to form the territory's first African government, and two years later at independence UNIP assumed outright power. In the last days of the fading Central African Federation Parliament, Konkola warned that in his country (and in Nyasaland) 'there will be a one-party system of government'[108] – a prediction which eventually proved accurate.

With the end of Federation Konkola's prominence finally does come to end. And again the evidence gets very patchy. To my knowledge the last archival reference, aside from his own memoirs, is from 1966. Commander TSL Fox-Pitt, a prominent European sympathizer during nationalist days, had returned from Britain and gotten a letter from Konkola. Fox-Pitt wrote Zukas saying 'I don't like or trust him very much and shall avoid getting involved with him until I can sound a U.N.I.P. official about his loyalty to the regime. He has just been in Rhodesia.'[109] An intriguing reference, given that this was now the Rhodesia of Ian Smith and UDI.

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[103] Konkola to Nabulyato (but a form letter), n.d., but received 6/10/1962, NAZ, HM 79/PP/1.
[104] D.C. Mulford, *The Northern Rhodesia general election, 1962* (Nairobi and Oxford, 1964), p. 116.
[105] Central African Mail, 23/10/1962.
[106] Mulford, Northern Rhodesia general election, p. 116.
[107] Central African Mail, 16/10/1962.
[108] Federation of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland. Debates of the Federal Assembly. Third Parliament, Second Session. Column 279, 16/4/1963.
[109] Fox-Pitt to Zukas 6/6/1966, NAZ, HM 75/PP/1.

Dixon Konkola was still a relatively young man in 1966, forty-six years old. In his middle age he reinvented himself as a professional, learning the trade of optician. Still, he could not quite shake the political bug, and ran for parliament yet again in 1973, this time in the new one-party system's primary election.[110] He received just 18 votes, which needless to say left him out of the running. In his autobiographical statements from the 1990s he said he was active in Zambia's latter-day (1980s forward) human rights movement, a claim I have not investigated. He died in Lusaka on 20 December 1997.

Macola (this volume) has suggested that Northern Rhodesia/Zambia has seen an enduring axis of political competition between an urbanist bloc (with a Copperbelt base and a Northern Province hinterland) and ruralist one centered in Southern Province. Konkola would seem to qualify as a sort of outlier of the first of these. I say 'outlier' because he was based in Broken Hill, rather than the Copperbelt proper, because he articulated a vision somewhat to the left, and because he often wanted to put some distance between himself and the other main players, in hopes of assuming the lead.

Rotberg and Macola may agree on little else, but they both term Konkola a 'maverick.'[111] True: he marched to a different drum. To put it differently, he wished others to march to *his* drum. His evinced little patience with playing second fiddle; his overweening ambition may qualify as his fatal flaw. Rotberg's further characterization of Konkola as a maverick 'who frequently expressed eccentric views'[112] cannot really be sustained, at least not until his period as Federal Assembly member. Earlier, in his prime, his views were quite consistent, within the mainstream (though on its left side) of aggressive trade union and nationalist movements, and were often eloquently expressed. Erratic behavior, rather than eccentric views, is closer to the mark. There is truth to the accusation of "shiftest." His personal instability once led to his institutionalization. Nonetheless, Dixon Konkola was a man of considerable ability and charisma. He was a significant contributor to Northern Rhodesia/Zambia's political evolution in the 1950s. No history of that period is complete without him.

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[110] Information provided by Giacomo Macola.
[111] Rotberg, *Rise of nationalism*, p. 305; Macola, this volume.
[112] Rotberg, *Rise of nationalism*, p. 305.

PART III

THE UNSETTLED WORLD OF SETTLERS

7

Proletarians in paradise: The historiography and historical sociology of white miners on the Copperbelt

Ian Phimister

> 'This bush-encircled Shangri-la, this heaven for the proletariat'
> (Cyril Dunn**,** Central African Witness**)**

Drawing on J.F. Holleman and S. Biesheuvel's extensive survey of 'The Attitudes of White Mining Employees towards Life and Work on the Copperbelt'[1] (1), this paper outlines the historiography and historical sociology

[1] J. F. Holleman & S. Biesheuvel, 'The attitudes of white mining employees towards life and work on the Copperbelt', Part I A Social Psychological Study, Part II An Interview Study, Part III Summary, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research Contract Report 10/60 (Johannesburg, 1960). See also the abridged published version, *White mine workers in Northern Rhodesia 1959-60* (Leiden, 1973). This latter study includes extracts from 'The attitudes of white mining employees towards life and work at Broken Hill, Northern Rhodesia', National Institute for Personnel Research NIPR 18/61 (Johannesburg, 1961). For a critical review of *White mine*

of a racially-bounded aristocracy of labour. Described as a paradise for the proletariat, the Copperbelt provided employment for over 7,000 white miners during a crucial period of its history. Yet with the exception of the survey noted above, the experiences and struggles of these miners have often been ignored where they have not been misrepresented.

I

Between 1954 and 1958, *The Observer*'s foreign correspondent in South Central Africa was Cyril Dunn. A particularly acute witness of the foibles of the sub-continent's inhabitants, Dunn's sardonic despatches were required reading for anyone in Britain wishing to understand the region. In 1959 his impressions of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland were published as *Central African Witness*.[2] Amongst many memorable vignettes – whether of Salisbury [now Harare]'s 'young English housewives, hatless and pleasantly dowdy in woollen cardigans, with none of the skin-tight metallic smartness of white womanhood in Johannesburg', or of Sir Roy Welensky's baffled regret that he had not been able to convince Africans of 'the tremendous advantages there are in the modern industrial system, once you've accepted its basic slogan – "Work or Starve"'[3] – Dunn's take on the Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt stands out. It bears recounting because of the compelling images it invokes and the insights it contains, but also because this most influential of commentators may for once have missed a significant trick or two.

For Dunn, the Copperbelt, even when compared to the gold mines of the Witwatersrand, was an 'immensely wealthy mining complex, with motor highways; luxury guest-houses with Old Masters on the walls, the latest novels on the bookshelves, and housekeepers lately in the service of the nobility supervising in the kitchen; white miners from the afternoon shift driving home in Jaguars; huge country clubs, sports stadiums and a yacht club that operated on water pumped up from the mines; and African townships fitted up almost regardless of cost. And all this set in a circumference of primeval bush hundreds of miles deep'. It was, he thought, 'an African fantasy beside which Timbuktu and the Mountains of the Moon are trifling, mundane items'.[4] 'The first impact of the Copperbelt is exciting and refreshing', continued Dunn, 'the car suddenly runs off the apparently endless highway of corrugated sand and stones on to a

workers, see C. Perrings, 'White mine-workers, the dequalification of labour-power and the "African advancement" Issue in Northern Rhodesia' *Zambezia*, 6 (1978).

2 C. Dunn, *Central African witness* (London, 1959).

3 Ibid., pp. 25, 179.

4 Ibid., p. 33.

network of wide, tarmac roads, with power lines leaping from pylon to pylon beside them. They connect a complex of small European towns arranged over a tamed clearing, 1,600 square miles in area, in the African wild which goes on beyond it, and the Belgian copper-mining region next door, for ever and ever. Suddenly, after that wearying forest of tawdry and stunted trees, there are cinemas, milk bars, department stores, tentative skyscrapers and traffic policemen. The houses of the white mineworkers and officials stand surrounded by civilised flowers in orderly beds besides lawns where water-sprinklers continually make their languid suburban gestures. And beside the massive headgear of the mines are the African miners' houses, like council estates in South Yorkshire.'[5]

'On the face of it a paradise for the proletariat, black and white', the Copperbelt was 'a miniature Welfare State conceived on lines which made the similar arrangement in the United Kingdom seem parsimonious. Houses were provided for all the workers at nominal and markedly sub-economic rents; I visited homes which would not have disgraced the Surrey hills for which the occupiers were paying rents of £4 a month or less.' The water and electricity supplies were virtually free and medical services cost the white workers no more than a few shillings each month. As if this were not enough, the mining companies also 'tried to soften the impact of this hot desolation for the workers and their families by furnishing them with gorgeous social and sports clubs where the subscription rates were trifling'. Best of all was the fact that the Copperbelt's white miners were a labour aristocracy. 'Miners in other parts of the world do a great deal of hard manual work', expounded Dunn, 'but not here. The humblest white worker in this region is a supervisor of blacks, who do all the shovelling'. For this, even the 'least well rewarded' white miner received £132 per month, while overall in 1956 there were some 7,000 whites serving the mines in all capacities and their *average* income was roughly £2,500 a year. Many of them had come to the Copperbelt 'from the mines of South Africa, among them Afrikaners'. 'To hear them gossiping about the peculiarities of their "Kafirs" down in the mine gives one, momentarily, a sense of being back south of the Limpopo (…) The white miners were described to me as being in general "hairy gentlemen who would bop you one if they felt like it", but it seemed to be universally agreed that they were no longer as wild as they used to be in the old days, when the common procedure was to make as much money as quickly as possible on the Copperbelt and then get out.'[6]

Yet as the author of *Central African Witness* understood it, this entire edifice rested on the enforcement of the job colour bar, a concession wrested by the

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5 Ibid., pp. 135-136.
6 Ibid., pp. 136- 138.

[white] Mine Workers Union (MWU) from the Copperbelt's two mining groups, Anglo American and R[hodesian] S[election] T[rust], in the context of the production imperatives of World War Two. When successive British governments and the mining companies subsequently saw the need to advance African miners into jobs then reserved for white workers, they found that on the question of African advancement, the feelings of the Copperbelt's white miners went deep. 'They seemed to be convinced that if Africans were allowed to do "European jobs"', wrote Dunn, 'the bottom would be knocked out of life for themselves and for their children'. Naturally, the MWU 'did not allow its motives to seem discreditable'. 'One was not surprised to hear from the Union that they had at all times tried to view the situation dispassionately and had not allowed racial prejudice to cloud their judgement on the issues involved. They insisted only on equal pay for equal work and responsibility. They argued that to pay an African less for doing a job now being done by a European would be contrary to the interests of organised labour and would go against all the tenets of democracy'. But, continued Dunn, 'the fact was that in the opinion of the mining companies, whose opinion in these matters must reasonably be accepted as decisive, it would take at least three Africans to do a European's job and produce the same output. Adhering to this belief, the companies could advance Africans into European jobs on terms acceptable to the European [Mine Workers] Union (…) only by being ready to multiply their labour costs by three in each instance. It is difficult to suppose that the European [Mine Workers] Union were unaware of this or imagined the companies' assessment of the realities to be inaccurate.'[7]

Faced with this obduracy, explained Dunn, Anglo American and RST suggested that 'some European jobs might be broken down into two or three smaller jobs which Africans might do without supervision, and by evolving jobs of new kinds for Africans. In this arrangement the European [Mine Workers] Union finally concurred, nodding their assent to limited advancement for Africans'. The persistence of two wage scales, one high and largely white and the other low and entirely black, however, provoked the African Mine Workers Union, determined not to see its most skilled members hived off by the mining companies, into a series of rolling strikes in the second half of 1956. Unimpressed by the 'irresponsible truculence of the black miners' leaders', few of whom were disposed 'either to talk connectedly to visiting newspaper correspondents or to exercise charm', Dunn nonetheless endorsed the findings of the subsequent Commission of Inquiry chaired by Sir Patrick Branigan. Arguing that 'human relations on the mines (…) could not be isolated from the

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[7] Ibid., pp. 141-142.

whole dilemma of an emergent multiracial society',[8] the Commission suggested that there had been 'a failure to recognise the depth of feeling which certain matters in dispute had engendered, not only in Union leaders but amongst the rank and file of the African workers.'[9] The crux of the matter was that the 'human questions in Central Africa cannot be cut down to Western size simply to help those who can claim to know all the answers in the Western sense (…) these answers evidently cannot be applied without modification to the Central African situation'. And who better placed to understand such complexity than the commanding figure of Sir Ronald Prain, chairman of RST? 'Easily, one would say, the most enlightened industrialist operating in Central Africa', Prain had impressed Dunn in 1956 by his remarks at the Duke of Edinburgh's Oxford conference on industrial relations. It would always be difficult to keep the Copperbelt's black miners contented, Prain advised his audience, in the face of the 'violent contrast' between African wages and 'the exceptionally lush conditions which our European labour enjoys.'[10]

II

If some of what Dunn witnessed on the Copperbelt was finely observed, it is also clear from the extracts cited above that crucial aspects largely passed him by. Inclined by class and education to sympathise with 'Ronnie' Prain, if not always with Harry Oppenheimer, the South African-born chairman of Anglo American, Dunn's attitude towards white miners was one of uncomprehending condescension. They were a mass of undifferentiated, racist savages whose blinkered ways had brought the fabulously rich copper mining industry to the edge of an abyss. Only the mining companies, with RST leading the way, had been able to avert disaster. Corporate motives were doubtless as much self-interested as they were enlightened, but they were no less enlightened for that. It would be interesting to speculate on the influence exerted by *Central African Witness* in shaping the consensus that subsequently emerged around these issues, but essentially it is one which Dunn would have had no difficulty in recognising.

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8 Ibid., pp. 142-143, 147, 149.

9 Report of the commission appointed to inquire into the unrest in the mining industry in Northern Rhodesia in recent months (Branigan Report) (Lusaka, 1956).

10 Dunn, *Central African witness*, p. 146. See His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh's Study Conference on the Human Problems of Industrial Communities Within the Commonwealth and Empire 9-27 July 1956 (London, 1957), 2 vols, Volume II, Background Papers Appendixes and Index, p. 56. For Prain, see his Reflections on an era: Fifty years of mining in changing Africa (Worcester Park, 1981), & I. Phimister, 'Sir Ronald Prain', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford, 2008).

Popular books were scathing in their distaste for white miners and the world they inhabited. The 1950s 'were the days of *bwanas* and *donas* – and of "boys" and "girls" of over 40 years of age, or just *munts*', recalled one British reporter. 'Racial discrimination by Whites was particularly fierce on the Copperbelt, where at that time approximately 50 per cent of the White work force were Afrikaners from South Africa (…) (In all) the towns dotted over the infamous Copperbelt, the Whites (…) kept big dogs to chase anyone silly enough to be a pedestrian or cyclist.'[11] While another journalist, Richard Hall, contented himself with noting that white workers on the Copperbelt 'considered that they were in a province of South Africa and acted accordingly (…) commonly speaking Afrikaans amongst themselves and in their contacts with the local Africans employed (…) a master-servant patois of South African origin whose slang title is "Kitchen Kaffir"',[12] the civil servant, Anthony St. John Wood, peering down his Colonial Office nose, recoiled from what he saw. Since the end of the boom, he sniffed, 'copper miners now have to make do with two (cars), including sometimes last year's model'. 'Many own their own houses, pleasant but not very tasteful villas standing in their own grounds (…) They have large parties at which the drinks flow freely and nothing serious is said.' Insisting that there was 'a high divorce rate, a high incidence of alcoholism, much drinking and considerable juvenile delinquency' amongst whites on the Copperbelt, St. John Wood saw no hope for the younger generation. With the example of Lusaka's Gilbert Rennie Secondary School close to hand, but making a broader point, he claimed that 'older boys are disinclined to study because their fathers will find them jobs. They tend to abuse Africans and occasionally throw stones at them. Their I.Q. is low.'[13]

Nor was missionary opinion disposed to sympathise with what it took to be the mores of a philistine society. The Reverend Colin Morris, sent by his Church to minister to Chingola's white miners, revised his initially favourable impression of settlers in general, and of miners in particular. As his evolving liberal political beliefs increasingly put him at odds with the racial prejudices of his white congregants, Morris persuaded himself that they were not the 'incredibly nice people' he had once thought them to be. Spoilt for choice between 'first-class sports fields and swimming pools, a magnificent golf course claimed by Bobby Locke to be the finest in Africa, an air-conditioned cinema, and an opulent club which has everything from a full-sized ballroom to a well-

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[11] B. Hitchcock, *Bwana – go home* (Cape Town, 1973), pp. 83, 87.

[12] R. Hall, The high price of principles: Kaunda and the white south (London, 1969), p. 61.

[13] A. St. John Wood, *Northern Rhodesia: The human background* (London, 1961), pp. 58, 73.

stocked library', white miners were morally adrift. Most of the rootless white inhabitants of this 'slightly fantastic' region were mentally unbalanced, Morris concluded. 'For many Europeans the Copperbelt is a fabulous Land of Begin Again. Battered by their experiences in other places, and attracted by the promise of quick wealth and the lure of physical remoteness, they have made their pilgrimage to this Eldorado in the wilderness, leaving all behind them except their major handicap – themselves.'[14]

Morris' account of the Copperbelt's 'red and green roofed villas (…) each house standing amid a generous allowance of cultivated green lawn (…) [with] afternoon tea, waited upon by servants in crisp white uniforms',[15] itself shaped by Dunn's *Central African Witness* which he quoted admiringly, was in its turn lazily recycled by *The Guardian* correspondent, Patrick Keatley. 'To convey the luxury, incongruity, and privilege of Rhodesia's white settlers, I cannot do better than quote those words of Rev. Colin Morris', wrote Keatley. Taken from the same sources, his dislike of white miners was as undiscriminating as theirs. Repeating the claim that 'the natural source of skilled recruits for the mines was South Africa, and at times more than half the annual northbound immigrant flow consisted of men whose mother tongue was Afrikaans and whose outlook on "native policy" was far removed from that of the Colonial Office', Keatley was in no doubt that only the 'stubborn resistance of the white mine unions' stood between the Africans of the Copperbelt and what was rightly theirs. It was this prejudice underpinning the job colour bar which ensured that 'Moses Chona, let us call him, (…) in the copper mines for a dozen years, sweating it out with the drill in humid, choking conditions underground, and gradually working his way through a series of jobs to the highest-paid surface worker's category open to Africans', received £720 a year, compared to the £1,898 paid to stupid Europeans. 'Jacobus van der Merwe – the name is fictitious, of course – is, like fifty-five per cent of Northern Rhodesia's white copper miners, a South African. Let us say that Jacobus is not, unhappily, one of Mother Nature's most gifted creatures, and that because of his limited intelligence (lower than that of Moses Chona) he has been assigned the simplest sort of job and has never been promoted. For a dozen years now, he has been a concentrator crusher operator'.[16]

By contrast to journalistic accounts, academic investigations of the Northern Rhodesian copper mining industry have hardly looked at white miners at all. With the exception of the Holleman and Biesheuvel report-cum-book noted

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[14] C. Morris, The hour after midnight: A missionary's experiences of the racial and political struggle in Northern Rhodesia (London, 1961), pp. 8, 11, 12-13.

[15] Ibid., p. 9.

[16] P. Keatley, *The politics of partnership* (Harmondsworth, 1963), pp. 213, 231, 272.

above, scholarly studies have usually focussed on broad aspects of the Copperbelt's political and social past. Where the history of labour has been examined, it has very largely been the history of black workers and their trade unions. On the few occasions that the gaze of academics has fallen on white workers, it has found little to celebrate. Like their journalist counterparts, scholars have tended to see virtue on the side of the mining companies, emphasising RST's enlightened role in particular. By far the most detailed historical study of the place of black workers in relation to white miners, Elena Berger's *Labour, Race, and Colonial Rule*, was broadly sympathetic in its assessment of what RST and Anglo American did. 'It was difficult for the mining companies to break out of the conventional economic system', she concluded, 'yet to some extent they did so with their advancement plans'.[17] Other verdicts were even more positive. 'After 1953, the [Rhodesian Selection] Trust companies came to identify themselves very closely with the country in which they operated', concluded one economist. 'The top management played a major role in achieving the dismantling of racial barriers within the country by refusing in 1953-55 to accept the barriers that the European Mineworkers Union wished to place in the way of African advancement. For this action, Ronald Prain received his knighthood and he continued to press for nonviolent progress towards racial equality in central Africa through his speeches.'[18] Nor was the political scientist, Richard Sklar, prepared to take RST at anything less than its own self-serving estimation. 'Spokesmen for RST have cited this action [against the colour bar] as a high point of company statesmanship. In the words of a former chairman of AMAX, Inc., this step was taken "at the end of 1954, a time of high copper prices and high profits. RST's readiness to risk a strike under such conditions came to the European Mineworkers' Union as a great shock and brought them to their senses" (…) it was a significant step towards racial justice in the mining industry for which the RST Group should be credited.'[19]

More recently, important elements of this interpretation have found support in Larry Butler's history of the relationship between the copper mining industry and the colonial state. Persuaded particularly of RST's progressive attitude towards decolonisation in Central Africa, Butler also acknowledged the key part the company played in promoting African advancement.[20] Compared to Anglo

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[17] E. Berger, Labour, race, and colonial rule: The Copperbelt from 1924 to independence (Oxford, 1974), p. 232.

[18] S. Cunningham, The copper industry in Zambia: Foreign mining companies in a developing country (New York, 1981), p. 84.

[19] R. Sklar, Corporate power in an African state: The political impact of multinational mining companies in Zambia (Berkley, 1975), pp. 105-106.

[20] L.J. Butler, *Copper empire: Mining and the colonial state in Northern Rhodesia, c.1930-1964* (Basingstoke 2007). See also his 'Business and British decolonisation:

American, 'whose position remained cautious, RST was willing to challenge the colour bar (…) Until late 1952, RST had seen advancement as the responsibility of government, but steadily lost confidence in the state's ability to pursue reform'. Assured of the full backing of RST's major shareholder, the American Metal Company of New York, Prain issued the white MWU with an ultimatum. 'Taking the line that RST must remain "master in its own house", he refused to concede the MWU's demand to be consulted over the implementation of advancement (…) (The) union capitulated in 1955 (…) [and] although the labour situation remained tense for some years, the 1955 agreement (…) [was] a milestone in Copperbelt industrial relations.'[21] But like Berger before him, Butler also recognised that corporate motives were not entirely altruistic. The wider significance of the 1953 Guillebaud arbitration award for black workers had not been lost on Berger. Given that the annual cost of the award was about £873,000; that this followed a sharp rise in the general cost of production; and that the end of the British government's bulk purchases of copper increased the mining companies freedom of manoeuvre, it was obvious why RST chose that moment 'to press for new talks between the companies and the European (Mineworkers) Union'.[22] Similarly, Butler placed Prain's initiative against a post-war background of 'increasing global competition and rising costs, partly as operations became technically more demanding and deeper mineshafts became necessary'. He, too, saw that these developments were aggravated by 'a generous pay award, agreed after arbitration in 1953', as well as by the cost implications of an increasingly stabilised African labour force. All of this 'gave the mining industry a growing incentive to extract the maximum value from African labour, and to replace relatively expensive white labour with African recruits. Such a policy of "advancement" would also reduce the risk of political confrontation with African labour.'[23] Yet for all their insights, these remarks were not systematically pursued. Instead, both Berger and Butler left them hanging. They were considerations that somewhat modified but did not fundamentally alter their main conclusions.

Of all the studies of the Copperbelt for the period covered by this paper, or just afterwards, only three were sceptical from start to finish about mining company motives. 'It was obvious that the wage level necessary to attract

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Sir Ronald Prain, the mining industry and the Central African Federation', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 35 (2007). For a different perspective, see especially A. Cohen, 'Business and decolonisation in Central Africa reconsidered', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 36 (2008).

21 Butler, 'Business and British decolonisation', p. 461.

22 Berger, Labour, race and colonial rule, p. 124.

23 Butler, 'Business and British decolonisation', pp. 460-61. See also, *Copper empire*, p. 227.

intelligent, hard-working, and stable African workers could be far below that being paid Europeans for the same job', noted Robert Baldwin. 'The Rhodesian mines had only to look across the border at the Katanga mines (…) to see the possibilities for a tremendous increase in profits through African advancement.'[24] Unconvinced by Prain's claim that so long as the British government's bulk buying scheme lasted, RST was precluded from confronting the MWU, Michael Burawoy argued that 'at those times when pressure to produce was high, so demand too must have been high, which in turn would mean high prices and profits; consequently high financial risks would be at stake in the case of a show-down with European labour'. He thought it more likely that the mining companies 'were as much influenced by the price of copper as by pressure from the British Government in the timing of their confrontation with European labour. The final show of force with the European (Mine Workers) Union came in 1958, with copper at its lowest price since 1950, when the companies threatened to shut down the mines.'[25] Nor was Jane Parpart in any doubt as to what lay behind corporate support for African advancement. 'In 1953, increasingly expensive black labor and rising production costs threatened the high profit margins of the copper companies'. More than this, 'the growing militancy of the African union raised the specter of future wage demands and labor unrest'. In these circumstances, RST and Anglo American 'could see only one solution: African advancement. Management firmly believed that the advancement of skilled black miners into European jobs would reduce costs by replacing more expensive white labor and mollify the most militant members of the African union, who were generally more skilled and eligible for advancement'. The point of African advancement was two-fold, she believed. It would 'both permit a restructuring of the work force that lowered labor costs, and would enlarge the number of supervisory black miners'. This latter category would 'promote the development of an African middle class willing to support the Federation (of Rhodesia and Nyasaland) and its promise of multi-racial partnership.'[26]

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[24] R. Baldwin, Economic development and export growth: A study of Northern Rhodesia, 1920-1960 (Berkley 1966), p. 103. See also A. Martin, *Minding their own business: Zambia's struggle against Western control* (Harmondsworth, 1975), pp. 123-124.

[25] M. Burawoy, The colour of class on the copper mines: From African advancement to Zambianization (Lusaka, 1972), p. 89.

[26] J. Parpart, *Labor and capital on the African Copperbelt* (Philadelphia, 1983), pp. 136-137. See especially Perrings, 'A moment in the "proletarianisation" of the New middle class: Race, value and the division of labour in the Copperbelt, 1946-1966', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 6 (1980).

III

In 1946, about 3,500 white miners were employed on the Copperbelt. By 1956 their numbers had grown to just over 7,000, peaking at 7,780 in 1962. They worked and lived for much of this period on four large mines and their adjacent townships: Roan Antelope and Mufulira, owned by the London-registered Rhodesian Selection Trust; and Nkana and Nchanga, owned by the Johannesburg-based Anglo American corporation. Both companies, in Anglo's case, its Rhodesian subsidiary, for a time changed their domicile to Central Africa, and each company brought smaller copper mines into production in the latter part of the 1950s. These were Bancroft for Anglo American, and Chibuluma for RST. Initially heavily male-dominated, by the late 1950s, the ratio of white females to white males on the Copperbelt was well over 90 per cent, 'normal by Federal standards'. Counting miners' families and the expanding but still small non-mining sector, the total white population in 1956 of Nkana was 9,500. Mufulira and Roan Antelope totalled 6,000 and 5,000 respectively. Contrary to the impression created by visiting journalists, the Copperbelt's white miners were overwhelmingly English-speaking. In 1959, only nine per cent were Afrikaners. Just under two-thirds of all white miners came from South Africa, with the United Kingdom accounting for 30 per cent. The tiny balance was more or less evenly divided between the Rhodesias and other countries. White miners were further divided into two categories, staff and daily-paid. The former, about one-third of the total number, mostly men but some women, comprised professional graduates, administrative and clerical personnel, certified technicians, and supervisors. Daily paid men were artisans, hoist (winding engine) drivers, underground and surface operators, rockbreakers and timbermen. Most of the staff, usually members of the Mine Officials and Salaried Staff Association, were British, and most of the daily paid, invariably stalwarts of the Mine Workers Union, were South African. The median educational level amongst daily paid miners was Standard Eight, that is, four years of secondary schooling. At the end of the 1950s, the average length of service for married employees was 7.9 years.[27]

Residentially segregated housing was allocated on what Holleman termed 'a modified egalitarian principle'. Basic company policy was to provide white employees with accommodation corresponding to marital status and family size, from single quarters to four and five bedroom houses. 'With the exception of a relatively small number of senior officials', reported Holleman, 'the allocation of housing takes place without distinction as to rank or category of occupation, and especially the basic distinction of "staff" and "days pay" employees is

[27] Holleman & Biesheuvel, 'Attitudes of white mining employees', Part II, An Interview Study, pp. 4, 9, 10, 18.

eschewed. Since all rentals are nominal (although they vary slightly), there can be no distinction in practice on the basis of income. The main qualifications for allocation are length of service and size of family'. The houses themselves were not particularly appealing, however. They were 'functionally adequate and reasonably well spaced', Holleman thought, but on the whole they presented 'a somewhat monotonous repetition of a few standard types of dwelling'. The 'Surrey Hills' mansions evoked by Cyril Dunn in *Central African Witness* were in fact the 'distinctive types of special accommodation' reserved for senior management, and never more than seven per cent of the housing stock.[28] Visitors to the Copperbelt who actually met white miners, as opposed to managers and directors, saw a different side of the picture. Peter Fraenkel thought that the mining settlements had been built 'with energy, but without love'. 'They are painfully ugly and charmless. Usually the streets and avenues are numbered. Nobody could be bothered to think of two dozen names', he wrote. 'The European living areas (at Nkana) comprise monotonous rows of bungalows erected by some unimaginative engineer in the thirties, high, red-brick boxes with corrugated iron roofs and gauzed-in verandas.'[29]

As Fraenkel also realised, the average annual earnings of c. £1,900 received by white miners in the mid-1950s was hugely inflated by the copper bonus, sometimes as much as 75 per cent of basic wages. This was an additional premium that fluctuated according to the price of copper and which the companies had agreed to pay well before the boom had started. They were further distorted by the fact that specialist underground workers such as rockbreakers were paid more than other miners. The best of them earned up to £3,000 a year.[30] Basic wages, then, were significantly lower, closer to c. £1,000 p.a. But they were still about one-third higher than comparable pay elsewhere in the sub-continent, whether in the Federation or on the Witwatersrand. For most of the 1950s the real earnings of white artisans were approximately 20 times greater than those of the black workers they supervised.[31] While the latter did much of the hard manual labour, white miners also got their hands dirty. Visitors who went underground saw as much for themselves. 'In the Roan

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[28] Holleman & Biesheuvel, 'Attitudes of white mining employees', Part I, A Social Psychological Study, pp. 36, 23.

[29] P. Fraenkel, *Wayaleshi* (London, 1959), p. 77. Kitwe's white residential areas presented a somewhat different picture c. seven years later, once a smattering of privately-owned houses had been built. See R. Dorien, *Venturing to the Rhodesias and Nyasaland* (London, 1962), p. 141: 'We went up and down pretty roads, where the houses were most modern, where expensive cars waited outside flower-hung porches, where picture windows had been placed at the best view-points'.

[30] Fraenkel, *Wayaleshi*, p. 89.

[31] Baldwin, Economic development and export growth, pp. 84-90.

Antelope mine there was a semi-skilled artisan from Kent, working in the steam and sweat of the rock face, whose minimum earnings were £10 a day, and he earned every penny of it. Contrary to the sneers of superior people, the Europeans of the Copperbelt work hard.'[32]

Table 7.1 White miners: Wages and earnings

Year	Number employed	Average wage	Total wage bill (incl. copper bonus)
1950	4,604	£1,068	
1951	5,184	£1,275	
1952	5,504	£1,500	£ 7,973,614
1953	5,879	£1,782	£10,055,981
1954	6,294	£1,734	£10,580,316
1955	6,566	£1,943	£12,436,688
1956	7,065	£2,295	£15,724,696
1957	7,304	£1,910	£13,785,374
1958	6,739	£1,699	£12,063,075
1959	7,259	£1,868	£12,677,679

(Table constructed from Berger, *Labour, race and colonial rule*, appendix D; Baldwin, *Economic development and export growth,* p. 87; Daniel, *Africanisation, nationalisation and inequality*, p. 72; and *Northern Rhodesia Chamber of Mines Year Books, 1958, 1960, 1961*]

In good times and even in the relatively bad times following the collapse of the price of copper in late 1956, this found expression in 'high living and fast spending'. Holleman himself was much taken by a comment that the problem on the Copperbelt was not so much the high cost of living as the cost of high living.[33] Freed of any necessity to make provision for housing or health care, white miners spent extravagantly on cars, consumer goods and club memberships. Car ownership was ubiquitous in white society. Regarded as a 'bare necessity to get to work and play in the township, or to a holiday at the coast', something like 80 per cent of cars were bought on hire-purchase terms. Before copper's fall in price, these agreements were very often 'rolled over' from year to year in order to buy the latest model. This pattern of conspicuous

[32] C. Lucas Phillips, *The vision splendid* (London, 1960), p. 249.

[33] Interviewed in 1993, Holleman described the Copperbelt's white community on the eve of independence in 1964 as 'a cock-eyed society'. Uneducated miners, he pointedly recalled, earned 'as much money as a South African professor and (had) everything handed to them – low cost housing, free health care. Maybe (it was) the most affluent society on the face of the earth'. See L. Schumaker, *Africanizing anthropology: Fieldwork, networks, and the making of cultural knowledge in Central Africa* (Durham, N.J., 2001), p. 311.

consumption changed somewhat thereafter, but even in 1959, a third of all cars on Copperbelt roads were less than one year old. 'A new car and a radiogram, and possibly a big fridge' are just about standard equipment of every young married couple', Holleman's investigative team was informed. If little money was spent on household goods other than 'an expensive radiogram in the lounge where everyone can see it', this was because all houses were furnished by the mining companies. It went instead on buying the best sporting equipment, and on paying for membership of various clubs. Every mine had its own golf, cricket, baseball, rugby, bowls, rifle, fishing, flying, boating and sailing, and gymkhana clubs. Nkana even boasted several polo teams. Amateur dramatic 'little theatres' were established everywhere, as were Masonic and Buffalo lodges, M.O.T.H., W.I., and Scouts and Guides.[34] Ballet was popular 'among the little [white] girls of the Copperbelt', and in 1953 the Roan Antelope pool, 'a magnificent, lawn-bordered affair that would not look out of place in Hollywood', easily accommodated the all-Rhodesian swimming championships.[35]

Leave, taken every two to three years, and parties in private homes, 'lavishly supplied with drinks and snacks', were expensive affairs. Because of the Copperbelt's remoteness, the holiday distances involved were huge. The Federal capital, Salisbury, was c. 570 miles away, and Durban and Cape Town respectively 1,700 and 2,300 miles distant. As Holleman's report acknowledged, the cost of taking a family to a holiday resort on the Natal or Cape coast for a few weeks was 'undoubtedly high, and for those that want to visit their families overseas it is much higher still.'[36] Drinking at parties was the least of it. Alcohol consumption at hotel bars and mine clubs was not for the faint-hearted. Greatest amongst daily-paid white miners, excessive drinking and the stories which went with it lost nothing in the re-telling. Len Catchpole, a former mayor of Ndola, 'used annually to add to the prestige of his office among thirsty Copperbelt miners by challenging (and defeating) an elephant in a beer-drinking contest'.[37] 'I imagined that Southern Rhodesia was talented for drinking, but I had seen nothing till I went to the Copper Belt', recorded the novelist, Doris Lessing, in 1956. 'Outside the bar are rows of cars. At sundown, the families come driving in; the men leave wives and children in the cars and go into the bar. From time to time they come out with a drink for the wife and a

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[34] Holleman & Biesheuvel, 'Attitudes of white mining employees', Part I, A Social Psychological Study, pp. 32, 33, 34.

[35] D. Taylor, *Rainbow on the Zambezi* (London, 1953), p. 134.

[36] Holleman & Biesheuvel, 'Attitudes of white mining employees', Part II, An Interview Study, pp. 81-82; ibid, Part I, A social psychological study, p. 33.

[37] C. Sanger, *Central African emergency* (London, 1960), p. 53.

lemonade for the children, and then go back into the bar. And so they spend the evening, until the bar closes'. 'Never have I been anywhere where the feeling of boredom, of boredom crystallised into activity and alcohol for salvation's sake, is so strong as in the little mining towns of Northern Rhodesia', concluded Lessing. 'Never, that is, since my adolescence in Salisbury, which from the dusty distances of the Copperbelt, seems like an oasis of civilisation.'[38]

Not that white miners were unduly worried by the apparent lack of civilised amenities. Holleman's investigative team reported that only just over a quarter of all white workers experienced 'cultural deficiencies in Copperbelt life'. This could be explained, they thought, by the fact that 'the mean educational level of (daily paid) employees is not particularly high'. Dissatisfaction was higher amongst staff, but even here 60 per cent of those interviewed were either able to 'satisfy cultural needs' or were 'not interested at all'.[39] As very few of the Copperbelt's white inhabitants anyway saw themselves as permanent residents, this may also have been a factor. The coming of Federation in 1953 caused some to insist that 'we are here to stay',[40] but by 1962 attitudes had changed again as political uncertainty increased. This impression accorded more or less with what Holleman and his team had found a year or so earlier. While less than ten per cent of white mine workers were sufficiently dissatisfied to want to leave, and 50 percent hoped to stay until the end of their working lives, only 16 per cent envisaged staying beyond retirement. 'It is one of the paradoxes of Copperbelt life', he noted, 'that, in spite of its undoubted attractions, the contentedness and growing stability of its White population, the nature of European settlement has remained basically unchanged. To the great majority of this expatriate society, "settlement" remains a temporary – albeit lengthening – sojourn.'[41]

The other paradox of white miners' lives to catch Holleman's eye was the seeming contradiction between the hierarchical world of work and the egalitarian spheres of organised sporting and social activities. Despite the reality of a sharply defined mine hierarchy where daily-paid miners were subject to 24 hours notice of dismissal, most recently in the 1957 strike when 'a large number of European workers (…) [were] laid off',[42] and the persistence of social markers in patterns of consumption such as the American cars bought by daily-

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38 D. Lessing, *Going home* (St Albans, 1968), pp. 272, 282.

39 Holleman and Biesheuvel, 'Attitudes of white mining employees', Part II, An Interview &, p. 88.

40 Taylor, Rainbow on the Zambezi, p. 135.

41 Holleman & Biesheuvel, 'Attitudes of white mining employees', Part II, An Interview Study, pp. 20-37; ibid, Part I, A Social Psychological Study, p. 68.

42 Berger, Labour, race and colonial rule, p. 178.

paid miners and the British makes favoured by their salaried counterparts,[43] the 'off-work social situation was governed by essentially egalitarian principles'. Acknowledged as 'second to none', mining company sports facilities, control of which necessarily rested in the hands of Management, co-existed with numerous independent clubs and societies. It was here that most socialising away from home occurred. While egalitarianism may have been more pervasive in theory than in practice, Holleman's team found that egalitarian principles did have some influence on working relationships. 'Cross-level [social] relations' were 'markedly easier and much less formal' in the Copperbelt mining industry than in South African, Canadian, or British mines. 'In South Africa we would have said "Mister"; here we call the bloke Dave'.[44] As a visiting British trade unionist realised in 1958, 'we are not dealing with British workers, but they are somewhat similar to Australians, all the forcefulness, brashness of a new country and all the "Jack's as good as his master", "Everyone's a leader" attitudes'.[45]

This social familiarity was helped along by shared views on African job advancement and political change more generally. At the start of the 1950s, most white miners were convinced not only of their own strength but of the incorrigible fecklessness of black workers. 'We made this country rich', visitors were told, 'these Africans (on the mines) have got a life twenty times as good as their brothers – and yet they're never satisfied. Give a black man more money – and he wants still more, but for less work. They don't know what incentive means.'[46] Thoughtful outsiders wondered about white miners who were 'open and generous and kind to everybody, except the black majority around them'. The careful consideration shown to white newcomers was matched by the casual contempt displayed for Africans, 'only just down from the trees'.[47] In this, union officials and daily-paid white miners were not so different from their salaried peers. At the end of the decade, the majority of both groups were opposed to social mixing between black and white, although women were slightly less conservative than men. Most daily-paid miners and salaried staff believed in the 'rate for the job', the first and last line of defence for the privileged positions occupied by white workers. Provided this was respected, only 40 per cent were against Africans doing the same work as whites. Salaried

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43 A.L. Epstein, *Politics in an urban African community* (Manchester, 1958), p. 102.

44 Holleman & Biesheuvel, 'Attitudes of white mining employees', Part II, An Interview Study, pp. 73, 86-87; ibid, Part I, A Social Psychological Study, pp. 37, 38.

45 As cited in Berger, *Labour, race and colonial rule*, p. 173.

46 Taylor, Rainbow on the Zambezi, p. 135.

47 Fraenkel, *Wayaleshi*, pp. 90, 87.

employees, however, were noticeably more realistic than daily paid miners about the wider implications of African advancement for white employment. Confident that they were very much more efficient than their black counterparts, white miners insulated themselves socially from the African worlds around them. Daily-paid miners and salaried staff alike invested heavily in the cherished values of a shared 'European way of life'.[48] But social familiarity was far removed from class solidarity. It was not an investment that would prove capable of withstanding Anglo American's preferred course of cautious and gradual change, never mind RST's express determination to be master in its own house.

IV

Commissioned by the Northern Rhodesia Chamber of Mines, effectively the Anglo American and RST corporations acting in concert, the Holleman and Biesheuvel survey was not concerned to examine critically the motives and policies of the two mining groups. Its narrow remit was 'to interpret the attitudes of the heterogeneous White mining population with regard to work, life and future prospects on the Copperbelt'.[49] Yet in the course of doing so, their report not only painted a picture of a much more variegated white mining community than acknowledged either at the time or subsequently. It also hinted at different ways in which the economics and politics of copper production might be understood. As the chairman of RST acknowledged, the problem was that white miners were paid too much, not that black workers were paid too little.[50] Viewed from this perspective, the economic and political struggles that engulfed the Copperbelt in the 1950s seem rather less straightforward than the simple morality play presented in much of the subject's historiography. That the history of the Copperbelt's white miners needs to be recovered is obvious enough. Indeed, what is striking about the studies of the Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt discussed in this paper is not only how very little has been written about white mine workers, their obvious importance notwithstanding, but also how extremely fragmented the mining industry's history remains to this day. More than 25 years ago, Andrew Roberts recognised the need for a 'sustained attempt' to synthesise the disparate themes in what was even then an extensive

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[48] Holleman & Biesheuvel, 'Attitudes of white mining employees', Part II, An Interview Study, pp. 28-32, 37, 49, and especially pp. 92-117; ibid, Part I, A Social Psychological Study, pp. 45-46.

[49] Holleman & Biesheuvel, 'Attitudes of white mining employees', Part I, A Social Psychological Study, p. 4.

[50] Butler, 'Business and British decolonisation', p. 460.

literature.[51] Astonishingly, this plea by the doyen of Zambia's academic history has not yet been answered. Nor is it likely to be until the parts played by white miners are accounted for.

[51] A.D. Roberts, 'Notes towards a financial history of copper mining in Northern Rhodesia', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 19 (1982), p. 347.

8

Rivers of white: David Livingstone and the 1955 commemorations in the lost 'Henley-upon-Thames of Central Africa'[1]

Joanna Lewis

The year 1955 was one of providential coincidence for the former capital of Northern Rhodesia that proudly bore the name of Anglo-Africa's unofficial patron-saint. It was the *twenty-fifth* anniversary of the town being granted the

[1] I would like to thank the organisers of the conference on Zambia in the 1950s for allowing a newcomer to Zambian history to contribute to this collection. I would like to thank those conference participants whom I met for generously sharing their views on David Livingstone with me, and Dr. Jan-Bart Gewald, especially, for my being there in the first place. Also I would like to thank Dr. Marja Hinfelaar for helping me retrieve a newspaper item at lightening speed. This article forms part of a broader study of the memorialisation of Livingstone in Britain and Africa. I would like to thank Mr. Friday Mufuzi for his help at the Livingstone Museum. Finally, and most of all, Dr Giacomo Macola for his consistent encouragement and for being my 'smoking dictionary' on all things Central African. I would also like to thank Emeritus Professor Andrew Roberts for reading a draft of this paper and for giving me in Leiden some of the best advice ever imparted by a senior academic, that it is possible to go without lunch.

status of municipality. It was the *fiftieth* anniversary of the construction of the stunning iron bridge over the Zambezi that had extended the railway from the south, making a sizeable white settlement a possibility. And thirdly as the year drew to a close, it would be the *hundredth* anniversary of the day a Scotsman became the first European to sight Africa's most dramatic natural phenomenon, from which the town kept a safe but close distance. In terms of the romance of white settler tales of past sacrifice and heroism, and the foundation myths of extending the frontiers of civilization and Christianity, such a year of commemoration captured the lot. Suddenly the prospect of a much needed reversal of the town's fortunes looked tantalisingly close.

The town is of course Livingstone; the natural phenomenon, the Victoria Falls. Dr. David Livingstone, part-missionary, part-chippy Scot, part-humanitarian, but mostly-competitive explorer, had 'discovered' them in 1855. Although initially underwhelmed by the 2km wide falls that later became one of the officially recognised wonders of the natural world, he quickly felt obliged to replace the local name of *Mosi-oa-Tunya* – Smoke that Thunders – in order to honour his monarch and simultaneously prevent any continental European rival from doing the same to his.[2] A hundred years on, the bridge still spanned the steep gorge, as it does today. The avenues and colonial buildings whilst architecturally not nearly so impressive as the bridge, were holding their own. Just. So in 1955, two years after Northern Rhodesia was joined in political federation with Nyasaland and with Southern Rhodesia, their close neighbour and racial ally, the year looked set to be one huge and successful celebration. What could go wrong...

The 1955 centenary celebrations

As announced in the Livingstone Centenary Celebrations Souvenir Programme, priced one shilling, (also available as a free supplement to *Holiday and Travel* magazine),[3] events began on 1 June with the an exhibition at the Rhodes-Livingstone Museum. Arranged by the Trustees of the Museum but designed by

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2 For his initial 'flat' account, which underestimated the width and depth, see T. Jeal, *Livingstone* (London, 1973) pp. 148-49. Later when writing up his field notes with an eye to publication, he became far more enthusiastic. See T. Holmes, *Journey to Livingstone: Exploration of an imperial myth* (London, 1993), p. 88.

3 This appears to have been a publication produced in Southern Rhodesia by a private tourist company. In addition to the copies in the magazine, 5,000 were to be printed for re-sale in Livingstone. C.G. Reedon-Rodway (Federal Tourist Officer), Note about Federal Tourist Development, 25 March 1955, National Archives of Zambia (NAZ), Lusaka, SP1/1/32.

a Federal Tourist Officer,[4] according to the blub it offered the most complete collection of David Livingstone memorabilia ever put together and included: 'the red shirt that he was wearing when he was found by H.M. Stanley; one of his travelling boxes with a pile of candle grease in one corner (…) [and] the watch that he carried throughout his travels and which was by his bedside when he died (…)'. Possibly less enthralling were the films shown alongside in a small cinema depicting the 'history and development of the Federation'.[5] From 6 to 12 June, a 'Film Festival and Art Exhibition' could be viewed in the town's Victoria Hall. Sponsored by the British Council, with a strong imperial propaganda element, the selling points were films that were in colour and included 'Scotland; gardening; sport; architecture; the arts; music and ballet; education and history'. This then had to make way for the Livingstone Choral Society's production of The Mikado. Next, somewhat bizarrely, came the five-day South African Municipal Engineers' Conference. Delegates and their lucky wives could look forward to visits to the Victoria Falls Power Station, Livingstone Airport and the Municipal Waterworks. Ending the month and running throughout July was an impressive Drama Festival. Also supported by the British Council, 14 different plays would be performed by amateur dramatic groups from Northern and Southern Rhodesia described as 'one of the most powerful cultural forces in the Federation'. With such titles as 'The Day's Mischief'; 'Black Chiffon'; and 'We Must Kill Toni', it is hard to disagree.

July certainly seems to have been *the* month for activities. It also seems to have been the only month with Africans explicitly on board. First there was a two-week African Girl Guides rally on a campsite next to the Zambezi River. Sixty African Girl Guide companies from Northern Rhodesia were to attend, apparently lured by sightseeing, training, singing around the campfire and 'talks about Dr. Livingstone's discovery of the falls and other matters of value'. Newspapers made much of the event later on. A front-page report in the *Livingstone Mail* came with the sub-heading 'Some girls had never seen a train.'[6] Expectations had to be adjusted downwards (a constant feature of most activities by the end) as although patrols from each of the neighbouring territories had been invited, only 400 guides made it. Assurances had to be printed that each sub camp would be 'in the care of a European', a clear indication of how racial attitudes had shapped the programme.

The July Regatta on the Zambezi River, held over four days, trumpeted as 'one of the highlights of the celebrations', seems to have had some Africans on

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4 'Livingstone Centenary Celebrations: Souvenir programme', 1955, Livingstone Museum Archive (LMA), Livingstone, H5/3B.

5 Ibid.

6 *Livingstone Mail*, 8 July 1955.

board though watersports were hardly a great leveller between races. Most of the participants would have been white, coming, as was listed, from both Rhodesias *and* the Union of South Africa, to compete in speedboat, rowing and skiing, but 'African canoeists' were also scheduled to take part. If one had survived the Regatta without disappearing over the Falls, later in the month, a reward might have been a day at the Agricultural and Industrial Show. This included an African arts and crafts section, a display by the Women's Institute and the local Horticultural Society; and a British South Africa Police 'motor cycle gymnastic display'.[7] Finally, at the end of the month, the Rumba Sports Ground would host the African Football Finals. African teams, it was announced, from across the Federation would be competing for a new floating trophy, to be known as the David Livingstone Shield.

Other events across July seem solidly white occasions: a European Boy Scout Jamborette; a Bowls competition bringing together 48 registered clubs from the Federation. However, at a stretch, one could argue that the Pan-African Congress on Prehistory had Africans firmly in its sights, albeit dead ones. A 'museum on the spot' had been built at the eastern cataract of the Falls, so that visitors would be able to glimpse 'the past cultures of the peoples that have lived in this part of the continent during the last half million years'. At an even bigger stretch, one could also argue that Air Rally on 30 August, organised by the Livingstone Flying Club, would at least be visible by anyone in the vicinity of the airport, regardless of race. Expected participants again included Flying Clubs from the Federation and South Africa. The advertised highlight was a display of precision flying by pilots of the Rhodesian Air Force in their new Vampire jet aircraft. However, any form of military presence at events may well have put off some local Africans from attending at all. Finally, prizes for spot landings, bombing, cutting the tape, a cross-country race, formation flying, aerobatics and air flips were to be presented at an evening dance.

In contrast, September was rather thin on the spectacular and derring-do. The Centenary Exhibition continued at the Museum of course; there was a musical recital or two. Decidedly more low-brow and a nice illustration of the background of many settlers, a Darts Championship was to take place sponsored by Castle Beer bringing together finalists from across the Federation. The other event scheduled for September was a Soap Box Derby on the Lusaka Road including the under 16 finals of all soapbox derbys (home made racing karts). A clear hierarchy of events staged according to a class pecking order seems obvious: the more genteel plays and music first; darts and rallies, more lower class, had to come second. Lastly, in the final month of the celebrations, David Livingstone appears in a religious ceremony. After some debate, it was

[7] 'Souvenir programme', p. xi.

agreed that the 16 November would be exactly a hundred years since Livingstone saw the Falls for the first time, and so it was chosen for the 'Unveiling of the Monument and re-dedication ceremony'.

It is easy to smile at these quaint activities aping middle-class English suburbia. It is tempting solely to analyse (and thus dismiss) these events in terms of their racial exclusion of Africans and Indians, or indeed of anyone who might have tried to impose anything other than a very English kind of celebration. The first African mayor of Livingstone could not recall ordinary Africans being invited to watch, let alone participate in any of the events.[8] By today's standards, this exclusion, so late, still shocks; Africans in Northern Rhodesia would be liberated Zambians in less than a decade. And today it is unfashionable to study white settlers, unless it is their brutality being documented; their study often now dismissed as politically incorrect within a broader argument for the end of imperial history all together. To be sure, it has been vital to blast away the rubble left by imperial propaganda and to concentrate on the study of black Africa's experience of colonial rule after so much scholarly neglect and institutional racism within European academes. Yet the recent fetishisation of colonial settler violence has perhaps obscured the more banal and white on white aspects of white settler existence. This chapter takes up Professor Andrew Roberts's plea for historians more seriously to engage with the history of white settlers in Northern Rhodesia.[9] For in contrast to the literature on white settlers in other British territories in Africa, notably Kenya and Zimbabwe, that on Northern Rhodesia's smaller white communities seems patchy.

In the spirit of redressing this imbalance, the title of this chapter is part *hommage* to Dane Kennedy's path-breaking book on Kenya and Southern Rhodesia up to 1939.[10] *Islands of White* was a beautiful term for the ugly reality of settler life, where a culture developed and mutated in hostile opposition to Africa and Africans – a culture designed to exclude and thus unite, to diminish and so reify. The 1955 celebrations in Livingstone certainly conform to Kennedy's over-riding, distinguishing feature of white settler cultures, namely that a European heritage would always be distorted by the effects of a set of shared circumstances with the purpose of 'securing it against all change'.[11] Mid-decade, change was present only in absence. Yet settlers, he concluded, all too

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8 Interview with Mr William Chipango, Livingstone, 29 June 2009.

9 See Roberts' chapter in this collection and also his review of R.I. Rotberg, *Black heart: Gore-Browne and the politics of multiracial Zambia* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1977), in *African Affairs*, 78 (1979), pp. 571-573.

10 D. Kennedy, *Islands of white: Settler society and culture in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1939* (Durham, NC, 1987).

11 Ibid., p. 192.

easily characterised as 'supremely confident', operated in 'distinctly strained and tenuous circumstances', where '[p]ower was matched by fear, arrogance by anxiety, disdain by suspicion.'[12] In laying bare the cultural theory and practices of settler Africa, *Islands of White* distinguished itself from such analyses of the economic and political aspects of settler regimes as had been popular in the 1960s and 1970s. More recently, the fashion has been to focus on the discursive and material power of British settler societies, their brutality, violent endings, destructiveness, and the often nightmarish experiences of Africans living under alien rule. But what of the variations, across time and place? This chapter at a basic level, is an argument for the importance of remaining sensitive to the potential in white settler history for distinctiveness generated by the locality, and that settler distinctiveness is greatest when placed in the arena of settler culture.

White settler commemorations offer rich pickings in this regard. Like other 'public' events such as royal visits,[13] they were always performing a number of roles. Political, racially structured and emotional; they were important occasions for a tiny minority ruling over a majority, living away from a homeland they simultaneously missed, loathed, sought to replicate or wanted to outdo. Heavy with symbolism, such events were choreographed in opposition to instability, inclusion and weakness. Theatrical displays of unequal power relations, acted out cultural superiority through social behaviour and etiquette, backed up with military presence. Settler morale and white solidarity got a lift, and colonial ownership of the public space, particularly in urban areas, was reasserted. Official speeches and religious sermons would normally stress Christian duty, rally the civilizing mission, congratulate pioneering and make reassuring noises about permanency. Settlers brushed up whiter to the sound of the last post or before a military salute.[14] Ceremonies often leave a rich paper trial: what was viewed as innocent fun at the time can later be highly revealing. We see settlers in their Sunday best, putting on a good show; but in dressing up they also reveal their naked ambitions. Moreover, even the most tightly controlled public events

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[12] Ibid, p.187.

[13] 'Monarchy and empire', special edition of the *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 34 (2006).

[14] For some examples of recent work looking at commemorations in southern Africa, see T. Ranger, Voices from the rocks: Nature, culture and history in the Matapos Hills of Zimbabwe (Oxford, 1999); L. Stanley, Mourning becomes: Post-memory and commemoration of the concentration camps of the South African War, 1899-1902 (Manchester, 2006); J. Fonstein, The silence of great Zimbabwe: Contested landscapes and the power of heritage (London, 2006); and P. Maylam, The cult of Rhodes: Remembering an imperialist in Africa (Cape Town, 2005).

always have an unpredictable or undesirable element breaking through. Yet image and reality are usually at odds. In the case of Livingstone celebrations, events were often hamstrung by long standing bickering between town council and central government, between high and low public cultures. How these were resolved or not depended on the ability to mobilise networks based on friendship, trades unionism, religion and the ability of key individuals to understand the arts of diplomacy and compromise. White on white class prejudice was a huge factor; as was different attitudes to black Africans by 1955. Fundamentally a lack of resources undermined most of the plans.

So into a general set of principles about settler commemorations, we can then add the distinct history and circumstances of Livingstonians in 1955 and perhaps find answers to bigger questions. Living with the new Federation, the economic ascendency of the Copperbelt and the growing menace of nationalism in the form of the ANC, made putting on a successful set of events less easy but more crucial than ever. So was there a sense that this moment was possibly a final fanfare, as it would turn out, in the doomed history of whiteness? Was there a paranoid fear that African nationalist argument, even agitation, was poised to snatch the exclusive white ownership of Livingstone identity? Or had white Northern Rhodesians, as Harold Macmillan was about to Britain 'never had it so good'? Perhaps ignorance was still bliss.

It is impossible to improve on Kennedy's seductive image of *islands of white*, as ideologies and cultures of separateness within a sea of black, even if one wanted to. But for Northern Rhodesia, and Livingstone town in particular, I want to add the metaphor of *rivers of white*. Though Northern Rhodesia shared many of the basic features of white settler cultures, there were quite important streams or shades of differences resulting from its geography, local personalities, features, institutions, the comparative abundance of land, the absence of a Mau Mau and counter-insurgency operations. Much smaller and fragmented communities, blue collared, or big farmer, never as closed off from other territories as elsewhere, wind their way through the landscape, following rivers or railway systems, meandering and widening out around key townships, often very different, eventually more or less converging in support for greater white unity with the southerners, but at the same time constantly feeling different from them, and short changed by them. Being situated around transport systems or boom and bust towns, a sense of people – often young people – moving through, finding a way to somewhere better, en route to somewhere else, must have made permanency extremely illusive. The distinctiveness of all these towns is important to acknowledge. Livingstone might have been the capital of the Southern Province, but many of the large-scale farmers kept aloof, and there were plenty of similar, small self-contained white towns dotted along the route to Lusaka. But uniquely Livingstone always

had the Falls, even if the statue of David Livingstone and the best hotel belonged to Southern Rhodesia in the far more prosperous town of Victoria Falls, on the other side of the gorge. In 1955, Livingstonians tried to reverse their history. A figurative whitening of the river was staged, with a very British colonial regatta. So the river and its Falls were re-appropriated by a series of public events culminating in the religious ceremony to mark the discovery by David Livingstone. They lost to other whites immediately. That same year it was announced that the dam to be constructed across the Zambesi to allow the man-made flooding of the largest area of land in the world would service a power-station on the Southern Rhodesia side. Swimming against the prevailing current would seem to be a fate they could never escape from.

White settlers, Livingstone town and the Victoria Falls

The very first European regatta took place June of 1905. This was barely two months after engineers had conquered the distance made by the deep gorge into which the Zambesi thundered. The new bridge brought the railway to this remote region and met Cecil Rhodes's strict instructions, that it should run close enough to the Victoria Falls so that passengers could, if they wished, in the rainy season, feel its spray on their faces.[15] Previously, it had taken 'pioneers' and their attendant possessions, including cattle, weeks to traverse the river at the Old Drift, a nearby crossing-point long worked out and used by Africans. This and other nearby African crossings had been used to move people, goods and warring parties for centuries. The land around the steep slopes of the Falls had also used for centuries as sacred sites.[16] In the nineteenth century the dominant Lozi people in the region had their lives disrupted by Makololo and Ndebele crossing the river from the south. Having recovered from those incursions, they now faced a steady trickle of British South Africa company officials, prospectors, missionaries, gang masters, cattle traders, merchants and game hunters, all desperate enough to brave the wide expanse of water near the Falls. Now the river could be traversed in minutes with Rhodes' railway pushing through from South Africa enroute to the Copperbelt and beyond there,

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[15] 'The Zambezi Regatta, 1953: Rhodes Centenary Celebrations', p. 3. Brochure priced 1/-. Published by the *Livingstone Mail*, LMA, H4/13. The distance from the top of the bridge's highest span to the ground below was equal to that of the height of the dome of St Paul's Cathedral. For a short, popular history of Livinsgstone see K. Ese, *An historical guide to Livingstone Town* (Harare, 1996). I am grateful to Mr Humphry Chinjuli Mhango for a copy of this book and for giving me a short history of the town, in Livingstone, on 28 June 2009.

[16] Interview with the current Chieftainess, Mukuni Village, Victoria Falls, 26th June 2009.

the Congo.[17] The price had been high in African labour. Along parts of the railway line, it was said, Paulings, the contractors, had dug one grave for every sleeper laid.[18]

Two years later, in 1907, enough permanent settlers were surviving malaria to form the Livingstone Boat Club. It was quickly renamed the Zambesi Boat Club and took over the assets of a number of smaller clubs sprouting up along its banks, enabling it to build a brick boat house and purchase seven boats. In 1908 a small light railway was built to connect the growing settlement of Livingstone with the club house and a second regatta was held in 1909. Sensing an opportunity for marketing the region, the British South Africa Company, the chartered company that would remain in charge of the administration of Northern Rhodesia until 1924, asked the club to organise an international regatta for 1910. Unable to pull that off, nevertheless a sculling contest was set up between the reigning champion from New Zealand and Ernest Barry from England, with £1,000 prize money. Then disaster. A hurricane destroyed the boathouse and a number of boats in December 1912.

Two years later another storm wrecked more craft and by the end of the First World War, the club was virtually moribund. Nevertheless, the club flourished again during the 1920s, as the new boathouse committee raised enough money to buy new boats.[19] Membership rose to 175. But then, more setbacks occurred, local and global in origin. In the 1930s, the world depression hit the region badly; the colony's administrative capital was relocated from Livingstone to Lusaka; and a young man drowned in the swimming enclosure. Membership had fallen to 40 by 1938, and the Second World War all but finished it off. The small but dedicated group of old club members worked to restore its former glory and in, 1947, the first regatta for 14 years was held. In 1948, a University crew from South Africa visited, further popularising their activities. In 1953, the Centenary of Cecil Rhodes was celebrated by a four-day Zambesi regatta in July organised by the boat club 'under the auspices of the Northern Rhodesia government and the sponsorship of the municipality of Livingstone'. The event proved so successful that when the question of the 1955 Livingstone commemoration was first discussed, another extensive regatta was poised to dominate the celebrations, having raised a healthy profit. Collaboration with southern African white had proved lucrative in the year in which Federation had been launched. With the Governor, Sir Gilbert Rennie, listed as patron and the Mayor as its honourary president, the roll call of stewards, organisers, umpires,

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[17] L.H. Gann, A history of Northern Rhodesia: Early days to 1953 (London, 1964), p. 139.

[18] R. Murray-Hughes, 'Livingstone, 1910-11', *Northern Rhodesian Journal*, 4 (1957), p. 359.

[19] 'The Zambezi Regatta 1953', p. 4.

judges, controllers, timekeepers and general helpers, reveals a largely British, un-aristocratic large pool of 'esquires'.[20]

In many ways, this little history encapsulates the fate of white settlement in Livingstone up to 1955 and typifies many of the distinctive features of life as a tiny ruling elite in the protectorate more generally. Fortunes ebbed and flowed. Remoteness, often an attraction to some, was never enough to provide immunity from the world at large. And by 1955, the future looked better than it had for a while. Rivers set Northern Rhodesia apart from other settler colonies. A number of large river systems in the territory, including that of the Congo, their flood plains, attendant swamps and semi-permanent tributaries, inflicted natural barriers and water-borne diseases no societies had ever been able to ignore. (Livingstone, the explorer, had been searching for the headwaters of the Nile when he perished in 1873, finally beaten by constantly tramping through swampy flood plains, dying slowly and painfully in the village of headman Chitmabo, in central Zambia). The 290,587 square miles of territory that made up Northern Rhodesia was described by its official white historian, Lewis Gann, as 'a land of limitless horizons, and nothing moves the stranger more than the sheer immensity of the veld.'[21] Being more central Africa than southern Africa made it feel that much more remote. The distance from Lusaka to Cape Town, for example, was as far as that from London to Kiev. Despite the breadth of landscape, white settlers were often hedged in by company rule, the Colonial Office and then African self-determination.

White settlement generally followed another transport system - the railway belt from Livingstone to Lusaka, the mining camps, such as Broken Hill, or new administrative substations. The population of white settlers remained fairly modest: it was 'a man's world' and at best 'a gigantic village community spread over a vast territory.' Numbers did grow but African death rates decreased, especially infant mortality, and so their numbers rose too. In 1911, there were 1,497 settlers to an estimated 826,000 Africans. Numbers slowly crept up to 10,000 in 1935 (to 1.4 million Africans) and had more than doubled by 1946 to just under 22,000 (1.6 million Africans). In the 1950s as the Copperbelt went into boom overdrive, the figures are astonishing, jumping from 37,221 in 1951 to 64,800 in 1956 (the African equivalent figures being 1.7 milllion up to 2.1 million).[22] Whilst having a small portion of rich land owning settlers concentrated in the Southern Province among the Tonga cattle-owning peoples, including the standard British aristocratic eccentric or two, and at the other extreme, poor whites, initially South African 'bywoners' or colonial born

[20] Ibid., p. 5.
[21] Gann, History of Northern Rhodesia, p. ix.
[22] See Gann, History of Northern Rhodesia, passim.

British, most settlers were lower middle class, skilled artisans. By the boom of the 1950s, poor whites were less of a problem and the average annual income, though still not very high, was £1,000. Northern Rhodesia was therefore becoming more of a permanent place of residence rather than just somewhere to work temporarily; it was no longer 'a land without grandparents', though three quarters of the white population in 1951 had still only lived there for five years or less.[23] It was also becoming less British: for a quarter of the European population English was not their first language. The forging of a separate and dominant white Northern Rhodesia identity – being 'pro-national' – continued therefore to be an elusive goal, having to compete with notions of pan-regional Rhodesianess, of being a colonialist, a Britisher, Livingstonian and so on. Nevertheless shared white racial solidarity but also a shared self-styled and proud provincial identity, attitude and political positioning – a form of what Pilossof identifies elsewhere as "affirmative parochialism"[24] – usually papered over these cracks. Defining themselves against a range of 'other', usually inferior, or that which was now lost was a favourite pastime.

By 1955, racial attitudes had barely altered since the first Victorian wave of small scale settlement at turn of the century. The British Empire generally stayed a Victorian empire – a loose family concern, even in its twilight run by the grandsons who had sat on the knees of its original architects. According to Gann, attitudes to segregation, particularly a rigid colour bar in towns, were never very different from attitudes in South Africa. Residential segregation in towns like Livingstone commenced when Africans first began to seek employment early on in the twentieth century. Welfare legislation was always minimal. The 1908 Masters and Servants Ordinance had a typically harsh and militaristic approach to African employment law with heavy punishments. The use of force to discipline was not unusual. Gann argues that the arrival of cars and lorries in the 1920s expanded the white population, reduced some of the horrible burdens literally placed on African men, but increased the distance between the races.[25] According to Rotberg, by the 1930s, the 'tiny frontier ruling class' that was increasingly made up of miners and railway workers was 'racist, fascist-leaning' and the Colonial Office's position paper setting out the paramountcy of native interest had provoked 'fevered outrage' amongst the small and scattered white population.[26] Africans were first included in the Legislative Council in 1948 (two representatives selected from an African

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[23] Ibid., p. 443.

[24] Rory Pilossof, 'The Unbearable Whiteness of Being: white farming voices in Zimbabwe and their narration of the recent past, circa 1970-2004 (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Department of History, University of Sheffield, August 2010).

[25] Ibid., p. 171.

[26] Rotberg, *Black heart,* pp. 170-171.

Representative Council). Pressure had come from London, where many on the Left saw settler society as 'nothing more than an over-paid and under-brained pigmentocracy'.[27]

That is not how white Northern Rhodesians saw themselves by the 1950s as their copper export economy boomed, looking more healthy than that of Southern Rhodesia. After WWII, the more direct rule from the Colonial Office included the Labour Party's view of African welfare organisations and trade union activity as welcome practice for an eventual multi-racial electoral roll.[28] For Colonial Office liberals, Federation was a compromise that would give Europeans a near monopoly of political power in the present but held them to the notion of multiracial partnership in the future with a view to bolstering the prospects of Africans in Southern Rhodesia where they were the lowest out of the three territories. Most settlers went along with the Federation, as a way of securing what they always dreamt of: 'autonomy sufficient to arrange once and for all the social and political order within as they said "their own country"'; or the kind of partnership that existed between *a horse and rider*, as the first Prime Minister of the Federation, Sir Godfrey Huggins, had once indelicately explained it.[29]

Most educated Africans and Indians understood this reality and opposed the move, fearing, as always, any loss of paternal influence exercised by London. The Federation's life was short and would be remembered for having speeded up the very process of African political emancipation it had been designed to head off. But in 1955 that scenario was not in the minds of most settlers in Northern Rhodesia. Only a tiny sliver of radical liberal whites who now began to finally pool their 'meagre resources together' regarded the concessions to Africans as 'piffle', daring to suggest in private that 'we must try to see the world through African eyes'.[30]

In 1955, Livingstone, the town, still had an American wild-west meets a large gin and tonic feeling. Remote and quaint, it offered the visitor a mixture of imperial frontier, English suburbia and, at a safe distance, elemental Africa. It had an extraordinary set of features that made it exceptional, not just within Northern Rhodesia, but in comparison to British colonial Africa as a whole.

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[27] Gann, History of Northern Rhodesia, p. 390.

[28] For a history of this new ideology see chapters 2 and 3 of J. Lewis, *Empire State-Building: War and welfare in Kenya, 1925-52* (Oxford, 2000).

[29] F. Dotson & L.O. Dotson, *The Indian minority of Zambia, Rhodesia, and Malawi* (New Haven and London, 1968), pp. 308-09. Tellingly, of the 25 original invitees to the Bandung Conference mentioned in the introduction only the Central African Federation chose not to send a representative. South Africa was not invited.

[30] A. Scott to S. Gore-Browne, 14 November 1955, quoted in Rotberg, *Black heart*, p. 303, fn. 15.

First and foremost, it had sidled up to the most impressive natural phenomenon of the southern hemisphere. The Victoria Falls ensured it was on the tourist's trail and a popular venue for conferences despite its remoteness. One of the earliest gatherings was a General Missionary Conference for Northern Rhodesia held in 1914, which gave expression for the first time to 'an incipient Christian "public opinion" in the territory'.[31] Later, it was the venue for the many constitutional conferences on the vexed issue of amalgamation. It was one of the oldest towns in the protectorate with the oldest Anglican church.

Of course it had all the standard pioneer stories of struggle and moral fibre. Harold Williams had arrived there in 1914, aged 11. Later he recalled how the town initially had only sandy roads and a network of tracks running over them. 'People moved around in trolleys', he reminisced in 1955, 'which were pushed by Africans'.[32] Electricity was rationed by the British South Africa Company and lights went off at midnight, with a wink 10 minutes before as a gentle warning. Although an open air cinema was set up 1916, 'there was no screen (…) people brought their own deckchairs, and, in the rainy season, wore raincoats'. It had the oldest Protestant church in honour of Livingstone. It had Africans, the backbone of much of the town's growth, segregated.[33] Nevertheless there was nostalgia for the tough, disease-ridden early days, remembered as a time of free spirited individualism – an era of rule bending and a world where there was no jargon such as 'inflation' or 'the welfare state', when the local bank manager, Swanson, also dealt in elephant tusks, gold watches and the odd firearm.

The new bridge completed in 1905 had made the Old Drift crossing redundant; the small settlement made up of wooden trading posts and shacks that had sprung up on the riverbank was living on borrowed time. The local administrator, Robert Coryndon planned a new town away from the malarial infested swamps and concern was high to 'preserve the features of the Falls'.[34] There seems to have been little discussion or dispute over the name. With the town on the south side called Victoria Falls, the choice of the explorer's name seems to have been inevitable.

By 1907, the town had become the administrative capital of North-Western Rhodesia and, after the 1911 amalgamation of the two regions into which the colony had been hitherto subdivided, the capital of the whole Northern Rhodesia. More settlers began to arrive and set up businesses. Most famous are the Susman brothers, two young Jewish entrepreneurs, originally from

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31 Gann, History of Northern Rhodesia, p. 116.

32 'N.R. Pioneer's farewell message: "Leadership needed to command the respect of Africans"', *Northern News*, 15 November 1955.

33 Gann, History of Northern Rhodesia, p. 368.

34 W.H. Milton, 'Letter about preservation of features', October 1903, NAZ, A1/2/3.

Lithuania, who obtained a licence to trade from the British South Africa Company in 1901, buying cattle at very low prices from Africans and then herding them south.[35] Not untypical, Livingstone would become the home to a number of traders of non-British origins. But it was an Englishman who gave the town another distinctive feature. Frank Leopold Moore had been among the last to leave the Old Drift. He was the local chemist. But to describe him as just that would be the equivalent of saying that Hitler liked going abroad. Against incredible odds, he set up a weekly newspaper, the *Livingstone Mail*, in 1906, which for many years was the most read paper in the territory, with its no-nonsense partisan editorials and coverage of government business.[36] By the 1940s, just before he died, Moore was pro-Federation; but as the business interests of the North continued to be subordinated to those of the South after its creation, had he lived on, it is doubtful that enthusiasm would have continued. Moore and his fellow Livingstonians found themselves constantly swimming against the prevailing currents. Livingstone's white community lost out twice, first to Lusaska, which became the new administrative capital in 1935, and then to the Copperbelt, which became the main attraction for new immigrants after the war. 1955 came just before it would lose out a third time to African self-determination. However, Livingstone's white population had always managed to punch above its weight. The *Mail* stamped a Livingstone perspective on much of Northern Rhodesia's white settlerdom for a long while.

Despite being the birth place of the territory's brawn – the natural home of the outdoor settler man – it also became the brain capital of the colony in 1937, when the prestigious Rhodes-Livingstone Institute was founded, incorporating the town's three-year-old Museum, and becoming the first social science research institute in Africa.[37] The museum was the brainchild of Governor Hubert Young, keen to preserve for posterity 'traditional handicrafts (…) and native made objects' that were rapidly being 'replaced by cheap imported goods'.[38] The Government set aside funds for the collection of African artefacts. In 1934, this growing collection was given its first home in the old Magistrate's Court in Livingstone, called the David Livingstone Memorial Museum. A year later it moved out of the single large room with a veranda, into the newly

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[35] H. Macmillan, An African trading empire: The story of Susman Brothers & Wulfsohn, 1901-2005 (London, 2005), pp. 18-19.

[36] I. Graham,'Newspapers in Northern Rhodesia', *Northern Rhodesia Journal*, 5 (1964), p. 421.

[37] For the fascinating story of this influential institute particularly in the history of British anthropology, see Lyn Schumaker, *Africanizing anthropology: Fieldworks, networks, and the making of cultural knowledge in Central Africa* (Durham and London, 2001).

[38] *The Rhodes-Livingstone Museum, 1934-1951, Report for 1950*.

vacated United Services Club, empty following the Government's relocation to Lusaka. The new Institute, it was hoped, would help compensate the town for its loss of status and capitalise on its tourism, and act as an "institutional cultural broker" according to Schumaker, gently educating the white population to respect African cultures.[39] It brought a new type of white to the area certainly. Academics and researchers often rented large villas on the hill overlooking the town. But these new arrivals did not always easily fit into the town's established white community, having little in common with the manual, blue-collar workers. White society at best viewed them as romantic with regard to their views on race, but continued mostly to deride them, as they did administrators, for their 'negrophilia'. Nevertheless, the Museum's journal, the *Northern Rhodesia Journal*, allowed amateurs to publish pieces on a mind-boggling range of subjects, and also circulated short notes and advertisements of events and related organisations such as the Northern Rhodesian Society. Academic luminaries, such as Max Gluckman and Audrey Richards, spent time at the Institute, enhancing its reputation as a pioneering centre promoting progressive racial thinking and race relations for the time. All of which underscores the diversity of whites in the town by 1950s, adding to the influx of post-war Polish refugees. For many that home was still temporary, such as the men from the RAF, sent there for recuperation.

Post-war Livingstone came close to flourishing. The effects of the Depression had been somewhat ameliorated by the end of World War Two. A new international airport was built. There was a building boom. The town even made an unsuccessful bid in 1952 to become the new capital of the proposed Federation.[40] Daily life was easier. Sanitation was still hit and miss, but the government had built a cold storage plant in 1942. Fresh supplies of vegetables were less of a problem. By the late 1940s a regular supply of milk was available. The poorest of the poor whites had dwindled in number, from the first 'bywoners', the Afrikaner labourers employed on Afrikaner farms who lived in mud huts, to the railway guards and ticket collectors who worked night shifts. They, moreover, were often itinerant and kept apart from the main social groups in town, unless hospitalised due to their high levels of exposure to malaria.[41]

The experience of the majority African population was a different one. By the mid-1950s more and more Africans, barred from shops, hotels and other public places, were feeling the psychological pain of 'social discrimination', which manifested itself particularly sharply in a tourist town like Livingstone. Officially, talk was of partnership but, ironically, in 1952, at one of

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[39] Schumaker, *Africanizing anthropology*, p. 54.
[40] Macmillan, *African Trading Empire*, p. 190.
[41] Murray-Hughes, 'Livingstone, 1910-11', p. 360.

Livingstone's many conferences, the Closer Association Conference, the British hosts received complaints from local whites because African delegates were put up in a hostel used by white civil servants.[42]

For the white community Livingstone was still their good-time town, 'no better playground than the Zambesi River and its banks above the Victoria Falls',[43] with romance and danger, pastel pink lunar rainbows, bars and stores selling cheap South African brandy.[44] Hotels hosted a 'bust' or lock ins. Women could have fun too. A Livingstone Ladies Rifle Club was established in 1906. Amateur dramatics gripped the town from the beginning; men and women performed on stage even as early as 1906, when the Court House hosted a 'Grand Evening Concert' in aid of the Livingstone Church Building fund.[45] The Prince of Wales, when he visited in 1925, enjoyed his evening of dancing so much he insisted the clocks be turned back for an extra hour so they could continue. The local cure for Blackwater Fever was champagne based.[46] If melancholia and depression rolled into town like a river mist, or the heat and the millions of flying ants got too much by October, the 'suicide month', at least a boat trip, car racing at the aerodrome, a game of bowls, or a round of golf were never far away.[47] And it was on this past and spirit that the organisers sought to capitalise during the 1955 centenary.

For the town was once again experiencing a slump. Much of the impetus for the planned celebrations came from a hard-nosed business point of view, always central to understanding white settler sensibilities, or lack thereof, throughout the colonial period. As the next section will show, the way that these anniversaries coincided gave the town an opportunity to use advertising to promote itself as a chief tourist destination for whites and the long dreamed of 'Henley-upon-Thames' of Central Africa.[48] Yet the organisation of events was

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42 Rotberg, *Black heart*, p. 295.

43 Submission for bid to become the capital of the Federation, July 1953, p.10. Rhodes House, Oxford, Mss. Welensky, 172/6.

44 Mrs E. Lawrence, 'Memoirs of life in Northern Rhodesia, 1948-64', n.d. p. 24, Rhodes House, Mss.Afr.s.1904. This accounted for many a death she insists.

45 Programme of Grand Evening Concert, 16 April 1906, LMA, H3/2. Men and women sang solos, duets and played the violin and performed Scottish airs in the first half. After the interval came a play. See also Gann, *History of Northern Rhodesia*, p.140.

46 Macmillan, *African trading empire*, pp.27, 148-149.

47 Memoirs of Christine Fitzhenry, 'African Dust', esp. p. 72, Rhodes house, Mss.Afr.s.367-369.

48 This phrase was used a number of times by locals and tourist officials to refer to the town when making plans for the celebrations. Its origins lie in the first attempts to market Livingstone as a tourist destination in Britain by Thomas Cook, the travel

not without tensions, frustrations or back-biting. To an extent some of this is to be expected and normal for any organised set of social events trying to meet a range of expectations from a diverse community with a limited budget. Yet – as will also be seen – the Northern Rhodesian government bizarrely remained unenthusiastic and later despaired at the lack of African participation. And what of the memorialisation of David Livingstone? As the final section of the essay will argue, his legacy was a less straightforward one than might initially have been expected.

The serious business of commemoration

When it came to obeying Dr. Livingstone's call for the spread of 'Christianity and commerce' in Central Africa, of these, it was commerce that seems to have been uppermost in the minds of the municipality in the run up to the 1955 commemorations. The temptation was to see the event as a grand strategy to attract visitors from the Federation and South Africa (and hopefully some more permanent immigrants – white of course) to a town that they still optimistically imagined could be the Henley-upon-Thames of Central Africa. This was a dream of a town that embodied English tradition, upper middle-class values and a high standard of living, with the best of an outdoors based lifestyle with all the athleticism, prowess and 'gay' society associated with river sports but with just enough metropolitan sophistication not to make it feel like a provincial backwater.

The travel sector had seen a golden opportunity too. Using a drawing of the iconic image of the Victorian Falls in the rainy season, festooned by exotic palm trees, the Central African Airways had recently begun advertising long weekend trips to the Victoria Falls Hotel flying from the Copperbelt for £27 & 8 shillings.[49] This famous hotel was on the Southern Rhodesia side. Livingstone town had always used the iconic image of the falls for its marketing efforts, regularly redrawing or re-photographing them through the decades but had remained the poorer resort in relation to its neighbour.[50] Many in the town viewed the centenary celebrations as part of an ongoing commercial bid, not least the *Livingstone Mail*. Its editorial after the start of the regatta in July headlined 'WE MUST ALL HELP'. Paying tribute to all the voluntary labour involved in this and other events, the paper still reminded its readers that 'much of Livingstone's prosperity depends upon events such as these and conferences

agent, once the bridge was completed: See J. McGegor, *Crossing the Zambezi: The politics of landscape on a Central African frontier* (Oxford, 2009), pp. 82-105.

49 *Northern News*, 18 November 1955.

50 For a charming official pamphlet with an art deco style imposed on the Falls on its cover, see 'Hints on seeing the Victoria Falls', undated pamphlet, LMA.

(…).'[51] The call was heeded. In late November, after the celebrations had finished, another editorial lavishly praised the Mayor's decision to hold a cocktail party to thank all the 'backroom boys and girls' for their crucial part in making the celebrations run so smoothly.[52] The paper was particularly pleased that in this 'modern world' where the people who did the work were usually ignored, Livingstone town was bucking the trend with an event for nearly 100 helpers. Not surprisingly since it was a newspaper in a decidedly working man's colonial setting, it was quick to pay respects to 'the workers'. There was, however, no mention of the African labour involved, which must have been quite significant.

If pulling together for the commercial sake of the town was one of the successful aspects of the year, record-breaking tourist figures hint at a commercial boom. Riding high on the wave of the Regatta, the *Livingstone Mail* was happy to report that the 'white population' had almost doubled thanks to visitors from the Federation the Union, Sweden, France and the Belgian Congo.[53] Reedon Rodway, the tourist officer, told the newspaper that 150 people had visited his office on the previous Thursday alone, a record. Shop owners also reported a 'rush for curious' with African sellers having their 'bargaining powers' put to the test. Hoteliers were also apparently doing a roaring trade. Nearly 1,000 people had watched the regatta, many apparently agreeing that it was 'the most successful event ever held on the Zambezi'. Also the level of local participation was celebrated as a breakthrough, as 'Livingstone people shook themselves out of their usual apathy'. The paper went on to describe the four-day event as 'the most ambitious ever staged in southern Africa'.

'Thrills, chills and overspills' was how the paper summed up the visitor experience. Pictured alongside was a photo of the Zambezi's B rowing team leaving the jetty (the head of the river having sprung a leak and sunk shortly after the start of the race). The Commodore of the Powerboat section told the paper that the event had drawn 200 entries, the only disappointment being that one of the competitors from Britain could not attend due to a strike. There was much local pride that to house competitors and visitors a 'tent town' had been built which boasted its own police station, telephone call box and cafe. High-profile visitors had been attracted, including the Lord Chancellor of Britain and his wife, Lord and Lady Kilmuir, and the Governor General of the Federation and his wife had made a private visit. Predictably perhaps, the *Livingstone Mail* also enthusiastically reported the success of the agricultural and industrial show,

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[51] *Livingstone Mail* 8 July, 1955.
[52] *Livingstone Mail*, 22 November, 1955.
[53] *Livingstone Mail*, 15 July, 1955.

with 3,000 people drawn there apparently by such attractions as the first Angoni Bull ever seen in Livingstone and a working display of an overhead irrigation scheme. Another source of pride covered by the paper, but with no photos, were the 300 African girl guides at the Victoria Falls Centenary camp.[54] The commemoration had also secured Livingstone as the venue for the Federal Tourist Development Board's conference the day after the closing ceremony. It was the first time it had met outside Salisbury (now Harare).[55]

Local traders had certainly taken advantage of events to advertise themselves as a modern town. Eleven pages out of the twenty making up the official souvenir programme, out of its 20 pages, were either full-scale single advertisements or had adverts down either side of one central column of text. But to get such a publication done, Southern Rhodesia had to be involved, produced and printed by a travel company in Salisbury. The Zambezi Trading Co. Ltd advertised itself as 'the oldest established firm in Northern Rhodesia' selling wines and spirits groceries, general merchants. Leopold Moore's dispensing chemist also offered photographic film development as well as American cosmetics, such as Elizabeth Arden and Max Factor. Livingstone, we learn, had a 60 minute dry-cleaning and steam laundry service care of H.G. Poohas. At Sober's Curios 'native craftsmen using Rhodesian timbers, ivory, buffalo horn, and vegetable ivory' could be observed at work where scale models (thankfully) of Livingstone's statue, animal lamps and stuffed crocodiles were for sale. Longevity, quality and the latest imports were recurrent selling points.

Luxury goods were not the town's bread and butter. The only clothing shop advertised was '"Fix" outfitters'. More plentiful were companies offering a range of building supplies, including timber and sanitary ware, as it was delicately phrased. Also car and transport dealers were in abundance. Only national and regional companies could afford a full page. Castle Beers offered a toast to the citizens of Livingstone to the next hundred years 'yesterday, today and tomorrow'.[56] The Standard Bank of South Africa, 'Rhodesia's first bank', chose a short tribute to Cecil Rhodes. African people were all but absent in this marketing strategy; the suggestion was an Africa without Africans. The exception was an advert for Barclays bank which merged a picture of a military type establishment with an aerial shot of the Victoria Falls and a smiling African woman grinding food. Livingstone was making a bid to capture a

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[54] This, it was noted, gave the Quartermaster of Coillard Memorial girls school the nightmare task of feeding 350 people over 14 days.

[55] 'Tourist Board Meets in Livingstone', *Livingstone Mail*, 11 November, 1955.

[56] From the adverts one can see that not all shops and businesses could afford telephones in 1955. And the length of the telephone numbers for those who did, gives a nice clue as to which businesses had been connected first.

tourist market that was based in Southern Rhodesia and South Africa. To do that, it had to show a quaint, picturesque Africa that was home from home and essentially white.

Indeed, looking at the photographs in the *Livingstone Mail*'s *Centenary Pictorial Supplement* published in November, one could be forgiven for thinking this *was* Henley-upon-Thames.[57] Photograph followed photograph conveying a panorama of classic British sporting and cultural scenes. Young women rowers, radiating Hollywood glamour in their slightly risqué shorts; white spectators standing around the Livingstone monument, jam-packed with people dressed up in hats, Sunday best and floral dresses; feathered senior dignitaries greeting the mayor; the grinning faces of the victorious bowls team, each man in open white shirt and matching white sun hats. There were no African political demonstrations to sidestep. Indeed no Africans, for there were very few photographs of non-whites, apart from an African soldier raising the flag in the retreat ceremony at the end of the celebrations (next to a photo of the Governor General) and a photograph of black children in part of the crowd watching the Livingstone commemoration, with the headline the Indian community was 'well represented'.

The sweet smell of success also rises from the messages of congratulations bestowed on the celebrations and read out at the Municipality headquarters soon after the rededication of the Livingstone statue brought proceedings to a final close. The Governor General congratulated everyone in his telegram for what would forever be 'a historic event'. Sir Arthur Benson, the Governor of Northern Rhodesia, had sent a letter (to be framed) in which he wrote, as if in a sceptical school master's end of term report, of how 'the very high standard set at the opening of the celebrations has not only been maintained throughout but continuously improved upon.' A Royal Geographical Society representative and the Archbishop of Central Africa, who had been invited to attend the final ceremony, had also written in praise of the event.[58] There was even a letter read out from Senior Chief Chitanda of Broken Hill, perhaps one of the two chiefs mentioned elsewhere in the press who attended the closing ceremony in colourful traditional costume. This was great race relations propaganda, seemingly endorsing the celebration's progressive attitude to mixing with black people. Expressing his gratitude in highly stylised prose, he 'wanted to recall that very interesting occasion (…) which I would call a non-colour bar gathering in Victoria Hall', where, he continued, 'we had the chance of talking to the Europeans, some of whom did not know the Africans'.

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[57] Centenary pictorial supplement, encl. in *Livingstone Mail*, November 1955.
[58] Extract cut out from an unknown regional newspaper, LMA, H/5.

The huge distance that still existed on racial grounds by the 1950s is astonishing, but the organisers must have felt they had done their bit, for the Chief went on to pronounce that 'if such practice continues, I am quite sure that the whole question of partnership will be resolved'. Unlikely. As the Governor General, Lord Llewellyn, also reveals in his telegram, segregation remained the norm. Thanking them for the delightful dinner and luncheon, he expressed his appreciation for having met 'so many distinguished citizens at the former, and was so glad that you included the African chiefs in the latter'.

Yet were the centenary celebrations really such an unblemished success? Evidence suggests not. By mid-November, the town was once again in a slump. 'We had a bit of a boom in July with the Victoria Falls celebrations', a spokesman for the Zambezi Trading Company told a reporter from the *Central Africa Post*, 'but the present slacking off has more than made up for this'.[59] The removal of more government departments from the town was listed as the prime reason; also significant was the way that the recent boom in building had encouraged more businesses to open up without enough long-term trade to sustain them. Naturally, Mayor Harry Thom was upbeat and 'not at all worried'. Likewise, the local Chamber of Commerce was buoyant. The legacy of the centenary advertising blitz was that, according to its Chairman, a new publicity association had been established that was busy preparing a brochure to advertise the town. Such private initiative clearly shows that they did not feel they could rely entirely on national or federal support in this area.

More seriously, the main thrust of the centenary celebrations – launching the town as the tourist destination for Southerners as well as northerners – faced basic obstacles to do with the town's infrastructure. These were hinted at as a list of 'shortcomings' in the *Livingstone Mail*'s candid editorial at the time of the regatta. The gravity of not having a 'proper main road' was not lost on visitors, though some of them generously excused the town agreeing that they were 'modern pioneers' and that the municipality had had to develop modern amenities in the space of 10 years 'when others had 30 to 40 years'.[60] In the list of further problems, a picture emerges of a town that was very far from a Henley-upon-Thames: outdated shops that needed to be demolished; a cinema without a good screen, sound system and 'a modicum of comfort for its patrons'; and there was only one place serving food after 9pm.

For others, tourism as the basis for the town's regeneration and future prosperity was a red herring. A better road, more side roads, decent pavements and many other amenities too numerous to mention would be nice, wrote one worried businessman to the *Mail* in November, but the basic fact remained that

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[59] *Central Africa Post*, 15 November 1955.
[60] 'We must all help', editorial in the *Livingstone Mail*, 8 July 1955.

the tourist season lasted only two or three months.[61] He wanted effort put into attracting new large industries and into keeping established ones busy. Forget attracting new immigrants as a solution. He was concerned that a large number of skilled artisans who had arrived from Britain many years ago – 'people and their families', who had been 'an asset to the town (…) and the community' – were reluctantly leaving. These were the people, he continued, who participated in social events, gave to charity, spent money and – the heart of their role regarding racial boundary keeping – 'always maintained the high standard of living we are entitled to in this country'. This cry shows a sense in which the life blood of white privilege was dwindling in supply. Beneath the smiling photos, their Livingstone was dying.

Of course many of these shortcomings were beyond the capacity of any set of public events to reverse and were symptomatic of the inevitable decline of necrotic state-protected white settler enclaves throughout colonial Africa by the 1950s. But does this explain the partial flop? Could more have been done in 1955? Even the staunchly loyal *Livingstone Mail* hints at local anger that more could have been. After the closing ceremony, an editorial described a 'storm cloud' looming with regard to the celebrations, whipped up by 'criticism against the poor organisation; criticism against the poor choice of events and consequently the money (taxpayers money) wasted (…).'[62] Considering what was being commemorated had such potential appeal, that the idea of a commemoration was first mooted in 1953, and an organising committee had been convened, had the politics of organising such commemoration obscured or even undermined the economic potential for regeneration?

The Lusaka-Livingstone divide

In September of 1954, the newly reconstituted Livingstone Municipality Centenary Celebrations Committee (the CCC) was in a flap. Their efforts so far had come to very little. It was at the 1953 regatta that the then governor, Sir Gilbert Rennie, had suggested the town mark the forthcoming centenary in a similar way. A subcommittee of the Council had been duly formed but their request in January for a grant of £7,500 from the central government to match their own grant had received a frosty response. Observing the strict hierarchy of colonial administration, the Town Clerk had addressed the complaints to his Provincial Commissioner first (the letter would be duly forwarded to the Chief Secretary), explaining how they were 'hampered in their deliberations' because the regatta committee was planning another event in the same year and the

[61] J. Seligman's letter to the *Livingstone Mail*, 8 November 1955.
[62] 'The uninvited guest', editorial in the *Livingstone Mail*, 18 November, 1955.

government had not decided how to dispense with the surplus raised by the 1953 one.[63] In his covering note, the Provincial Commissioner, Gervas Clay, drew his Chief Secretary's attention to an item in the press that the South African Caledonian Games might be held in Livingstone in 1955. A case for leaving it to others seemed to be mounting.[64] However, local interest grew and in April 1954 the Committee submitted another request, this time for a £15,000 grant, but it was again ignored.[65]

Nor by September had the CCC received many positive responses from the private-sector regarding donations, most seriously nothing as yet from the British South Africa Company.[66] 'Heavy subsidies' would be needed if the celebrations were to be a success, the Town Clerk again warned his Provincial Commissioner. And time was running out. It had taken over seven months just to arrange the transport of racing boats to the river for the last regatta. Also of grave seriousness was the CCC's failure to secure the all-important temporary accommodation for visitors, the town being unable to absorb the hoped-for influx in hotels and guesthouses. Their request to have the prefabricated huts built for the Rhodes Centenary exhibition at Bulawayo was refused by the Northern Rhodesian government on the grounds that, though the huts were owned by the Federation, they were two thirds the property of Southern Rhodesia.[67] Similarly, their request for a loan for 'tentage' was rebuffed by another branch of the central government, on the vague grounds that 'it will not be practicable'.[68] Meanwhile a new rival had entered the field. The Rhodes-Livingstone Museum, in contrast, had secured a whopping grant of £11,400 from the Northern Rhodesian government for their own centenary exhibition, whilst the municipality could only pull in small sums from bodies such as the Nkana-Kitwe lottery, yet its planned events had mushroomed to seventeen.

This lack of enthusiasm and flexibility shown by the central administration in Lusaka was to continue and was largely responsible for a program that was more limited, and more tedious to arrange even in its more modest form, than might otherwise have been the case. Manson, the Chief Secretary in Lusaka, was happy to approve funds for the Museum's more serious and academic set of events. The Museum and central government had a closer and easier relationship than Livingstone's town councillors. He may have felt its curator, Dr. Desmond Clark, was more on his level and that the town council was only

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63 Town Clerk to G. Clay (Provincial Commissioner, Southern Province), 29 January 1954, NAZ, SP/4/1/10.
64 G. Clay to Chief Secretary, 2 February 1954, ibid.
65 Town Clerk to PC, Livingstone, 7 September 1954, ibid.
66 Minutes of the Centenary Celebrations Committee, 5 October 1954, ibid.
67 Chief Secretary to Town Clerk, 6 September 1954, ibid.
68 Development Secretary to PC, 24 August 1954, ibid.

operating on a lower class level of river races and games. So he stuck to his position that on the issue of who should pay 'the full or at least the substantial part should fall on the municipality.'[69] There had been a change of Council in the recent elections; the outgoing elected body had not pushed hard to commit its successors to an extensive programme, but the request from the new one had been ignored. Manson later regretted that his position had not been explained nor the new committee consulted. However, the added problem was a much more mundane one. The file had simply got lost, as Manson admitted. But the consequence of all this would sour subsequent relations.

The Secretariat put a brake on early efforts at coordination and planning in other ways too. In June, the Federal Government, in contrast, made it known to Lusaka they would commit £5,000 for the celebrations and suggested a representative from both governments be appointed to serve on the appropriate committee in Livingstone. Federal Deputy Prime Minister Roy Welensky, ex railway man and trades unionist, was personally involved and committed. Anti African advancement and pro closer union between the two territories, he was also committed to being British despite being a Jewish and Afrikaner by birth. The Northern Rhodesian government, however, declined the offer on the grounds that they did not want to interfere with the programme arranged by Clark at the Museum. Evidently they held a more limited view of the town council's plans of 'regatta and games' and of a David Livingstone popular commemoration. Nevertheless, the federal government took up Lusaka's suggestion that they send a representative and they offered two men, including V.W. Hillier, who was in charge of the Central Africa Archives.[70]

Unsurprisingly, in October, local frustration and anger boiled over at a crisis meeting held in Clay's office in Livingstone and including various representatives from the federal and Northern Rhodesian government and the new chairman of the CCC Councillor C.R. Baldwin, a Provincial Engineer employed in the Public Works Department who specialised in water supply and irrigation.[71] Baldwin made his pitch. To match the council's commitment of £10,000 and a temporary extra levy on rates, they were asking for funds from local and federal sources. Unable to commit any more people and events with a non-existent budget, they needed to know what kind of assistance they could expect. Interestingly, he stressed that with the Falls in Southern Rhodesia there had never been 'a great get-together on anything' and that this event would be the 'first centenary of any kind in Northern Rhodesia'. Whilst the federal government representative was sympathetic – the hope was that people would

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[69] Manson to PC, 27 July 1954, in ibid.
[70] Manson to Foster (Ag PC, Southern Province), 30 August 1954, in ibid.
[71] Few personal details emerge from the record.

travel up from South Africa through the Federation for the celebration – Baldwin was told firmly that he could expect nothing from the Southern Rhodesian government, whilst the Northern Rhodesian government was constrained by having already given money to the Museum. Somewhat disingenuously, Lusaka claimed not to have seen a programme before the meeting.[72] Baldwin could not hide his disappointment. A compromise was agreed. The provincial commissioner would ask for funds from Lusaka and the Federation – £7,500 respectively – and Baldwin apologised for having been 'pugnacious'. This was not before a discussion on the merits of whether advertising the planned African participation would improve their chances of 'substantial assistance'. The record of this discussion is rather opaque. It seems that there was no great incentive to widen the events, the feeling being that a regatta for Europeans and Africans, likewise the agricultural show, sports and African river sports, and the darts championship which was to include Africans, were sufficient.[73]

Baldwin clearly felt invigorated and positive. He suggested the creation of various subcommittees, each in charge of various activities that would report to the main committee; he also created an executive committee that met for the first time in October.[74] There were no Africans on either, of course. But the district education officer and municipal African affairs officer had been approached with regard to getting Africans involved in the sports and river events. He sent a copy of the new programme and costs for forwarding to the Chief Secretary also in that month with a request for 'an early reply'.[75] The reply, when it came at the end of December, must have been a bombshell. Since the temporary increase in rates would cost them an extra £2,500, and they had already donated to the museum, the central government declined to make any grant, other than paying for someone appointed by Lusaka to 'take charge' of the organisation (£1,250 base line not to rise above £2,000) and also appointing a government representative to serve on the committee to ensure the celebrations were 'a national rather than a local affair'.[76]

The Governor even attempted to sabotage the supportive response from the Federal Government when he sent a personal note to Sir Roy, scathingly describing the CCC's plans as 'fantastic'. He doubted whether Scottish people

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72 Minutes of a meeting held in the PCs Office, Livingstone, 12 October 1954, NAZ, SP/4/1/10.

73 Ibid.

74 Minutes of the first executive committee meeting for Centenary celebrations, 15 October 1954, NAZ, SP/4/1/10.

75 Ag PC to Chief Secretary, 13 October 1954, in ibid.

76 Chief Secretary to PC, 20 December 1954; PC to C.R. Baldwin, 24 December 1954, in ibid.

would come all the way to the town just to toss the caber and he declared himself 'despondent' over their efforts.[77] Benson had been deliberately misleading in the figures he used, he happily confided after he wrote the note; as he was bent on convincing Sir Roy that the government had been more generous.[78] From their perspective, these events held the prospect of government having to foot the bill. The recent Rhodes Celebration had cost the government £170,000 in order to cover its losses. But there was also probably a class snobbery at work too. For the Governor and his senior officials, Livingstone's plans were parochial, low brow and vulgar.

The triumph of Councillor Baldwin

Lusaka underestimated the tenacity and vision of the man in charge in Livingstone. On Boxing Day Baldwin rattled off a furious reply to their latest objections. They already had an organiser; their own contributions had been scaled down to £4,000; and the committee felt 'quite disheartened at the apparent lack of sympathy with their efforts (which arose out of the suggestion from the government) (…)', and they could not meet a request from the Museum for a grant to pay for the final fittings for their exhibition. Clay was sympathetic to his position, for in his covering letter to the Chief Secretary enclosing the letter, he wrote as much. Lusaka should send a representative down to talk to the committee, he suggested, and he felt the committee was justified in not topping up the Museum's grant.[79]

Clay's efforts at mediation fell on stony ground. By early January, the press had got hold of the story and Baldwin's Boxing Day reply. The *Livingstone Mail* supplemented the news story with an editorial entitled 'Another snub for Livingstone'.[80] The government had once again 'cocked a snook' at the town; the offer of an organiser was described as 'farcical enough to be Gilbertian'. Reflecting a widely held grievance over the government's 'well known' attitude to Livingstone, the paper further accused the central government of having seemingly placing deliberate obstacles in the path of a successful celebration. The museum's events, it continued 'will not be a sufficient inducement' to attract the hoped-for tourists and visitors.

Lusaka was hopping mad. At least two phone calls were made to Livingstone. An official at the secretariat rang Baldwin at his office in the public works department to convey the government's 'considerable

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77 Governor to Sir Roy Welensky, 17 December 1954, NAZ, NR11/34.

78 Note to Administrative Secretary, n.d., in ibid.

79 C.R. Baldwin to PC, 26 December 1954; PC to Chief Secretary, 31 December 1954, NAZ, SP/4/1/10.

80 Editorial and 'Government replies to requests for aid for celebrations', *Livingstone Mail*, 7 January 1955.

dissatisfaction' at his comments appearing in the *Livingstone Mail*. Defending himself, Baldwin insisted the press attended all committee meetings; the extracts were from letters that had been 'put on the table'. Moreover, he claimed he had actually always stopped 'unnecessary criticism' from appearing in print 'at considerable personal embarrassment'.[81] But Baldwin was also now accused of not giving the government revised estimates and of not visiting the secretariat on a recent visit to Lusaka in his capacity as an engineer. He had to get back because of the rainy season, he explained, and once again he set out another programme of planned events, now scaled down to match the funds received. Baldwin's list shows the shortfall in even this modest programme: no money for accommodation, a river pageant, the agricultural show, Caledonian games, the museum request for their display and administrative costs.

Luckily for Baldwin, his PC remained steadfastly sympathetic, reminding Lusaka that there was 'very considerable feeling in Livingstone' that there was 'no adequate support' from the Northern Rhodesian government. Clay also argued that the museum's Pan African conference that had been allocated some of the government's grant would have received the money in any year and was 'extraneous' to the celebrations.[82] Welensky remained unflinching in his support for the Livingstone Council. They had written to him personally before, deepening their solidarity against the establishment and the more upper class and liberal Secretariat. Baldwin meanwhile continued to press his innocence but had to tread very carefully, forced to provide a written account of his interview with a journalist from the *Northern News* at the end of January. He insisted he had begged the reporter not criticise the government 'because I was convinced that they were very sympathetic (…).'[83] But by now a huge chasm had opened up between two essentially rival camps: the Museum (and central government) and the Municipality (and the provincial government), set to be brought together at yet another tortuous meeting of all parties, this time in Lusaka.

Again, one finds evidence of continued central government opposition and pettiness. The Administrative Secretary still complained they knew little of the programme and lamented the lack of government representation on the CCC. Clay said they did know and he would serve on the Committee. The Secretary back peddled, insiting Clay should not be a full member. Clay then said he would prefer to be a full member. (His wife ran the sub-committee dealing with the African Girl Guide event. She was the daughter of Lord Baden-Powell).[84]

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81 C.R. Baldwin to G. Clay, 18 January 1955, NAZ, SP/4/1/10.

82 G. Clay to Chief Secretary, 22 January 1955, in ibid. Clay went on to become director of the Museum in the early 1960s.

83 Note of telephone conversation with *Northern News* journalist by C.R.Baldwin, in ibid.

84 Macmillan, *African trading empire*, p. 191.

The Member for Agriculture and Natural Resources, poured cold water on the suggestion of an agricultural show, since 'he doubted whether Northern Rhodesia was ready (…) at this stage of its agricultural development'; a territorial show would be taking place at Lusaka around the same time as proposed; even that show never attracted many participants from the south. Baldwin was able, however, to change his mind.[85]

Indeed, the lowly Provincial Engineer, whose initial list of events had been considered hugely disappointing for tourism by Lusaka, comes out of this well. It must have helped that he drew unfaltering support from Welensky, who had already established a close connection with Livingstone's councillors and chamber of commerce during its bid to become the Federal capital. And he probably shared a strong dislike of the territorial government's infamous 'niggardly attitude'.[86] Baldwin maintained a tight financial control over the plans, having decided to drop a series of planned events, including the beauty pageant, the floodlighting of the Falls, the Caledonian Games (later the hosting of the Bulawayo Orchestra), rather than over commit the Council. By February 1955 the funds had swollen to £11,600 (£4,000 from the Federal Government and Municipality, respectively; plus money from the Kitwe Lotteries and £500 each from four mining companies).[87] Baldwin also comes across as reasonable and flexible. Whilst they needed a further £4,725, he was asking the Northern Rhodesian government for a £4,000 grant with which he could then see the Council being able to meet Dr Clark's request for a further £2,000 to put the finishing touches on the museum's plans. Similarly on the potentially explosive issue of which senior official was to open which ceremony, he shows he bore no grudge, agreeing that the Governor should open the Pan African conference at the Museum despite a refusal to open their Drama Festival. By March, the Secretariat concluded that 'Mr Baldwin appeared to be an extremely competent organiser', now adding that Clark at the museum preferred to 'paddle his own canoe'.[88]

They never did get their £4,000 grant from the Northern Rhodesian government. They did get half that amount, the government topping up the Museum's shortfall and allowing Baldwin to spend the £2,000 how he liked (though at £2,000 this was only one and a half times more than the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association's donation). Yet, by July, the CCC

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[85] Minutes of meeting held in the Acting Administrator's Office, 17 February 1955, NAZ, SP1/1/32.

[86] Telegram from John Graylin to Roy Welensky, Rhodes House, Mss Welensky 172/6..

[87] Minutes of the Livingstone CCC, 8 February 1955, NAZ, SP1/1/32.

[88] Notes from meeting in Livingstone, 3 February 1955, NAZ, NR11/34.

was able to congratulate itself on the programme of events, now in full swing. Baldwin told his long suffering committee that July had been 'the greatest month of all time in the history of Livingstone' and that the Regatta was 'the greatest ever in Livingstone'.[89] The Boy Scout jamborette had 'proved its worth'; the girl-guide event was jubilantly endorsed as 'the largest and most successful ever held in the Federation'. Baldwin had also been able to keep an eye on the small details, holding a competition among schoolchildren to design a special commemorative Federal stamp and then to have that stamp issue extended up to the climactic end of their celebrations (although unfortunately the winning design was later exposed as a copy of the British stamp).[90] In recognition of his hard work, his Council were keen to thank him with a special gift presentation and dutifully asked for permission.[91]

Nevertheless, it is clear that discontent over tardy organisation, exclusions and omissions, which appeared in the press after the closing ceremony, was also well-founded. Events had to be dropped or scaled down. The issue of accommodation was never adequately resolved and must have considerably restricted visitor numbers. As late as May, the government did make available to the Municipality the use of 17 houses, but this was only after the issue of shortage was raised by an Elected Member of the Legislative Council. It came too late to stop the cancellation of the Bulawayo Orchestra.[92]

Another serious consequence of the delays in getting financial support throughout 1954 was the limitation placed on publicity. There had been a serious delay with the publication of the official brochure. Members of the committee acknowledged there was a 'paucity' of publicity generally, and, very late in the preparation calendar, the committee realised that many people living in Livingstone itself did not know about the forthcoming events. Large posters and leaflets for hand distribution were hastily arranged.[93] It seems reasonable to conclude that the numbers of white settlers travelling from outside Livingstone, and indeed from outside Northern Rhodesia itself, must have been reduced as a consequence.

Harder to prove, but nonetheless likely, is a corresponding limiting knock-on effect upon African participation. On the one hand, there was little incentive to widen African activities from the perspective of the Livingstone organisers, who were inclined financially as well as racially to look gleefully upon the prospect of attracting white participants and tourists from Southern Rhodesia

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89 Minutes of the Livingstone CCC, 28 August 1955, NAZ, SP1/1/32.
90 Minutes of the Livingstone Executive CCC, 5 February 1955, in ibid.
91 Mayor of Livingstone to Chief Secretary, 4 October 1955, in ibid.
92 Note of discussion with the Administrative Sec, 12 May 1955; Acting town clerk to PC, Southern Province, 26 May 1955, in ibid.
93 Minutes of CCC, 3 May 1955, in ibid.

and South Africa; too much emphasis on Africans and, sadly from our perspective today, those dreamed-of visitors may very well have been put off, if not repulsed. Yet, on the other hand, evidence exists that some efforts regarding Africans were once again held back by a lack of finance and vision from the central government in particular. For in January the committee made it known that they wanted to invite the Paramount Chief of the Barotse and the royal barge to be part of the Regatta.[94] Alarm bells rang immediately within the office of the Resident Commissioner in Barotseland. Did the committee have enough funds, he asked the provincial Commissioner, for such a 'considerable undertaking'? He knew only too well that this would entail 'a vast entourage of indabas, paddlers, drums (…)', and the Paramount Chief would expect to be 'properly received and looked after'.[95] Funds at this time did not match the vision of such a spectacular addition to the events. Even a more modest suggestion regarding Africans was also somewhat truncated. As part of the Regatta, each district commissioner stationed alongside the river received a letter from the CCC asking them to encourage local head men and chiefs to put forward local men – paddlers – who would bring their own 'dugouts' and so provide 'additional interest' with 'mokoro racing'.[96] Whilst the offer of food and accommodation was made, critically, there was no offer of help with transport, since the means and the funds were not there.

This and limited district government involvement on the committee helped to ensure that African participation was mostly as girl guides, or footballers thanks to Livingstone's Welfare Officer. As for the final financial reckoning, the books were eventually balanced and closed but not before the council had to fork out an extra £500 and the Town Clerk write a begging letter to the Deputy Commissioner for Police, asking him if he would kindly waiver the fee of £31.10 for the Northern Rhodesia Police Band. He agreed.[97] The Mayor's request that Baldwin be presented with a gift for his work was rejected by the Chief Secretary. Baldwin was a civil servant, he reminded the Mayor, and therefore subject to 'an absolute prohibition' on the acceptance of valuable presents. In view of the recent difficulties, such a curt response seems unsurprising.[98] Not that Baldwin would have minded. For by 1956 he was

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94 Secretary of the CCC to Resident Commissioner, 11 January, 1955, in ibid.

95 Resident Commissioner to G.Clay, 17 January 1955, in ibid.

96 Secretary of the CCC to DCs (Mongu, Sengana, Shesheke, Livingstone), 13 January 1955, in ibid.

97 Financial statement for CCC, 3 July 1958; Provincial Commissioner to Town Clerk, 12 April 1956, in ibid.

98 The Mayor (H.L. Thom) left the meeting for this discussion which was temporarily chaired by Councillor Slutzkin. Ibid.

awarded an OBE. Perhaps it had been the Federal Government, which had supported the celebrations from the beginning, that had recommended him.

David Livingstone's confused legacy and the politics of race

Even the events to commemorate David Livingstone were subjected to the same kinds of obstacles. On Wednesday 16 November, the large bronze statue of Livingstone which loomed large over the Falls, though on the Southern Rhodesia side, was to be the object of a day-long set of official commemorations in the north. It was also a public holiday for the territory: as the *Livingstone Mail* confidently predicted, 'A TRULY GREAT DAY.'[99] The statue had first been unveiled in 1934, organised and paid for by the Federated Caledonian Society of South Africa.[100]

Again, events were significantly reined in by the Secretariat. Livingstone's organising committee had initially envisaged a much bigger occasion and wanted to invite royalty. The latter plan was dismissed as 'absolutely out of the question'. The proposed pageant on boats was deemed to be dangerous and 'may lead to an accident'; the suggestion that a new monument be erected on one of the islands dismissed as 'not wise'.[101] For months, many at the top doubted that the event would take place at all. Rumours did the rounds that it was not going to happen. 'The only thing about this that I am not particularly clear in my own mind is that the celebrations planned for the "Day of Rededication" or whatever the Livingstone Centenary Celebrations Committee propose to call it, will come off', noted an irritated Governor in September. 'In the first place, let me say that it has never had my full support (…)', he continued.[102] Only when the Governor General agreed to attend after the committee took the initiative in inviting dignitaries, did the Secretariat become actively involved in the guest list and advising on protocol. Their huge concern was that the chiefs be invited. The Governor was absolutely insistent that Africans be involved. But by this stage of the game, Livingstonians were happy with their white-dominated occasions, never having a sense of the importance of involving Africans. Yet ironically, by restricting the amount of money to the committee in the first place, the Government had made it unlikely that money could now be found for the kind of reception and accommodation needed to properly receive chiefs and their entourages. Generally, the colonial administration was always happier working with chiefs, if they had to deal with

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99 'Editorial', *Livingstone Mail*, 11 November 1955.
100 David Livingstone Memorial statue – various publications. In: Box H, LMA.
101 Note from Private Secretary to H.E., the Governor, 12 July 1955, NAZ, NR11/34.
102 'Minute by His Excellency', 2 September 1955, in ibid.

Africans, rather than anyone else, a weakness which helped widen the huge power differential between the haves and have-nots.

What actually took place then was a more sober and white set of events with a strong military presence. On the day before, the day itself, and the day after, retreat ceremonies and a programme of music were put on by the bands of the Northern Rhodesia Police and the Rhodesian African Rifles. Joining them at 8.30 am on 16 November for an hour whilst everyone arrived and found their place was the Bulawayo Pipe Band. A rest tent (toilet) had been constructed. Special invitees could attend a civic buffet lunch and the civic banquet at the Victoria Falls hotel in the evening. For the public the day finished with a fireworks display on the Zambezi, near the boat club, where, again, the band of the Northern Rhodesia Police and Rhodesian African Rifles would 'entertain during intervals'. Tickets had to applied for at the Town Hall well in advance, and the two stands built on either side of the statue with seating had been divided alphabetically. In front on both sides, school children of all races were to stand.

Rain overnight and an overcast sky at the start gave way to a gentle breeze and then temperatures soon soared to a high of 90 degrees. 'Colourful scenes at Livingstone', was the headline the day after in the *Central Africa Post*, its short summary finishing with the news that 'large numbers of Africans were in the crowd, both in the stands and enclosures, and two chiefs were conspicuous in their colourful robes'.[103] A special David Livingstone Centenary Commemoration Programme had been printed which was free and free also of adverts. Included was the original message by Lord Llewellyn, the Governor General, but the Mayor's had been left out. 'FEDERATION PAYS TRIBUTE TO A GREAT MAN', ran the headline, alongside a photo of Llewellyn bowing his head respectfully in front of the plaque.[104] The *Livingstone Mail* also published the programme (and a hand drawn site plan on its front page five days before).[105]

What is significant is that there had to be two distinctive ceremonies. The first event was more personal to Livingstone, the man. It was, after all, the commemoration service. The CCC had much earlier opened up a correspondence with the London Missionary Society, inviting them to attend, perhaps unaware that Livingstone had severed his formal connection with them fairly early on in his career and was not on their books when he died. Nevertheless, the LMS was keen to participate, and this missionary organisation

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[103] *Central African Post*, 17 November 1955.
[104] *Livingstone Mail*, 18 November 1955.
[105] 'David Livingstone's centenary commemoration programme, November 16', LMA, H5/3B; *Livingstone Mail*, 11 November 1955.

seems to have designed the first ceremony. The hymns were typically evangelical and popular nonconformist choices: 'All people that on Earth do well (…)'; 'Fight the good fight with all thy might (…)'; and the classic muscular 'Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war (…)'.The benediction followed the national anthem to close proceedings.

Halfway through, a grandson of Livingstone, Dr. Hubert Wilson, unveiled a commemorative tablet. Wilson had lived and worked at Chitambo mission, close to the site where the internal organs of the explorer had been buried by his African followers. Just days before the ceremony, the *Northern News* reported that he might not make it on time. His boat was already a day late on its journey to Cape Town from Britain, causing 'great anxiety' among the Committee.[106] His son, also at Chitambo, would stand in. He did make the unveiling and was followed by a long address from the chairman of the London Missionary Society, the Rev. Cecil Northcott. There was a third participant though he was not given a name in the official programme. We only know of his role because it was reported in the press. For the first prayer was, it seems, read out by an African LMS missionary preacher, named Aaron Mwenya. Little comment was made on this in the Livingstone press. Silence speaks.

In contrast, the second ceremony – a rededication 'to carry on the high Christian aims and ideals' – was much controlled by officialdom at the federal level mixed with high Anglicanism. It began at 5 pm with the national anthem. A standard hymn was followed by an address from the Archbishop of Central Africa, Dr. Paget. The hymn sang at Livingstone's funeral – a well-known non-conformist favourite, 'O God of Bethel' – was followed by prayers, the lesson (read by the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, Garfield Todd), another hymn, then the unveiling of a plaque of rededication by Lord Llewellyn. The ceremony, now in the fading light, drew to a close with a series of prayers and, to finally end, a general thanksgiving. One of the prayers was to be repeated by the whole congregation. Another poetically echoed the natural world thundering around them (though ironically they were standing close to the foaming cauldron named Devil's Cataract):

> Most great and glorious God, who has appointed the rivers to hasten to the sea; makes the stream of our will perpetually to flow a cheerful and impetuous course, bearing down all impediments of affliction, pleasure or self interest, to its plunge in the unfathomable ocean of Thy love (…).

Thousands had attended, according to the *Mail*. Hundreds drove by car from Lusaka.[107] Very little seems to have gone wrong. The only sign of local

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[106] 'Livingstone's grandson may be late for unveiling service', *Northern News*, 11 November 1955.

[107] *Northern News*, 15 November 1955.

criticism was to do with the guest list, which indeed took up most of 'The Uninvited Guest', the *Mail*'s editorial after the event. The paper opined that the case of who should have been invited 'must be answered by the compilers of the list'.[108] The editor was evidently incandescent over the treatment of an historian who had solved the puzzle of which day in 1855 Livingstone had first seen the Falls, when he found a small, tattered notebook, thus ensuring the ceremony was not held on the 15, as originally planned. The notebook had been flown in but not the man (perhaps also a dig at the Museum's dominance).

The CCCs Executive Committee could congratulate themselves on having taken charge and on getting the federal and national secretariats involved, which had ensured that all governors, ministers and senior officials, judges, and other prominent persons in the Federation had been invited. Looking at the list of people attending published in the *Livingstone Mail*, it seems they had been successful. It was also surely a success in the way the issues of race and federation had been deftly dealt with. The problem presented by such a ceremony – one identified by the administration early on – was that it had to be presented as a non-political event in order to ensure African participation (and therefore to ensure that this event showed the Federation in a positive and progressive light). In October 1955, the Chief Secretary in Lusaka sent a letter to all provincial commissioners asking them to invite their chiefs to the commemoration in November, but warning that the committee was not prepared to pay all expenses for a large retinue. He went to some lengths to stress that while there was 'no political significance in these Services', it was 'at least possible that the African Congress might imply that chiefs are being invited to approve of the Federation'. Both services were religious and it was the 'earnest wish' of the municipality that the day should be 'a memorable one for all races'.[109]

Newspaper coverage is once again very revealing, since, for editors, the events were of great significance with regard to providing a news peg on which to dangle their politics in front of their white readerships. And in their coverage of Livingstone, the historical figure, he was approached very differently according to the politics of race.

He was most tightly embraced, celebrated and his legacy enunciated upon by the liberal white press. The *Central African Post*'s Editor, Dr. Alexander Scott, one of Northern Rhodesia's leading liberals, was able to ensure that the paper penned an affectionate portrait of Livingstone the man in an editorial on 8 November, which as its title suggests, also dealt head on with the 'Legacy of Livingstone'. Once a household name in Central Africa, the present and coming

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[108] *Livingstone Mail*, 18 November 1955.
[109] Draft invitation to PCs, 1 October 1955, NAZ, SP1/11/32.

generation did not know how remarkable he had been, so began the piece. At 42 he discovered the Falls and was used to trekking 20 miles a day. The editorial enthusiastically portrayed him as the ultimate white pioneer-hero: 'one of the first men who ever set foot in this country, possibly the toughest of the lot'; 'he must have had an inside like a steam boiler. For months on end he lived on native food. He could drink water (…) putrid with rhino's urine and buffalo's dung'; 'he must have been yellower than a Chinaman for he had had 27 attacks of fever (…)'; he gave the continent its first 'minute but vital injection of civilisation', and so on.[110]

However there was a political agenda here with regard to steering the direction of the Federation. The paper was keen to reinstate Livingstone as the 'patron saint of the Federation', since Central Africa was his land geographically and spiritually, but his inspiration, it was felt, had become lost 'in these turgid times in a changing Africa'. The paper asked readers to imagine what he would think of Central Africa today. The issues were African economic and industrial revolution, racial tensions, the Colonial Office's welfare policy and African nationalism. It was the tangle of daily 'economic and racial antagonism' that the paper singled out, dealt with by an 'incomplete Christianity' that seemed to lack vigour and initiative. Although phrased in a vague language, a case was being made for a rededication to Livingstone as the good Christian, the patron saint of progressive race relations. This was white code for speaking to African nationalists.

This entwining of a Christian legacy, racial partnership and nationalism around the figure of pioneer-Livingstone was reinforced with the newspaper's decision to reproduce, in full, the address by Rev. Northcott as its coverage of the day's events next to its editorial for 18 November. Indeed the editorial discussed above was an almost direct copy. After reading a long extract from Livingstone's diary about his first sight of the Falls, the LMS missionary represented the Falls as 'the future flow of the continent's possibilities (…) the mighty potential for good which lies in the partnership of the races (…)' Turning to the audience and the times in which they lived, Northcott defined Livingstone's legacy, not just a geographical one, but the legacy of hope, 'hope of a Christian civilisation in the heart of Africa. He also left behind the character of a gentleman, honourable in his dealings with both Europeans and Africans', again nudging forward a progressive attitude to race. Partnership was the next theme. Northcote called for a return to Christianity to try to solve the vast problems of modern Africa. It was time to look again at Livingstone's 'energy and dedication' for inspiration, defining Livingstone's spirit as a 'spirit of goodwill, of patience, and unselfishness and determination to answer the

[110] 'Legacy of Livingstone', *Central African Post*, 9 November 1955.

questions which Africa raises (…)' for today is 'everybody's Africa'. What was needed was a 'new and copious draft', which came ultimately 'from the Christian source he knew'.

The *Livingstone Mail* was rather less enthusiastic in its coverage of the Northcott address and the Christian-fellowship reading of the Livingstone legacy, reflecting perhaps the majority view of its local readers. It did run its front page with 'Federation pays tribute to a great man' and in the accompanying front page article it did include extracts of the address with the sub-heading 'partnership'.[111] But there was no corresponding editorial and the news item was embedded with details of the whole day and the success of the event for the town. Understandably perhaps, the stress in a recent editorial had been on what Livingstone meant for residents of the town, especially those that remembered it as just 'a northern outpost'. Here it is Livingstone the remarkable geographer and pioneer whose 'great faith in God carried him through terrible hardships' which was the focus, and the fact that 'he refused the request of Queen Victoria to return to England' – a particular local issue considering the flight of permanent residents.[112] This was reflected in Baldwin's official message, printed at the beginning of the souvenir programme we began with. His was a litany of white achievement, intertwining the good work 'began by our predecessors, headed by Dr. Livingstone', with that of the 'farsighted people who laid the foundation for the Federation of the Rhodesia's and Nyasaland.'

This tension surrounding what whites could accept Livingstone stood for in the politics of race by 1955 reflected in the two ceremonies and newspaper coverage, was neatly encapsulated in the official message, from the Governor General, found in the commemoration programmes. He first stressed the impressive developments that had taken place in the 100 years since Livingstone found the Falls. But as a representative of the British government, with a mission to try to keep the disparate political forces within the Federation on side, Llewellyn needed to use this event to promote an ideal of racial partnership whilst supporting the status quo. So next came his call to remember that Livingstone had come to Africa to bring not only material benefits but also Christ's message 'to love the Lord thy God and thy neighbour as thyself'. This was necessarily vague with regard to anything that could have been seen by whites as favouring African nationalism. Deliberately ambiguous, it could be read by whites as just an appeal to them to get on with each other within the Federation.

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[111] *Livingstone Mail*, 18 November, 1955.
[112] 'Editorial', *Livingstone Mail*, 16 November 1955.

But there were other audiences now and such a statement, typical of the time, could speak to them too. Africans were consumers of news too, now becoming more politically sensitised by their own trades unions and political parties – those African 'neighbours' who were crammed into urban compounds in Livingstone or squeezed into servants' quarters at the bottom of their English gardens. When they read the terms of the rededication in the official African newspapers of the time, or felt the exclusion from the events, it tapped into an understanding by mission-educated men that David Livingstone was the standard bearer for such enlightened race relations as the present system of rule grossly violated. Thus, for them, Christian discourse when mixed with politics spoke the language of African liberation.

Indeed, it may well be the case that, by the 1950s, with declining British white stock, enthusiasm for Livingstone in general was waning. The *Northern News* ran a short piece entitled 'How Ndola celebrated the day'.[113] Many drove to the river, swam, sailed or watched their fishing lines begin to wobble. Others had to work. For 'builders, policemen, industrial workers, and essential services men (…) it was apparently 'just another day"'. The item ended with the observation, 'Many people did not know why they were having a holiday. "Something to do with Livingstone" they said.' Other evidence of a lack of interest: '"LIVINGSTONE'S FOOTSTEPS" JOURNEY IS CANCELLED'.[114] A man from Lusaka who had allegedly spent three years planning to go by canoe and sleep on the riverbank along the route Livingstone had taken, to arrive just before the ceremony, had his request to the Federal Film Service for a cameraman to accompany him rejected, on the grounds that it would have 'little news value'. 'That is wrong of course', retorted Mr. Adams. However, he did not get them to change their mind.

Conclusion

From June to November, the centenary commemorations succeeded in raising the profile of Livingstone as a visitor destination for whites in central and southern Africa, even if they were unable to launch it once and for all as the Henley-upon-Thames of Central Africa. (It is hard to imagine the scale of an event which could have achieved that.) As their year of modest and very British celebrations ran its course, events had been restricted by a number of factors. There was the problem of resources and amenities to match the plans. Secondly there were long standing tensions surrounding the celebrations, particularly between the municipality, on the one hand, and the museum and central

[113] *Northern News*, 17 November 1955.
[114] *Central African Post*. 11 November 1955.

government, on the other. Anti-Lusaka feeling ran deep going back to Livingstone's loss of status as a capital city, a wound re-opened by its recent failure to become the federal capital. Likewise, the central administration had its own prejudices against a more lower class, reactionary collection of anti-government self styled pioneers.

And, thirdly, a contradictory process was at work. These celebrations, supported by Welensky and the Federation, and sold initially as an opportunity for all races to participate in, became increasingly white in character. It was white visitors and tourists from the south whom the Livingstone community – especially the business community – were interested in attracting, whites who would be put off by Africans being present. Livingstone town had few incentives to embrace more liberal attitudes to race, sticking to their prejudices instead. The commemoration of David Livingstone, and the rededication to a shared notion of Christian values at the end, stand somewhat apart from the other events, symbolised by an African man reading a prayer. In 1955, David Livingstone's legacy was not a straightforwardly pioneering settler one for white Northern Rhodesians, since it now included African Christianity and racial partnership. It was unsettling for many Livingstonian whites, and in retrospect, the beginning of the end. It makes for an intriguing irony to pose the argument that we see a white imperial symbol that was potentially more popular among the very audience that was being excluded from its celebration.

Nevertheless by the mid 1950s, the white community in Livingstone still lived largely insulated from the changes they would soon have to make with regard to the moral and political claims of African nationalism. They were not living the end of empire. In their view they were still living the age of modern pioneering. They may, however, have had a nascent sense of the precarious hinge on which they now dangled, for they had never been strong numerically, nor in material resources, and some were finding partnership with Southern Rhodesia a financial disappointment – a Cinderella to a big ugly sister. The end of empire here would be largely confronted non-violently by the Baldwins of this world: a lower middle class white settler society staffed by men who the official record only remembers by their surname, whose working lives were not particularly glamorous, but who were profoundly preoccupied with, and often trodden down by, a terrain and lifestyle they had not been able to master. Livingstone town's whites remind us of the petty fractures within Northern Rhodesian settler politics and society and the unique cultures of belonging and opposition that varied from town to town. In this case, Livingstonians looked more to their Southern Rhodesian neighbours; the river, though paradoxically a natural barrier, in this case worked to unite them. A significant number would deal with independence by crossing that river south for the last time.

By 1955, David Livingstone and the Victoria Falls were not solely white symbols that could be completely appropriated by Northern Rhodesians: indeed, the more the settlers celebrated them, the more they gave politically astute Africans reason to identify with them too. Despite the light hearted and sporty occasions that made up most of the centenary celebrations, which in their levity should have been great opportunities for racial mixing in the twilight of empire, the very icons that were being celebrated actually militated against this, in a context of high levels of social anxiety and cultural apartheid between Africans and Europeans generally. For Livingstone's whites, they encouraged a misplaced sense of invincibility, tied together as they were within a genealogy of pioneering, discovery and struggle. David Livingstone and the Falls converged into a powerful double dose of white endeavour and settler achievement, the statue offset by the visual splendour and sound of the cascading river. And in their magnanimity – a giant figure of white paternalism looking down on a landscape which no one could tame – white settlers found recourse in a nostalgic past which did not invite concession. There was no racial big bridge building as an equivalent to their forbearers' achievement in 1905; no new economic artery opening up either. Instead they were comforted and anaesthetised by a close association with a heroic pioneer and an immortal landscape they believed they knew best how to honour. Believing very little could, would or indeed should change became an unspoken shared experience of the celebrations, and part of their pleasure. But Northern Rhodesia's rivers of white were never quite a match for the symbols they associated with, dwarfed as they were by the African waterfalls and morally outdone by the great explorer.

9

Fears and fantasies in Northern Rhodesia, 1950–1960

Jan-Bart Gewald

In 1950s Northern Rhodesia, present-day Zambia, rumours abounded amongst the African population that intimated that the white settlers and administration were extensively involved in witchcraft, cannibalism and blood-sucking. In turn, members of the white administration and settler community believed very much the same with regard to the African population of the territory. The development of nationalist politics and the increasing unionization of African workers in colonial Zambia led to agitation that was matched with increasing disquiet and fears on the part of white settlers. The emergence of 'Mau Mau' in Kenya and the envisaged use of African troops from Northern Rhodesia in that country served to underscore European fears in Northern Rhodesia.[1] Based on research in the National Archives of Zambia and the United Kingdom, this paper explores the manner in which public rumour played out in late-colonial Northern Rhodesia.

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[1] National Archives of the UK (NAUK), Kew, War Office, WO 276/111 Ops Eve Relief of KAR 1952-53. And W.V. Brelsford (editor), *Handbook to the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland* (Salisbury, 1960), p. 67

In 2000 Luise White published a wide ranging and path-breaking book that was the culmination of a series of articles that dealt with African articulations of the metaphysical in east and central African history.[2] Graced with a detailed and dense introduction, *Speaking with Vampires* sought to take 'these stories' of the metaphysical 'at face value, as everyday descriptions of extraordinary occurrences.'[3] White argued that the inaccuracies in these stories make them 'exceptionally reliable historical sources' as they allow historians 'a way to see the world the way the story teller did'.[4] These stories provide historians with 'a vision of colonial worlds replete with all the messy categories and meandering epistemologies' that Africans used to describe every day life.[5] White was explicitly not concerned with the origins of these stories, choosing instead to focus on their power, 'their ability to describe and articulate African concerns over a wide cultural and geographic area'.[6] White positioned herself in opposition to analyses that 'seek to explain belief and the imaginary to an observer; they explain why someone might believe what is to most authors make believe.'[7] White, in contrast, '[tried] to do something different, looking not so much for the reasons behind make believe as for what such beliefs articulate in a given time and place'.[8] The paper presented here *is* interested in the origins of these stories and with the reasons for this belief in the make believe. At the same time this paper seeks not to separate out African beliefs in the metaphysical from European beliefs in the make believe, choosing instead to see both as two sides of the same coin, where one group's fears were another's aspirations.

Changed imperial policy

The landslide election victory of the British Labour Party in 1945 brought about radical change in Britain, and initiated long-term and irreversible changes in Northern Rhodesia and the British Empire as a whole. Desperate for capital to fund its war time debts and the emerging welfare state, the British government began the process of divesting itself of those parts of the empire that it could no longer afford to hold, whilst seeking to encourage economic development in those parts of the empire that held promise. Little more than two years after

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2 L. White, *Speaking with vampires: Rumor and history in colonial Africa* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2000)
3 Ibid., p. 5.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid., p. 18.
7 Ibid., p. 44.
8 Ibid.

taking office, the Labour government oversaw the partition and independence of 'the jewel of the crown', India. At the same time the newly established Colonial Development Corporation and Overseas Food Corporation envisaged economic promise in proposals that included, amongst others, the establishment of enormous groundnut schemes in Tanganyika and the possible settlement of white farmers on the Nyika plateau in Nyasaland.[9] Further afield the tin mines and rubber plantations of Malaya were considered to be of vital importance to Britain's post-war economic reconstruction. In the interests of economic efficiency that would benefit Britain, it was envisaged that federations be established within the Empire in the West Indies, the Far East, East Africa, and the Rhodesias. A Colonial Office mandarin informed the United Nations in 1947:

The fundamental objectives in Africa are to foster the emergence of large-scale societies, integrated for self-government by effective and democratic political and economic institutions both national and local, inspired by a common faith in progress and Western values and equipped with efficient techniques of production and betterment.[10]

Though many may not have believed it at the time, the granting of Indian independence signalled to colonial subjects the inevitable dissolution of the British Empire and the ending of colonial rule. The independence and partition of India held within it the promise of independence for all colonial territories in the Empire. Henceforth the possible existence of independent African territories ceased to be a pipe-dream entertained by fantasists and dreamers. In February 1948 a number of ex-servicemen who had served the Empire in Burma were shot and killed by police in Accra as they sought to make their protests known to the British governor of the Gold Coast. In the aftermath of the killings and the disturbances that followed, the British government appointed a commission 'to enquire into and report on the recent disturbances (…) and their underlying causes.'[11] Commenting on the political causes that had led to the violent confrontation, the commission noted a failure on the part of the government to recognise that 'the spread of liberal ideas, increasing literacy (…) closer contact with political developments in other parts of the world, [and] (…) [t]he

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9 The 'Groundnut Affair' has come down to us in history as one of the most striking examples of failure in development schemes. A. Wood, *The groundnut affair* (London, 1950).

10 A.H. Poyton, cited in N. Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain made the modern world* (London, 2003), pp. 357-358.

11 Colonial Office, *Report of the commission of enquiry into disturbances in the Gold Coast 1948* (London, 1948), p. 4. The report is commonly referred to as the *Watson Report*. See also NAUK, Colonial Office, CO 96/795/6, Strikes and Disturbances: Riots after parade of ex-servicemen in Accra.

achievement of self-government in India, Burma and Ceylon had not passed unnoticed in the Gold Coast.'[12] The Commission recommended that various political amendments 'be adopted for a period of ten years'.[13] Although the British government in its official reaction emphasised that it was 'not possible to lay down in advance the pace of political development', and sought to retain a hold on the course of change, within ten years of the report having been written, the Gold Coast had gained its full political independence as Ghana.[14] In the same way that India, Burma and Ceylon had inspired Ghanaian independence, so, too, events in the Gold Coast and the rest of the world inspired those who sought majority rule elsewhere in Africa.

Classically schooled civil servants may have recognised the inevitable decline and fall of the British Empire; yet it was another matter altogether for many of the British settlers who had sought to establish themselves with hopes of a prosperous future in the far-flung territories of the empire. In addition, as the world staggered into the 'Cold War', geo-political issues and military interests came into conflict with African nationalism and fuelled and inflamed settler myths and fantasies.

The colonial setting

> Union policy reacts on Central African policy – many of the Europeans in Central Africa are South African by birth and sympathy – and the entrenchment of a caste system in the Union fortifies racialism in Central Africa, tending to prevent any increase in racial inclusiveness there also.[15]

Anthropologists of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute commented upon the racism that they encountered when they started working in Zambia in the 1940s. This came most explicitly to the fore in the mining towns, where the concentration of large numbers of white settlers allowed for the open expression of racism in everyday life. To put it bluntly, colonial officials, many of whom were stationed at some distance from large settler communities, could ill afford to let their racism dominate their daily lives. Many of these men, particularly prior to World War Two, were Oxbridge graduates who, by dint of their education and background, were not necessarily dependent upon the colour of their skin for job security. District commissioners, if they wished to continue to

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12 Watson Report, pp. 7-8.

13 Colonial Office, Statement by His Majesty's Government on the Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast 1948 (London, 1948), p. 9.

14 Ibid.

15 G. & M. Wilson, *The analysis of social change based on observations in Central Africa* (Cambridge, 1945), p. 156.

govern and administer effectively, could not allow their racial prejudices to gain the upper hand in their day-to-day dealings with the Northern Rhodesian population. This is not to deny that a number of these officials were suffused with racial prejudices and that many of their activities could be deemed to be extremely patronising and paternalistic. But the circumstances which determined a modicum of consideration on the part of colonial administrators appeared not to apply to the white immigrants who worked in the mines in Northern Rhodesia, many of whom came from South Africa.

By 1940 the colonial state was firmly established in Zambia, and the cities and mines were increasingly being filled with settlers who soon soaked up and shared the sentiments of white South Africa. Stark anecdotal information provided by Peter Fraenkel sheds light on these views.[16] Fraenkel describes how, whilst driving to the European quarter of Ndola, the bus made a short stop to drop off Fraenkel's African colleague. This resulted in a discussion in the bus led by a young white Rhodesian and a 'red-faced and pimply' young man with an English north-country accent:

> 'What's this building?' asked the young Rhodesian.
> 'African hotel, just newly built,' said (an) elderly European. He seemed to have an Italian accent.
> 'What!!!' The young man was aghast; 'we go to the compound to drop a kaffir first?'
> 'Hotel á la Bantu,' sniggered the north-country youth.
> 'Well, I don't know what this country is coming to (…)' grumbled the Rhodesian. 'I'm a Rhodesian, born and bred in Umtali,' he continued, 'and I think it's all wrong. It's those fellows in England (…).'
> The young Englishman hastened to ingratiate himself: 'Yeah, they don't know what things are like here. I came out to Southern Rhodesia three years ago and I can tell you, when I first got out I also thought 'Treat them like human beings', but now (…) well, now I know them. Baboons, straight off the trees. Do you think this could have happened in the South?'[17]

Max Gluckman, anthropologist and director of the RLI between 1942 and 1947,[18] had emphasised time and again that the inhabitants of Northern Rhodesia, white immigrants as well as Africans, were all members of a single social unit. Yet the only RLI researcher to actually seriously study aspects of the white community of Northern Rhodesia was J.F. Holleman, who undertook

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[16] Fraenkel was closely associated with the Rhodes-Livingstone anthropologists, even to the extent of later marrying one of them, Ms. Merran McCulloch. P. Fraenkel, *No fixed abode: A Jewish Odyssey in Africa* (London, 2005), p. 233.

[17] P. Fraenkel, *Wayaleshi* (London, 1959), pp. 74-75. Peter Fraenkel returned to this incident in *No fixed abode*, pp. 184-185.

[18] E. Colson, 'The institute under Max Gluckman, 1942-47', *African Social Research*, 24 (1977), pp. 288-289.

commissioned research at the request of the Northern Rhodesian Chamber of Mines on the 'attitudes of White mining employees towards life and work on the Copperbelt and at Broken Hill'.[19] Holleman's research, which was finally published after he moved to the Netherlands, makes for interesting and, at times, humorous reading. The opening words of his study display a dry and appealing sense of humour:

> One of the intriguing aspects of the swift turn of African history in the late 'fifties and early 'sixties has been the inability of the White communities fully to comprehend the speed and magnitude of impending political change. Nowhere, perhaps, was this more evident than in the mining centres of Northern Rhodesia – now Zambia – where the expatriate White minorities, living in closed communities in the vastness of underdeveloped Africa, proudly (if sometimes recklessly) pursued what they believed to be the distinctive and superior values of the 'European way of life'. Sustained by a protective employment structure and a general affluence probably unequalled in any other White community in Africa, they succeeded in creating for themselves exclusive spheres of social refuge (and of mental escape) from the African world around them.[20]

Protected by racist legislation, communities of people were able to establish lives for themselves in the mining towns of Northern Rhodesia that would have been virtually impossible elsewhere.[21] What is particularly disturbing about the Northern Rhodesian situation is that so many of these people believed that this was their natural right. Holleman described the life and noted:

> As the industry prospered and the mining communities grew more and more affluent, the pursuit of wealth and comfort soon became the established dogma of a prevalent and highly materialistic faith ... This very largely immigrant community came from many countries, overseas and in the south (62% of all male employees came from South Africa), where most of these values were to a greater or lesser extent the privilege of the upper strata of society. The vast majority of mining employees did not derive from these strata, but were working-class people to whom the acquisition of these values was tangible evidence of having made good in the new society. Naturally their ambitions were directed toward achieving these aims. In the Copperbelt employment structure even semi-skilled men could earn as much as, and sometimes more than, academically trained persons.[22]

Holleman's work describes a situation in which boorish and racist behaviour were sanctioned and appeared to be rewarded by the administration, workplace and the social setting. That this behaviour extended to the very pinnacle of

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[19] See Ian Phimister's chapter in this volume.

[20] J.F. Holleman with S. Biesheuvel, *White mine workers in Northern Rhodesia 1959 – 60* (Leiden, 1973), p. vii.

[21] This was one of Harry Nkumbula's favourite polemical arguments. See, for instance, the excerpt from the March 1955 speech cited by Macola, in this volume.

[22] Holleman, *White mine workers*, p. 35.

settler society is made abundantly clear by the exasperation expressed by British colonial official Greenall, who, whilst serving as District Commissioner in Broken Hill, noted the ridiculous nature of colonial rule:

> Some of them (master and servants litigation) were outlandish in the extreme, such as the occasion when Mrs Welensky (wife of the future prime minister of the Central African Federation) filed a formal complaint with the police that one of her 'houseboys' had stolen a slice of Christmas cake.[23]
>
> It cannot be considered surprising that in these circumstances the work and conduct of those who rejected the racist stereotypes of settler society were considered to be suspect.

The activities of Arnold Leonard (Bill) Epstein as a young anthropologist in Northern Rhodesia provide us with insight into the relations – such as they existed – between the RLI researchers and the colonial milieu at the time. Epstein, who by this stage had completed a law degree, served in World War Two and travelled from his native Ireland to Sri Lanka, modestly described his arrival in Zambia in 1950 in the following manner:

> I was at the time a rather naïve young man with no experience, and certainly little appreciation, of the nature of a colonial settler society, and I had conceived of my study as a purely academic exercise – what I hoped would prove to be a contribution to the anthropology of law. I was very quickly disabused of this idea.[24]

For although Epstein believed he was no threat, to many living in Northern Rhodesia at the time he did indeed pose a threat, particularly to those who owed their positions and careers to racial prejudice. In later years, when reflecting on conditions in Northern Rhodesia in the early 1950s, Epstein noted that the atmosphere at the time was 'quite nightmarish'.[25] The American anthropologist Hortense Powdermaker, who shared a house with Epstein in Luanshya, 'actually found herself disturbed by the RLI anthropologists' antagonism toward the settlers, and by their tendency to "take sides" with the Africans, which she felt led to a failure to treat the Europeans, too, as ethnographic objects and informants'.[26] As the nationalist movement developed in Zambia in opposition to plans for a Central African Federation dominated by white settlers in Southern Rhodesia, politics in Northern Rhodesia became ever more heated. The cold war and the bogey of communist fifth columnists did little to calm the

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[23] D.G. Coe & E.C. Greenall, *Kaunda's Gaoler: Memories of a district officer in Northern Rhodesia and Zambia* (London, 2003), pp. 96-97.

[24] A.L. Epstein, *Scenes from African urban life: Collected Copperbelt papers* (Edinburgh, 1992), p. 2.

[25] K.A. Yelvington, 'An Interview with A.L. Epstein', *Current Anthropology*, 38 (1997), p. 293.

[26] J. Ferguson, *Expectations of modernity: Myths and meanings of urban life on the Zambian Copperbelt* (Berkeley and London, 1999), p. 31.

situation. The enforced establishment of the Federation in direct opposition to the wishes of the majority of the African population led to a very volatile situation in Zambia. Indeed, as the nationalist movement gained in strength, opposition between 'whites and blacks' became more the norm, and those, such as the RLI researchers, who chose not to participate in these charades in which stereotypes, as opposed to real people, dominated were further alienated from settler society. As Epstein noted, 'if ever there was a situation that was made for paranoia, that was it'.[27]

Poisoned sugar, tinned human meat, and vampires

> But to me all this was no laughing matter. I knew that the Mau Mau in Kenya had been launched with [a] 'ridiculous' rumour.[28]

The establishment of a federation in Central Africa comprising Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland was central to the maintenance of white settler rule in the region, and in keeping with ideas formulated by the colonial office in the immediate aftermath of WWII. Although the idea of federation was enthusiastically supported by European settlers in Southern Rhodesia, the same did not hold true for the African population of Northern Rhodesia. In the Southern Province in late 1951, District Commissioner J. E. Passmore noted in his monthly 'public opinion report':

> The general attitude of Africans is one of intense suspiscion (sic) that the Europeans are plotting to take away their land. Every political move or development proposal is viewed in this light. The political (sic) minded have easily been able to take advantage of and increase this feeling to whip up opposition to Amalgamation and Federation (…). The educated Africans without exception regard partnership as a plot to work the African into a position where he cannot oppose federation. They will have no difficulty whatever in bringing the village Africans round to this view. (…). Mr. Harry Nkumbula is the leader of the opposition to political developments proposed; he found the fear of loss of land ready-made for him to work on; he has done so very successfully in spite of a very large measure of personal unpopularity particularly amongst the educated Africans.[29]

Powdermaker arrived in Northern Rhodesia in September 1953, shortly after the formal inauguration of the Central African Federation.[30] She noted that the

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27 Yelvington, 'Interview', p. 293.

28 Fraenkel, *Wayaleshi*, p. 199.

29 J.E. Passmore, 'Monthly report: Public Opinion', Namwala, 4 December 1951 ('Secret'), National Archives of Zambia (NAZ), Lusaka, SP 1/3/3. With thanks to Giacomo Macola for generous access to his archival notes.

30 For a partisan view of the Federation see: R. Welensky, *Welensky's 4000 Days: The life and death of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland* (London, 1964).

Federation had come to be established despite widespread African opposition manifest in 'speeches, motions and protests.' She wrote:

> When I began my field work, the meaning of the new political union became quickly apparent to me because the fear of federation and the loss of land was dragged into almost every interview and conversation, regardless of context or relevancy.[31]

Although she never specifically interviewed on the subject of Federation, 'most Africans, with or without education, young and old, appeared to have a compulsive need to talk about it and the related fear of losing their land.'[32] What struck Powdermaker forcefully was the repeated reference by African informants to the loss of land and the ultimate fate of the North American Indian populations.[33]

African fears regarding the loss of land and domination by white settlers were not unfounded. In a visit to Lusaka in 1949, the British Secretary of State for the Colonies, Arthur Creech Jones, stated not unreasonably that 'permanent white settlement needs to be controlled. Because Northern Rhodesia is a Protectorate, the Africans have been guaranteed certain inherent rights and therefore in agricultural development there are certain definite restrictions so far as Europeans are concerned'; hardly controversial it would seem, but in the context of Central Africa's settler society at the time the statement by Jones had explosive consequences.[34] On the following day, Welensky, the leader of Northern Rhodesian settlers, thundered that, should the British Government attempt to implement its wishes,

> It will have to bring troops to this country to carry it out. The European community will not under any circumstances recognise a paramountcy of African interests. I am prepared to work in partnership with the African people – and for as long as I can see, in that partnership we will be the senior partners – but I will never accept that Northern Rhodesia is to be an African state.[35]

Sir Godfrey Huggins (later Viscount Malvern) the prime minister of Southern Rhodesia, summed up white settler ideals when he commented, 'Yes, it will be a partnership – such as exists between a horse and its rider.'[36] Welensky's clear statement of intent, coupled with numerous and equally jarring comments ('If the Africans don't come in with the Europeans, they will

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31 Hortense Powdermaker, *Copper town: Changing Africa, the human situation on the Rhodesian Copperbelt*, (New York, 1962), p. 63.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid., p. 64.
34 Welensky, *Welensky's 4000 Days*, pp. 33-34.
35 Ibid.
36 Coe & Greenall, *Kaunda's Gaoler*, p. 100.

face the fate of the Red Indians in North America', he had stated on another occasion), served to ensure that the African inhabitants of Northern Rhodesia were at all times opposed to the establishment of the Federation.[37] However, the manner in which this unbending stance came to be expressed did not necessarily dovetail neatly with the European settlers or the Colonial Office's perceptions of what ought to have constituted opposition to the envisaged institutional transformation.

Peter Fraenkel, the aforementioned young broadcaster and close friend of the Rhodes-Livingstone anthropologists, described how he stumbled upon Africans engaged in the clandestine printing of anti-federation pamphlets. However, in contrast to the strident rhetoric commonly associated with political pamphlets, the flyers being illegally stencilled on a Roneo machine in the offices of the Northern Rhodesia Broadcasting Services noted, in the summarised words of Fraenkel:

> That on the 28th October the 'House of Laws' in London had decided to put poisoned sugar on sale to Africans, commencing on February 8th of next year, 1953. This would have the effect in the case of women, of causing their children to be born dead, and with men of making them impotent. The sugar would be recognised by the letters LPS on the packets. All Africans were warned to beware of such sugar.[38]

In seeking to understand the background to the circular, Fraenkel spoke to Africans whom '(he) had known since (he) was a child'. In discussing the rumour 'time and again they brought up the name of Welensky. Didn't I know that he had said he would kill all natives? Didn't I know that the same had been done in America?'[39] At a public meeting held by the African National Congress in Lusaka in early 1954, speakers, following up on Welensky's comments, stated 'that the African population would be wiped out like the Red Indians and aborigines of Australia if they did not take action'. In addition, they expressed their belief that 'Europeans doctored African beer to induce sterility among Africans.'[40]

The colonial administration of Northern Rhodesia had its own take on the 'poisoned sugar'. In the monthly 'public opinion reports' (which in the run-up to federation as of June 1953 became 'intelligence reports') colonial administrators sought to develop a more sinister approach to the rumour. In a report drafted in early 1953 it was noted that the District Officer in charge of Kalomo had come upon a letter written by Harry Nkumbula that dealt with 'Mr.

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37 Welensky, *Welensky's 4000 Days*, p. 57.
38 Fraenkel, *Wayaleshi*, p. 197.
39 Ibid., p. 199.
40 Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, February 1954, paragraph 10, NAUK, NA, DO 35/4778.

Welensky's "Red Indian" speech', '"vampire men", and the disappearance of Africans.'[41] Gervase Clay, acting provincial commissioner for the Southern Province, was convinced that:

> The origin of the 'poison sugar' rumour cannot be in doubt. There is strong suspicion that a quantity of drugs capable of causing abortions which was stolen from Kasenga Mission earlier in 1952 came into Nkumbula's possession. If Nkumbula is in possession of these drugs he may have succeeded in causing a number of abortions. The occurrence of these abortions would give a colour of truth to the rumour which is now being circulated. The District Officer in charge Kalomo believes that Nkumbula has considerable interest (or influence) in an African tearoom in Lusaka. Again, if Nkumbula still has these drugs the District Officer in charge considers it not impossible that Government may be faced with a staged 'discovery' of sugar which has been poisoned in some store or other place. The effects of such a 'discovery' can be imagined.[42]

In September 1952 K.M. Chittenden, the District Commissioner for Namwala, Harry Nkumbula's home district, had written to the Provincial Commissioner, Southern Province, and suggested:

> I cannot help thinking that a little publicity carefully put around about (Nkumbula's) private life might be advantageous although I appreciate the difficulties in so doing.[43]

In the event, the person suspected of having misappropriated the drugs was Nkumbula's mistress, an African nurse at Kasenga dispensary. Although the colonial authorities sought to blame Nkumbula by insinuating that his mistress, by carrying out abortions, had somehow initiated the poisoned sugar rumours, the missionary in charge of Kasenga had pointed out that 'ergot is a black liquid of distinct odour and filthy taste. Its uses in poisoned sugar therefore might be rather limited.'[44]

The exasperation on the part of colonial officials in attempting to rationally deal with rumours and gossip that threatened and ridiculed their administration is illustrated by the frustration expressed by Roy Welensky in his bitter overview of the Federation:

> The fear-laden stories grew wilder as the months went by: I had ordered the Africans' sugar to be poisoned, so that African women might miscarry and African

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41 G. Clay, 'Monthly Report on Public Opinion December 1952', Livingstone, 20 January 1953, NAZ, SP 1/3/3.

42 Ibid.

43 K.M. Chittenden to PC, (Namwala), 2 Sept. 1952, NAZ, SP 1/3/3.

44 K.M. Chittenden, 'Public Opinion Report: Namwala District, February 1953', Namwala, 26 February 1953 ('Secret'), NAZ, SP 1/3/3.

> men become impotent; tins of meat contained human flesh, poisoned to break African opposition to federation.[45]

In a desperate attempt to break these rumours a District Commissioner and his trusted African assistants consumed allegedly contaminated tins in public, only to have the whole exercise backfire spectacularly. Instead of disproving the rumour, the public display by the District Commissioner and his assistants only served to emphasise the power of their magic in African eyes.[46]

Particularly frustrating for the British Colonial administration, precisely because they were impossible to deal with rationally, were the persistent reports about 'vampire men' or *Banyama* (people of meat, i.e., cannibals). Central Africans believed that their society was being terrorised by occult beings who slaughtered innocent humans for their flesh, body parts, fats and fluids. Game rangers and tsetse fly guards were seen by the populace as being in league with the *Banyama*; intelligence reports make extensive references to game guards, who were wont to stroll through the bush, being obstructed in their work, accosted and accused of witchcraft.[47] To the exasperation of colonial officials, Africans accused the colonial government of complicity in *Banyama* attacks in that it either actively abetted or at the very least did nothing to protect people from these attacks. The fact that in living memory murders for ritual purposes or acts of cannibalism had occurred and had been admitted to under oath in colonial courts of law only served to underscore the fear of Africans and belie the protestations of the colonial administration.[48]

The belief in a collusion between white officials and *Banyama* may not have been unrelated to the perceived absence of government protection against witchcraft, a concept which in the mindset of the colonial administration did not exist other than as an expression of primitive superstition. Max Marwick, who conducted research into sorcery in Northern Rhodesia in the 1950s, noted:

> Most informants among the Cewa are aware of the fact that whites disapprove of beliefs in sorcery. They tend, therefore, not to relate incidents implying such beliefs unless they are sure that their listener will take them seriously, will not try to eradicate them, and will be generally sympathetic. (…) I might add that, even with ideal rapport, informants usually become reticent when they remember, not only that

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45 Welensky, *Welensky's 4000 Days*, p. 55.

46 Ibid., and Esptein, *Scenes*, pp. 174-175.

47 Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, December 1953, paragraph 14, NAUK, DO 35/4778.

48 For earlier references to *Banyama* and colonial complicity, see L.H. Gann, *A history of Northern Rhodesia: Early days to 1953* (London, 1964), pp. 231-232. The Natives Affairs Report for 1934, p. 33, reports that in the Kalabo district: 'three old hags (…) dug up a human corpse and ate portions of it. They were convicted of desecrating a grave, cannibalism not constituting a criminal offence under the laws of NR.' NAUK, CO 795/77/3.

> it is a criminal offence to impute witchcraft (including sorcery) to others, but also that, by doing so, they may arouse the hostility and precipitate the vengeance of those to whom they impute it.[49]

The witchcraft ordinances of the colonial administration forbade any accusation of witchcraft by any authority, which, as Hugo Hinfelaar remarked, 'in reality left the people without any legal sanctions and without any recourse in their fear.'[50] In the absence of government protection, and in the presence of such a blatant threat, people often took the law into their own hands:

> In Mufulira the finding in the early hours of the 23rd of November of a heap of abandoned clothing near a deep pit created a 'banyama'(vampire) scare and stones were thrown at two caravans parked nearby and occupied by Europeans. In the afternoon a large crowd of Africans gathered near the caravans and stoned a police party called out to restore order.[51]

In western Zambia people developed *Kaliloze* guns, magical guns fashioned from human tibia that were used to execute witches.[52] In 1956 there was a spate of murders where 'the victims had been shot a fairly close range with short-barrelled homemade muzzle-loaders, commonly known as *Kaliloze* night guns'.[53] In the event, over the course of little more than one year, thousands of people were arrested and interrogated and 1,212 (one thousand two hundred and twelve!) cases dealt with by district officers in Kalabo, Mongu, Senanga and Sesheke.[54] Following confessions 'by murderers and information subsequently obtained', people were arrested and found to be in 'possession not only [of] *kaliloze* guns but also human skulls, limb bones and, in a few cases, reputedly human flesh.'[55] In addition a number of people were taken into protective custody after having been accused of, and in some cases having admitted to, cannibalism.[56]

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[49] M.G. Marwick, *Sorcery in its social setting: A study of the Northern Rhodesia Cewa* (Manchester, 1965), p. 18. In addition Marwick referred to the Northern Rhodesia Witchcraft Ordinance, No. 5 of 1914 as amended by No. 47 of 1948.

[50] H. Hinfelaar, Bemba-speaking women of Zambia in a century of religious change (1892 – 1992) (Leiden, 1994), p. 143.

[51] Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, December 1953, paragraph 3, NAUK, DO 35/4778.

[52] Many would allege that the execution of witches by *Kaliloze* guns continues in contemporary Zambia. A manuscript on the topic is currently being prepared by the author. For previously published material, see B. Reynolds, *Magic, divination and witchcraft among the Barotse of Northern Rhodesia* (London, 1963), pp. 79-88.

[53] Reynolds, *Magic*, p. 11.

[54] Ibid., p. 139.

[55] Ibid., p. 11.

[56] Ibid., pp. 24–27.

Mau Mau fears and fantasies

> Sir Godfrey (Huggins) is, I know, concerned that suitable action is taken for he realises the potential danger of these African Nationalist movements. One need only look 500/600 miles North of the Federation's Northern borders to see what can happen. It is now spreading to other tribes.[57]

In the course of 1951, discriminatory legislation, self-fulfilling fears, the hubris of elders and authorities, coupled with widespread dissatisfaction and bruised youthful pride and aspirations, all combined to initiate a series of ever more murderous incidents that eventually snowballed into an historical sequence of events that has become known to us as 'Mau Mau' – a term that has come to be filled in with a broad scale of varying morally laden historical meanings. For many, Mau Mau was a movement of incipient revolutionary warfare; for others, it was a striking example of primitive African brutality. Whatever the current historical understandings of Mau Mau, for settler societies of the 1950s, Mau Mau was the epitome of colonial society gone wrong – the opposite of the world as it should be.[58] Mau Mau was the shadow under the bed, the dark forces that came out at night and fulfilled the wildest fears, dreams and fantasies of settler society. As the brutalities and atrocities meted out by combatants in Kenya came to inspire and disgust both colonized and colonizer, Mau Mau came to be an effective and shared shorthand for discussing and debating the morality and validity of colonial rule in late colonial southern and central Africa.

For many Northern Rhodesian Africans Mau Mau was an exhilarating slogan, concept and constantly morphing mental image that clearly unsettled colonial authorities and settlers. The unexpected power that lay behind the invocation of a conflict that lay more than a thousand kilometres away in Kenya inspired Zambian nationalists and greatly troubled those tasked with administering Northern Rhodesia. In early 1954 a young man living in Ndola who bore the nom de guerre Morris Malaya 'mentioned privately that he would like to form a communist party branch' and that he 'wanted Communism

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[57] Securtity Liaison Office (Salisbury) to I. Maclennan, 15 June 1954, NAUK, DO 35/4778.

[58] There is a swelter of publications that relate to Mau Mau, its origins, development and effects. A good introduction to the literature would include the following: R.B. Edgerton, *Mau Mau: An African crucible* (New York, 1989); J. Lonsdale, 'The moral economy of Mau Mau: Wealth, poverty, and civic virtue in Kikuyu political thought'. In: J. Lonsdale & B. Berman, *Unhappy valley: Conflict in Kenya and Africa* (London, 1992); F. Cooper, 'Mau Mau and the discourses of decolonization', *Journal of African History*, 29 (1988), pp. 313–20; G. Kershaw, *Mau Mau from below* (Oxford, 1997); and R. Bates, 'The agrarian origins of Mau Mau: A structural account', *Agricultural History*, 61 (1987).

because it provided a better government for people who were poor like Africans.'[59] At the same time intelligence reports noted that 'at various (…) Congress meetings at Lusaka there have been threats against the police and wild talk about attacking them.'[60] These calls were not limited to the rank and file of the African National Congress; there were increasingly militant calls emanating from within the leadership of the party. Thus, in early 1954, police informers reported to the colonial authorities that Wellington (sometimes known as Wittington) Kakoma Sikalumbi (Chief Clerk at Congress head office) had 'said that the time was near at hand for action and fighting'.[61] A month later Sikalumbi reappeared in the monthly intelligence report in which it was noted that:

> Wellington (…) Kakoma Sikalumbi (…) said at a meeting that in future all congress 'Police' should wear a uniform of black trousers, white shirt and black bow tie, with a red and black armband, towards the cost of which they should each contribute £1. He claimed that the Action Group – the 'Police' – now number 200 and he forecast that it would take a strong line in the future, but he did not say what this line would be. There is evidence that these 'Police' have been in action. At the executive meeting of Congress held at Lusaka on the 20/21 of March they checked on all persons to ensure that no members of the Northern Rhodesia Police were present.[62]

In July of 1954, as the Central African Federation became ever more of a daily lived reality, the hitherto peaceful protests of Nkumbula's African National Congress appeared to run out of steam in the absence of success. Instead there were increasing calls for militant action; thus it was reported that:

> Speeches and letters by those Africans who remain in the left wing of the Congress make increasing references to Mau Mau. Another indication of the militant views of this group is one reported instance of the training of uniformed women members of the movement.[63]

More specifically, intelligence reports noted that ANC committee members had stated that if 'Africans did not get self Government, plans which might lead to bloodshed had been prepared by Congress in both Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland and these would force the issue.'[64] It was reported that at a meeting

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[59] Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, April 1954, paragraph 3, NAUK, DO 35/4778.

[60] Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, February 1954, paragraph 10, NAUK, DO 35/4778.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, March 1954, paragraph 12, NAUK, DO 35/4778.

[63] Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, July 1954, paragraph 2, NAUK, DO 35/4778.

[64] Ibid., paragraph 17.

held in Lusaka in July 1954 Congress official Simon Tembe Yobi had claimed 'that plans had been made to safeguard Africans against ill treatment by Europeans and these might mean that Mau Mau might come to Northern Rhodesia.'[65] In addition it was reported that Rambhai D. Patel, of the Northern Rhodesia British Indian Association, had 'advised one of the Nyasaland African Members of Parliament to tell his people to give up their lives for their country as the Mau Mau were doing in Kenya.'[66]

British colonial officials were disturbed by the 'increasing frequency of reports mentioning threats of violence and references to Mau Mau activities in the utterances of the hot-headed and the young.'[67] Particularly troubling were comments that the 'African people should be prepared to sell their lives as the Mau Mau are doing in Kenya.'[68] As time went by the calls for militant action, coupled with such disquieting activities as the wearing of uniforms and military drilling, did not diminish. That these new policies were part and parcel of Congress is indicated by the overt presence of all at the party's conference held in Lusaka from between 17 and 20 August 1954. The conference was policed by 'Congress "police" guards':

> These guards were (…) dressed in a uniform consisting of a khaki bush shirt with a red and black congress badge on the left breast and home-made epaulettes on each shoulder, a red fez, khaki shorts and stockings, and black shoes.[69]

Intelligence reports indicate that Harry Nkumbula, the Congress' president, was well aware of the parallels that were being made between Congress militants and Mau Mau. Nkumbula allegedly stated 'that the Northern Rhodesia Government had interpreted agitation by Congress against Federation as a threat of terrorism similar to Mau Mau and had made complete plans to meet any terrorist action.'[70]

In spite of the threat of government action as intimated by Nkumbula, the conference delegates did not mince their words. At the close of the conference, party organiser Nephas Tembo called for direct action and suggested that 'threats should be made to induce the government to comply with the wishes of Congress.'[71] In the context of the conference, Tembo's call for action was opposed by Nkumbula. However, later, in a private meeting at the house of Rev. Dr. S.J. Tladi, of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Nkumbula, clearly

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65 Ibid., paragraph 18.
66 Ibid.
67 Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, August 1954, paragraph 12, NAUK, DO 35/4778.
68 Ibid., paragraph 184.
69 Ibid., Appendix A.
70 Ibid.
71 Ibid.

unaware that his words were being recorded and reported by informers of the Northern Rhodesian police, 'warned those present against talking about killing'. However, in this instance, Nkumbula noted, in the words of the intelligence report, 'that their friends in Kenya had made their plans long before fighting started without the Government being aware of them, which was why they were still able to continue fighting.'[72] Words of this nature, spoken as they were in the context of Mau Mau and what might come to pass in Northern Rhodesia, most certainly rattled the colonial authorities. This was particularly the case in the light of what happened in the following months. Intelligence reports for December 1954 noted that:

> At a beer-drink near Chinsali Boma an African lorry driver reported that seven Mau Mau leaders had been dropped by parachute on the Copperbelt and were teaching the Africans how to run a war successfully against the Europeans. He also explained how easy it was to steal arms and ammunition from the houses of Europeans[73] – at which point local Congress leaders told him to be silent.[74]

Although it would turn out to be the case that the claims being made were untrue, they did give an indication of to the extent to which the ideals and dreams of Mau Mau had taken hold of large sections of the population. In the context of beer drink camaraderie fantastic rumour expressed a desire that fellow drinkers understood and subscribed to: the successful defeat of European rule in Northern Rhodesia. However, although there were certainly no Mau Mau parachutists on the Copperbelt, the rumours did contain within them an element of truth. Intelligence reports for December 1954 made mention of 'two persons, a man and a woman alleged to be Kikuyu, who claim adherence to Mau Mau.' In addition these two 'are alleged to have said that they have been sent to this Territory to instruct Africans in Mau Mau methods.'[75] In contrast to what one might have expected, 'investigations *confirmed the authenticity* of the reports and the two persons have been deported as undesirable immigrants.'[76]

Anxious to contain the situation, which included an ongoing strike on the Copperbelt and the threat of Mau Mau-like violence, colonial authorities swiftly clamped down on nationalist leaders. In early January 1955 Harry Nkumbula and Kenneth Kaunda, President General and Secretary General of the African

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72 Ibid.

73 The recurrent fear of settlers that their servants would steal their firearms is an issue that bedevils each and every settler society. For a later example see S.M. Davis, *Apartheid's rebels: Inside South Africa's hidden war* (New Haven, 1987), p. 137.

74 Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, December 1954, paragraph 84, NAUK, DO 35/4778.

75 Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, January 1955, paragraph 17, NAUK, DO 35/4778.

76 Ibid. Emphasis added.

National Congress, were taken into custody and charged with having prohibited publications in their possession. Being in possession of what the sentencing magistrate referred to as 'cheap, disreputable and scandalous literature of a political nature', Nkumbula and Kaunda were convicted as charged and sentenced to two months imprisonment each.[77] Congress offices were raided across the territory, leading to the arrest of Dominic Mwansa (Provincial President, Eastern Province) and David Chitambala (Branch Secretary). Being less well known nationally, these men, in contrast to Kaunda and Nkumbula, were sentenced to jail terms of six, and not two, months for being in possession of prohibited literature.[78]

Although the arrest of the Congress leaders may have come as a surprise to the African population of Northern Rhodesia, it did not, as the authorities may have expected, bring to an end the increasingly militant calls for violent action. Instead, far from being cowed, Congress supporters argued that 'all leaders of national liberatory (sic) movements have, in the past, suffered imprisonment before they achieved their aims'.[79] Some Congress leaders expressed themselves more forcefully. In a meeting held in Ndola, following the arrests and raids, Justin H. Chimba (Western Province's Provincial Secretary) and Job Mayanda[80] (Acting Treasurer General) apparently called on followers to 'support a campaign of murder against Europeans, commencing in the farming areas'.[81] Particularly disconcerting for the colonial authorities in the context of what was known about Mau Mau was the fact that 'all present at the meeting' had seemingly been '*required to take an oath* of secrecy regarding the matters discussed and of support for the campaign when instructions were received.'[82] In addition, in the Northern Province, Congress made common purpose with the Lumpa Church of Alice Lenshina. Congress leaders Simon Kapwepwe, Robert Makasa and John Sokoni, in conjunction with the Lumpa Church, encouraged militant action against colonial authorities. The orders of chiefs and district commissioners were disobeyed, official cooperatives were boycotted, and, in a particularly symbolic act, 'a tree that had been planted to celebrate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II' was torn from the ground.[83] Whilst colonial

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77 Ibid., paragraph 18; R.I. Rotberg, *The rise of nationalism in Central Africa: The making of Malawi and Zambia, 1873-1964* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), p. 272.

78 Rotberg, *Rise of nationalism*, p. 273, Rotberg refers to David Chitambala as Frank Chitambala. On appeal Chitambala's sentence was reduced to two months, whilst Mwansa's sentence was upheld.

79 Northern Rhodesia Political Intelligence Report, January 1955, paragraph 19, NAUK, DO 35/4778.

80 Referred to as 'Jovu Hiyanda' in ibid.

81 Ibid.

82 Ibid. Emphasis added.

83 Rotberg, *Rise of nationalism*, p. 273.

authorities pondered whether symbolic action might go over into armed insurrection, they will have taken little heart from statements by Congress officials such as Sikalumbi, who had moved up through the ranks of Congress to become its Vice Treasurer General, yet continued, true to form, to express extremely militant opinions. In the wake of the arrests of Congress officials, Sikalumbi warned that 'Congress would go underground if stopped by Europeans'. In addition intelligence reports mentioned that 'the possibility of introducing Mau Mau is alleged to have been discussed at committee meetings'.[84]

For both Africans and colonial officials in Northern Rhodesia Mau Mau was a chimera that was given form and content depending upon when, where, why and who caught sight of it. For Africans, Mau Mau amounted to a dimly understood collection of fantasies that could be used to threaten colonial authorities at a metaphysical level (that of unsubstantiated fears), whilst at the same time serving as a possible template for as yet untested forms of anti-colonial struggle. For colonial administrators operating with but a partial overview of contemporary life in Northern Rhodesia, the ever-increasing mention of Mau Mau in police and intelligence reports triggered fears and fantasies that owed more to developments abroad than in the colony. Frightened by the ghost of the Kenyan insurgency, colonial authorities were poorly equipped to understand African frustration in Northern Rhodesia and attributed to it a pre-revolutionary quality that it probably never had. In so doing they gave more authority and thus power to the fantasies of African nationalists in Northern Rhodesia.

Conclusion

The establishment of the Federation exacerbated tensions in Northern Rhodesia; yet these tensions did not necessarily manifest themselves in ways immediately apparent – or intelligible – to contemporary political observers. In the early 1950s, as attested, inter alia, by the anthropologists associated with the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, increasingly wild rumours flowed back and forth through the societies of Northern Rhodesia. This contribution has charted the origins and development of some of these fears and fantasies, and it has sought to contextualise them by drawing out their links to overt political developments in the country and the rest of the British Empire. Particularly striking is the relationship between colonial fears and African aspirations with regard to events taking place in Kenya during Mau Mau. If the insurgency in Kenya epitomized

[84] Memo by Whitehall mandarin, 12 September 1956, dealing with paragraph 377 of the intelligence report for August 1956, NAUK, DO 35/4778.

the settlers and the administrators' greatest anxieties, Northern Rhodesia's Africans turned it into a largely metaphorical cudgel with which to threaten white rule. The paper thus makes a case for removing African rumour from the realm of the irrational and situating it firmly, alongside colonial fears, within a political discourse dealing with the legitimacy of the Federation.

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Indian political activism in colonial Zambia: The case of Livingstone's Indian traders

Friday Mufuzi

Introduction

The theme of Indian[1] political activities in colonial Zambia has not been explored systematically since the publication of Floyd and Lillian Dotson's forty-year-old *The Indian Minority of Zambia, Rhodesia and Malawi*.[2] The Dotsons revealed that during the period of African nationalism most ordinary Indians were worried about the prospect of the country falling under African rule, because, just like Europeans, they saw an ordinary African as an 'illiterate' and 'essentially incomprehensible savage' and therefore incapable of governing the country.[3] They also argued that 'Indian reactions to Federation underwent a cycle' of 'passionate and futile opposition', followed by 'a period of fairly comfortable accommodation' and finally 'reluctant rejection under the pressure

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1 In this essay, the adjectives 'Indian' and 'Asian', and the terms 'Asians' and 'Indians', are used interchangeably and refer to immigrant settlers in colonial Zambia of Indo-Pakistani origins. This paper is a product of the research leading to my MA dissertation at the University of Zambia, 'A history of the Asian trading community in Livingstone, 1905-1964' (2002), and to an exhibition entitled 'A photographic history of the Asian trading community in Livingstone, 1905-1990s', mounted at the Livingstone Museum in 2002.

2 Floyd Dotson and Lilian O. Dotson, *The Indian minority of Zambia, Rhodesia and Malawi* (New Haven and London, 1968).

3 Dotson & Dotson, *Indian minority*, p. 320.

of African nationalism.'[4] Although the Dotsons' work is a sociological and ethnographical study, it can be acknowledged as a major source of material and starting point for the study of the history of Indians in Zambia, particularly as regards their political activism, the subject of this essay.

Slightly more recent work on East Africa and Zimbabwe yields valuable insights into the forces shaping the nature of Indian political involvement in a colonial context. In his study of Asians in East Africa, Gregory argued that the Indians' indulgence in politics was focused on the removal of inequalities between themselves and the Europeans. He also noted that most Indians maintained a position of neutrality in the politics of decolonization in order to safeguard their trading activities.[5] Grewal, too, observed that the Indians' grievances against the British administration in colonial Tanganyika were mainly focused on removing legislation that concerned trade and commerce, particularly such regulations and practices as made it difficult for Indians to get trading licences.[6] With regard to colonial Zimbabwe, Makambe argued that the administration maintained racism in order to institutionalize inequality in a colonial economy in which Europeans were considered first, Indians second and black Africans third class.[7]

The observations made by the cited scholars are explored in this essay in the context of Indian political activism in Livingstone from 1950 to 1964. This piece's main argument is that the Livingstone Indians' political activism was driven by the desire to ameliorate the disabilities suffered by their community, particularly as regards impediments to their social well-being and the growth of their business enterprises. Consequently, they worked within the framework of the colonial government in order to safeguard their interests, an act which African nationalists perceived as collaboration with the colonial government in suppressing and frustrating the attainment of African self-rule. The essay also argues that when the issue of Federation came to the fore, the Indians in Livingstone opposed it as it was perceived to be detrimental to their interests. However, when the Federation became a reality in 1953, they decided to work within its framework because of the economic benefits accruing to it due to an expanded market. They only rejected it in support of African nationalism when it became clear that the formation of an African government was unavoidable.

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4 Ibid., p. 309.

5 R.G. Gregory, 'Co-operation and collaboration in colonial East Africa: The Asians' political role, 1890-1964', *African Affairs,* 80 (1971).

6 N. S. Grewal, 'Indians in Tanganyika: The decade of discontentment, 1923-1932', *Journal of African and Asian Studies*, 4 (1971).

7 E.P. Makambe, 'The Asian labour solution in Zimbabwe, 1898-1932: Labour practices and racial attitudes in a colonial society', *Transafrican Journal of History*, 13 (1984).

While the Dotsons' study suggests that Indian politics in colonial Zambia began on the eve of Federation, in this essay, I demonstrate that it started with the establishment of the Livingstone British Indian Association, a branch of the Northern Rhodesia British Indian Association formed in the 1920s. In the 1940s, it moved on to the struggle for a seat in the local government authority, which bore fruit in the mid-1950s, when the Indian community was allowed to nominate a member to contest a seat in the Municipal Council. The two provided the Indians with fora through which they could articulate their grievances relating to the amelioration of communal disabilities as a second class racial group in colonial Zambia. Moreover, this essay challenges the Dotsons' blanket statement to the effect that, throughout the 1950s, Northern Rhodesia's Indians were invariably averse to African nationalism and the possibility of its coming to power. Instead, I show that a minority of Indian traders identified themselves with African nationalism right from its nascent stage.

Whereas the Dotsons' study seems to suggest that Indian political activism was driven by expediency or even opportunism, my position is that it was shaped by their vulnerable class-race status as a minority racial group at any given place and time in colonial Zambia. As a result, the Indian settlers' political activism was centred on fighting any government policy, regulations or practices which hampered their immigration into the country and threatened their socio-economic well-being. By studying the Indians of Livingstone, the essay attempts to shed light on race relations in colonial Zambia, the issues that drove Indian traders into political activism and the nature of this political engagement.

Background to Indian political activism

Indian settlers, like their white counterparts, came to Northern Rhodesia at the dawn of the twentieth century. Unlike in South or East Africa, where they had settled much earlier and in larger numbers,[8] the Indians came to Zambia in small numbers and to work mainly as petty traders.[9] Indian settlement in Zambia began from two points, Fort Jameson (Chipata) and Livingstone, the then capital of Northern Rhodesia. Indian settlers in Fort Jameson were predominantly Muslim. They originated from Gujarat and entered Chipata through East Africa at the behest of the BSAC administration in North-Eastern

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[8] For Indians in South Africa, see R.A. Huttenback, *Gandhi in South Africa: British imperialism and the Indian question, 1860-1914* (Ithaca and London, 1971); for those in East Africa, see J.S. Mangat, *A history of the Asians in East Africa, c. 1886 to 1945* (Oxford, 1969).

[9] See N. Prithvish, 'Asian settlement in Zambia', *Africa Quarterly*, 18 (1979).

Rhodesia. The Company wanted to develop African trade and thus push Africans into the money economy as either labourers on European enterprises or cash crop growers.[10] In contrast, pioneer Indian settlers in Livingstone did so on their own initiative; most of them moved to Livingstone from India through the southern African ports of Mozambique and South Africa, passing through Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Like their counterparts in Fort Jameson, they were traders and Gujarati. However, unlike their counterparts in Chipata, who were predominantly Muslim, they were predominantly Hindus. From these two entry points, Indians spread to other parts of the colony.

In the 1910s and 1920s, Asian traders consolidated themselves in African trade, which involved trade goods that were popular among African consumers. Such goods included beads, calico cloths, three legged pots, cheap cotton blankets, cups, plates course salt, soap, matches, candles and paraffin. This alarmed the European settler community, some of whose members were also involved in the same trade during this period. They called upon the government to save them from Indian traders, whom they accused of unfair trading practices, by curtailing their immigration into the territory.[11] For instance, in 1914, one white settler complained in racist terms that the Indians lived in insanitary conditions. He also charged that they did not pay rent for their shops, paid no licences and missed other taxes which white traders were saddled with. He called upon the government to stop what he termed the 'Asiatic invasion' by withdrawing its support both from a political and health point of view.[12]

Colonial authorities succumbed to the white settlers' anti-Indian sentiments and their campaign against Indian immigration. In 1915, the Immigration Regulation (Northern Rhodesia) Proclamation was passed. This required prospective immigrants to be able to read and write in the English language to the satisfaction of an immigration officer before being admitted into the territory.[13] This aspect of the Proclamation was an obstacle to incoming Indians, as most of them had poor literacy skills up to the early decades of the twentieth century. The extent of racial prejudice against Northern Rhodesian Indians accounts for the gradual emergence of political activism among them. Such activism was mainly intended to improve their status in stratified colonial

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[10] H. H. Johnston, British Central Africa (London, 1897), p. 152; A.J. Hanna, *The beginning of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia, 1889-1895* (Oxford, 1969); and L.H. Gann, *A history of Northern Rhodesia: Early days to 1953* (London, 1964), p. 146.

[11] See 'Our Indian market gardeners', letter to the *Livingstone Mail*, 7 January 1911, and *Livingstone Mail*, 12 December 1913.

[12] 'Indians in Livingstone', letter to the *Livingstone Mail*, 24 April 1914.

[13] NAZ, SEC 3/51, Chief Immigration Officer, Livingstone, to Chief Secretary, 15 April, 1945.

Zambia. In this stratified society, whites were regarded as first-class citizens, Asians as second-class and Africans third.[14] Indian immigrants were normally regarded as British subjects, while Africans were British Protected Persons. Indian settlers wanted to enjoy the same rights and privileges as those enjoyed by white people. Consequently, through their association, the Northern Rhodesia British Indian Association, they campaigned for the elimination of discriminatory measures against them, as we will discuss later in this paper.

After 1935, obstacles to Indian businesses originated mainly from the colonial government and the Africans. By this time, European merchants concentrated on the lucrative European trade, rather than the African retail trade to which most Indians were confined. The two groups were therefore no longer in direct competition. But the colonial government continued to view the Indians as a potential danger, though, by the 1930s, it was the welfare of the Africans, rather than that of the Europeans, that the Indians were perceived as threatening. In 1930, the Passfield Memorandum on Native policy in East Africa had affirmed the doctrine of trusteeship and the paramountcy of African interests. The memorandum had declared that 'African interests should prevail whenever they and those of the migrant races fell into conflict.'[15] At least in theory, the colonial Government was now duty-bound to privilege the interests of Africans over those of 'migrant races.' One practical consequence was that colonial policies on trade began to discriminate against the Indians, as government pursued a policy of Africanisation of trade in the Native Reserves and urban African Locations. The official position on the issue was summed up in the advice the Acting Chief Secretary gave to the Provincial Commissioner of the Western Province in 1937. He wrote:

> I am directed to inform you that the policy with regard to the admission of Indian traders into the native reserves elsewhere in the territory has been to refuse applications for trading sites, in view of the necessity for giving every encouragement to the African trader, who cannot normally compete with the Indian.[16]

Undoubtedly, Indian traders were discriminated against in terms of admission to Native Reserves and African Locations. This measure, though it encouraged the growth of African traders, had the effect of restricting Indian commercial expansion.

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[14] Mufuzi, 'A History of the Asian trading community in Livingstone', chapter 2.

[15] R.I. Rotberg, *The rise of nationalism in Central Africa: The making of Malawi and Zambia, 1873-1964* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), p. 102.

[16] NAZ, SEC1/1576, Acting Chief Secretary E.A. Dutton to Provincial Commissioner (Western Province), 3 November 1937.

Amelioration of communal disabilities

The foregoing section has described the context in which Indian settlers operated in colonial Zambia. It has suggested that, in times of economic and political crisis, both the European settler community and the Africans used the Indians as a scapegoat, thereby relegating them to a pariah condition. I have argued that it was this situation that drove Indians in Zambia, in general, and Livingstone, in particular, into political activism. This section discusses in detail the nature of Indian politics in Livingstone. It demonstrates that Indian political activism was driven by the desire to ameliorate their communal disabilities.

Indian traders pursued their political activities mainly through the Northern Rhodesia British Indian Association, which was formed in the 1920s. The association had branches wherever there was a substantial population of Indians in the territory. It was therefore active in Fort Jameson, Livingstone and, in later years, Lusaka, Broken Hill (Kabwe) and some of the Copperbelt towns. Writing about Southern Rhodesia's Indian traders, whose problems were similar to those of their northern counterparts, H. H. Patel observed that:

> Had it not been for 'disabilities' suffered by the community as a whole one wonders whether the Asian organisation would have started in Rhodesia. More than anything else, it was their 'second-class' status with all the disadvantages that went with the status, which prompted Asians to form organisations to look after their interests.[17]

Patel's observation also applies to Northern Rhodesia. The Northern Rhodesia British Indian Association was formed in order to look into matters that concerned the Indian community as a whole, such as immigration difficulties, problems over trade licences, general discrimination faced by Indians and the welfare of the community as a whole.[18]

The Livingstone British Indian Association, a branch of the Northern Rhodesia British Indian Association, was quite active in the fight for the rights of its members. This is clearly borne out by a strongly worded petition sent to the Government in 1927. The Association complained about the discriminatory trading practices to which local administrators were subjecting its members, who, the petition went on, were not only British subjects, but were also law-abiding residents, loyal to the British Imperial Government.[19] The petition is indicative of the important role the Association played in fighting the injustices the Indian community faced.

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[17] H.H. Patel, 'Asian political activity in Rhodesia from the Second World War to 1972', *Rhodesian History*, 9 (1978), p. 67.

[18] Interview with Harishchandra Oza, Lusaka, 22 January 2000.

[19] NAZ, RC/240, British Indian Association at Livingstone: Petition for grant of trading licences and plots for Indians to Governor, 22 November 1927.

The effectiveness of this Association is also indirectly attested by the diplomatic approach taken by the Livingstone Management Board when recommending the allocation of an additional residential area for Indians and Coloureds. Even though Queensway (now Kuta Way), along which most Asians resided behind their shops, was congested, 'care must be taken not to give the impression that Government is forcing the Indian community to segregate.'[19] The Acting Chief Secretary, to whom the Secretary of the Management Board had communicated his concern, understood the need for tactfulness: 'I would be glad if you would inform me whether the Indian community have made any representation to you in regard to residing in a special street.'[20]

The issue of allocating the Indian community a special residential area dragged on throughout the 1920s and 1930s.[21] The Indians refused to move to the area earmarked for them because they felt that this was demeaning to them as British subjects. At a full Municipal Council meeting held on 15 May 1939, the Mayor, R. H. Orr, reported that the Indian community opposed relocation. Instead, they demanded to be granted permission to 'purchase property in the white residential area' and also 'demanded to be treated in the same way as white British subjects.'[22] RanchhobhaiPatel explained that his people refused to move to the allocated area because of two main reasons. First, the Livingstone's Indians were quite sensitive to any move by authority that appeared racially inclined. They declined to relocate in protest against the perceived administrative desire to compartmentalise Livingstone into racial groups. Second, and more prosaically, they are said not to have had the money to build houses during this period, as most of them still had low incomes. This is perhaps borne out by the fact that, in the mid- and late 1940s, by which time a number of Indians had grown relatively rich, a few of them did move to the place allocated to them.[23]

Despite the emergence of occasional tensions, the Livingstone Indian community's remained loyal to the colonial government. Take, for instance, the congratulatory letter that the Livingstone British Indian Association wrote to Sir Herbert W. Young on his appointment as Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Northern Rhodesia in 1934.

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[19] NAZ, RC/300, Secretary of the Livingstone Management Board to acting Chief Secretary, 21 May 1926.

[20] NAZ, RC/300, Acting Chief Secretary to Management Board, 31 May 1926.

[21] 'Indian housing in town, council responsible for position', *Livingstone Mail*, 8 April 1939.

[22] 'Indian problem referred to government – Europeans against Indians buying property in residential areas', *Livingstone Mail*, 27 May 1939.

[23] Interview with Ranchhobhai Patel, Livingstone, 11 November 1999.

> The Indians of Livingstone acknowledge with gratitude that they have enjoyed happiness and contentment in Northern Rhodesia and venture humbly to express the request that the favours which hitherto have been extended to Indians in this territory be continued. In conclusion, I beg sincerely to affirm our strong and devoted loyalty to His Most Gracious Majesty the King and our respectful duty and obedience to your Excellency.[24]

Though the Indians did not enjoy all the rights to which their notional British subjectship would have entitled them, on the whole, they were satisfied with the colonial set-up. This was because they occupied a position which was roughly commensurate with their economic, political and social status, half-way between European and African communities. Whatever their disabilities, they knew that life in colonial Northern Rhodesia held out more hope of prosperity than it did in India. As a result, they tended to support the colonial government as a way of preserving their small, but hard-won, economic and social privileges.

By the 1940s, the number of Indian children in Livingstone had grown substantially. Their fathers' political activities now turned to exerting pressure on the administration to build a school for Asian pupils. Prior to that, Indians sent their children to Southern Rhodesia or India for their education. The rich ones sent their children to British schools.[25] In view of this pressure, in 1946, the old government House stable for horses and donkeys was converted into a school for Indian children.[26] The Indians' campaign reached its ultimate objective with the construction of Coronation school for Indian children by the Government with financial support from the Indian community. The school was opened in 1953, on the day Queen Elizabeth the Second was crowned.[27] This symbolized the Livingstone Indian community's attachment to the British Imperial Government.

Indian involvement in civic activities

The Indian community also involved itself in politics at the local government level. This started in the 1940s, when they lobbied to have a member on the Rate Payers' Association. The Association was instrumental in the selection and

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[24] A photocopy of the letter was given to the author by Flexon M. Mizinga, then senior keeper of history, Livingstone Museum, in December 1998. The letter had been found in one of the cabinets in the Museum.

[25] Interview with H. Oza.

[26] D. Whitehead, 'The story of Livingstone, tourist capital of Zambia', unpublished paper, n.d., p. 48. See also *Northern Rhodesia Legislative Council Debates, Hansard no. 71*, 2 July 1951, col. 436.

[27] 'Seven hundred attend opening of Coronation school by PC', *Livingstone Mail*, 5 June 1953.

election of members who were to sit on the local Municipality Management Board. In fact, in the early 1950s, the Indians threatened to form their own association. [28]The threat bore fruits, because shortly afterwards the Indian community was admitted to membership of the Rate Payers' Association.[29] The Indian traders were forced to lobby for a seat on the municipal council because they wanted to counter both African xenophobia and the colonial government's policy of Africanisation of trade in the Native Reserves and African Locations. They also wanted to check government's administrative practices and trading regulations that were not in their favour.

The economic grievances of the Indian community were thus translated into political activism. Furthermore, Indians wanted equality of opportunities with Europeans as British subjects. By having a seat on the municipal council, they hoped to influence the European politicians in the area.[30] In fact, because franchise during the colonial period was based on income and property qualifications and many Indians were involved in trading businesses, many of them were entitled to vote in the elections to the Northern Rhodesian Legislative Council (Legco). This distinguished them sharply from the Africans, only a handful of whom appeared on the electoral register. In 1950, for instance, there were 61 eligible Indian voters and 416 European voters in Livingstone district, while in 1952 there were 87 Indian voters and 772 European voters.[31] It would appear that it was because of this Indian pressure and their influence on the Livingstone Rate Payers' Association and the Livingstone Legislative Council Electoral Area through their votes that Indians with sufficient capital were granted licences to trade on Mainway, hitherto a European reserved trading area, and allowed to live in European residential areas in the late 1940s. It was also because of this pressure that Indians were allowed to trade in liquor in the same period. Prior to that, only Europeans were allowed to trade in liquor.

Indian political pressure achieved a remarkable result in 1954, when the Indian community was allowed to nominate a member to contest a seat on the Municipal Council. Though he lost, Harishchandra B. Oza became the first Indian to contest elections to the Livingstone Municipal Council.[32] In 1955,

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28 'Why a separate association', *Livingstone Mail*, 9 February 1954.

29 'Rate payers' association in Livingstone to enhance interests of both Europeans and Indian communities', *Livingstone Mail*, 16 February 1954.

30 Interview with H. Oza.

31 Northern Rhodesia Certified Register of Voters Qualified to vote at Election of a Member of Legislative Council, 1950 (Lusaka, 1950), pp. 11-17; Northern Rhodesia Revised Register of Voters Qualified to Vote at Election of a Member of the Legislative Council, 1952, (Lusaka,1952), pp. 14-26.

32 'Sluzkin tops Livingstone Poll', *Livingstone Mail*, 22 April 1954.

Rivabhai V. Nayee followed suit.[33] He, too, lost the election for Councillorship. But the following year, Nayee was again nominated by the Rate Payers' Association to stand for Municipal elections. This time he won, becoming the first Indian to be elected as Councillor on the Livingstone Municipal Council.[34] Thereafter, Nayee continued re-contesting and winning the seat throughout the remaining years of colonial rule in Northern Rhodesia. This clearly implies that the Indian community in Livingstone had confidence in R. V. Nayee and was more united than the Indian traders in Fort Jameson, who, having successfully lobbied to have an Indian seat in the local Town Management Board in the 1940s, divided themselves into two opposing camps, an act which made them fail to decide on who should represent them at the local government level.[35]

Indian traders' political activism during the federation period

As elsewhere in the country, Indian politics in Livingstone in the early 1950s were dominated by the issue of the creation of the Federation of Central Africa. In his work on Indian traders in Chipata, Chiwomba Mkunga observed that, whilst Africans opposed the creation of the Federation, Indians generally supported it, as they viewed Federation and the expanded market resulting from it as economic opportunities.[36] The Dotsons, on the other hand, noted an initial rejection of Federation on the part of Northern Rhodesia's Indians.[37] The Livingstone Indians' reaction to the planned Federation appears to bear this out. The community strongly opposed the Federation up to about 1954, a year after its creation. An Indian informant noted that Indians along the line of rail, unlike those in Chipata, generally opposed the creation of the Federation. This – he maintains – was mainly because Indians along the line of rail were fairly well educated and well informed and possessed a higher degree of political consciousness than their counterparts in Chipata.[38] Indians feared that, with Federation, they would lose the protection of the Colonial Office and be subjected to white settler rule. They were particularly concerned with restrictions of Indian immigration and movement between territories, fearing

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33 *Livingstone Mail*, 18 March 1955.
34 *Livingstone Mail*, 16 March 1956.
35 Bizeck J. Phiri, *A history of Indians in Eastern Province of Zambia* (Lusaka, 2000), p. 46.
36 Chiwomba T. M. Mkunga, 'The development of the Asian trading class in Chipata, Zambia, 1900 – 1964', (M.A. Dissertation, University of Zambia, 1992), p. 155.
37 *Indian minority*, p. 309.
38 The informant requested to remain anonymous as he felt that the information had the potential to cause friction between descendants of Asians in Chipata and those along the line of rail

that the strict policies of Southern Rhodesia towards Indians would be extended to Northern Rhodesia.

Because of this, the Indians of Livingstone held meetings, issued resolutions and made numerous appeals to liberal European politicians who sympathised with their situation. For instance, in August 1952, when Henry Hopkinson, Minister of State for the Colonies, visited Livingstone, the Indian community through its leaders sent him a memorandum seeking assurance to the effect that, should Federation come about, they would not 'be placed under disability in enjoying the same privileges and rights as Europeans in matters of immigration, citizenship and inter-territorial movements.'[39] As a matter of fact, most Indians in Central Africa did not like Federation. This was because, as Patel observed, they feared that

> the immigration laws of Southern Rhodesia under which Asians were at a disadvantage would become part of the Federal Law, that Rhodesia type of discrimination would affect Asians in the two Northern Territories, that freedom of movement of Asians across territories would be restricted and in general that Federation would go the way of South Africa.[40]

Consequently, an organisation called the Central African Asian Conference (CAAC) was formed in Limbe, Nyasaland, in July 1952.[41] In 1955 and 1962, R.V. Nayee took part in its activities and led the delegation of the Northern Rhodesia British Indian Association at the Conference of the CAAC held in Lusaka in 1954.[42] The fact that a member of the Livingstone Indian Association was the leader of the national association at the Conference is indicative of the Livingstone's Indian traders deep involvement in finding political solutions to the problems that beset the Indian community in the country. The objective of the CAAC was to halt the Federation. But when Federation became a reality, the CAAC resolved to work within its framework and to do the best it could on behalf of the Indian community. This is evidenced in the CAAC's declaration of August 1953:

> The Federation of the three territories, Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, is an accomplished fact. We have to think of the part we are going to play in the progress and development of those territories, and at the same time we have to consider, frankly and seriously, the difficulties that lie ahead of us.[43]

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39 'Indian residents seeks assurance', *Livingstone Mail*, 8 August 1952.
40 Patel, 'Asian political activity in Rhodesia', p. 69.
41 Ibid., p. 70
42 *Livingstone Mail*, 18 March 1955 and March 1962.
43 Cited in Patel, 'Asian political activity in Rhodesia', p. 70.

The Livingstone's Indians, then, did not support Federation. On the contrary, they opposed it. This continued up to the early years of its creation. For instance, before the Immigration Act and the Southern Rhodesia's Inter-Territorial Movement of Persons (Control) Act were made into laws, the Livingstone Indian Chamber of Commerce and the Livingstone British Indian Association sent petitions to the Federal Prime Minister, Godfrey Huggins, to protest against their enactment, arguing that the proposed immigration bills would adversely affect the economic and social life of the Indian community in the country.[44] When the Inter-Territorial Movement of Persons bill was passed by the Southern Rhodesia Parliament in September 1954, a general meeting of the Livingstone British Indian Association passed a resolution against it.

> This Bill (…) is the most unjust, ill conceived and discriminatory document which appears to be aimed at the Indian community only in that Indians and criminals are precluded from entering Southern Rhodesia from the other territories of the Federation except by special permission (…) It has created a very bitter feeling amongst our members and reflects most incredibly on the Federation as a whole (…) we beg that His Excellence refuse to sign this Bill and stop it from becoming a law.[45]

When the federal law came into effect on 1 November 1954, all Indian businesses in Livingstone came to a standstill. It was a day of 'mourning and protest' against the Federal Immigration Act and Southern Rhodesia's Inter-Territorial Movement of Persons (Control) Act. All Indians in Livingstone closed their businesses for the whole day, and members of the Indian community wore black armbands as a symbol of mourning. They also held prayers and meditations. The usual evening cinema for Indians was cancelled.[46]

Whilst Africans opposed the Federation because they saw it as an obstacle to the achievement of African self-rule, Indians opposed it mainly because they feared the extension to Northern Rhodesia of Southern Rhodesia's immigration laws. However, as the Federation unfolded, Indian traders were able to come to terms with it due to the economic benefits that the expanded federal market was bringing about. Indeed, although the Federation and especially Southern Rhodesia had discriminatory immigration laws, trade goods moved freely through European businessmen who were not affected by these regulations.

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[44] 'Indians attack on immigration – petition to Federal Prime Minister', *Livingstone Mail*, 29 June 1954. See also 'Livingstone Indians protest', *Livingstone Mail*, 30 July 1954.

[45] 'Livingstone Indians protest against Southern Rhodesia Bill', *Livingstone Mail*, 10 September, 1954.

[46] 'Livingstone Indians hold day of mourning and protest', *Livingstone Mail*, 2 November 1954. See also, 'Todd's Reply to Asians Disgusting', letter to the *Livingstone Mail*, 2 November 1954.

Thus, trade goods, especially from Southern Rhodesia, which had a well-developed economy, became abundant, and Indian traders could procure their requirements easily from European wholesale traders. Moreover, the Inter-Territorial Movement of Persons Act, which barred the settlement in Southern Rhodesia of Indians from Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, was repealed shortly after 1959.[47]

Indian political activity in the light of African nationalism

The African nationalists were determined to achieve self-rule despite the setback posed by the Federation. Therefore, the Indians who were benefiting from it were seen to be collaborating with the colonial government, aiding it in suppressing and delaying African Independence. Consequently, from the mid-1950s, their shops were often targeted in politically motivated boycotts. The boycotts were economically damaging to Indian businesses. For example, when an African National Congress-sponsored boycott took place in Livingstone in June 1956, Indian shop owners on Queensway lost between £2,000 and £3,000 in sales in four days. There were between 25 and 30 Asian shops on Queensway at the time.[48] It is important to point out that the boycotts targeted both European and Indian shops. The Indians, however, were hurt the most because African trade was mainly in their hands.

Although information is scant, it would appear that, by the mid-1940s, the Indian community in Northern Rhodesia had formed an all-Indian party called Northern Rhodesia Indian Congress. Its headquarters were in Livingstone and, at least in 1947, its Chairman was B. J. Devalia, a Livingstone resident.[49] The Northern Rhodesia Indian Congress was probably ephemeral, as it seems to have left no trace of its existence at the National Archives of Zambia or in the memory of my informants. It is therefore difficult to assess its aims, objectives and activities. It may well be that the formation of the African Congress of Northern Rhodesia in 1948 militated against the Northern Rhodesia Indian Congress acquiring a more stable form. The continuing existence of the Indian Congress would have conflicted with African aspirations towards majority rule. As a minority group, the Indians abandoned their party so as to identify themselves with Africans who were set to achieve independence. This was especially so when it became clear that the Federation would be dismantled and

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47 Dotson & Dotson, *Indian minority*, p. 316.

48 'Indian traders in town felt the boycott pinch for four days – African National Congress relaxing', *Livingstone Mail*, 15 June 1956.

49 K. Ese, *An historical guide to Livingstone town* (Harare, 1996), p.11. See also D. Shakumbila, 'Devalia – A fighter for social justice', *Times of Zambia*, 9 January 1976.

that African nationalists would take over the mantle of power in the country. At this stage, most Indians, the majority of whom were members of the United Federal Party, switched sides and began to support the nationalist struggle for independence.

Though the majority of Indians in Livingstone only identified themselves with African nationalists after it became clear that Africans would take over the government of the territory, some of the Indians identified themselves with African nationalism right from the start. In an interview in Lusaka, Mr. Oza, a long-time resident of Livingstone, noted:

> We had a clear mind about nationalist struggle. We believed that the emancipation of people from colonial bondage could only come through struggle. Most of us at that time were focused on the struggle in India. Freedom was equated to development of people and country. Therefore, right from the beginning, nationalist rights were supported. The first thing was the right for freedom. Support was first given to African National Congress and then United National Independence Party (UNIP).[50]

The aforementioned Devalia was also member of ANC right from its formative years. When the British Royal family paid a state visit to Northern Rhodesia in 1947, Devalia was invited to meet it. Not only did Devalia decline the invitation, but he also refused to accept the offer of an MBE.[51] In 1976, when asked why he had refused such a prestigious honour, Devalia retorted:

> The colonialist knew that I was helping the ANC and wanted to get me out of my undesirable activities. I refused because I did not want to work for the colonialist government nor become a puppet. I wanted to fight for social justice and not to play the British puppet.[52]

In his work on Indians in the Eastern Province, B.J. Phiri noted that 'several Indians became associated members of ANC in the 1950s and gave both material and moral support to the nationalist struggle.'[53] This observation also applies to Indians in Livingstone, some of whom supported the ANC overtly. 'What we used to do', Devalia reminisced,

> was send five people at a time into the bush to carry out party propaganda among the villagers by distributing pamphlets. But it was difficult because some of our people were being arrested by Chiefs' Kapasos. Among the pamphlets, which party workers distributed to people, were reproductions of articles by Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru of India. Thousands of copies were reproduced in local languages. But because of their effectiveness, the colonial government banned the pamphlets

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50 Interview with H. Oza.
51 Interview with Aravindra Devalia, Livingstone, 7 September, 1999.
52 Shakumbila, 'Devalia – A fighter for social justice'.
53 Phiri, *History of Indians in Eastern Province of Zambia*, p. 49.

> because they were regarded as subversive literature. Anyone found with them was jailed while foreigners were deported.[54]

Wamulwange Siyambango and William Chipango, both African nationalists during the colonial era and former mayors of Livingstone, confirmed Devalia's claim.[55] Kapasa Makasa, a former freedom fighter and childhood friend of Kaunda, also noted that some Indians took a leading role in the struggle for independence. Among these was Rambhai D. Patel, who was popularly known as *Kanjombe* by Africans. In addition to the financial support he gave to African nationalists, *Kanjombe* also provided political literature, most of which centred on the struggle for independence in India and on the political ideas of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi.[56] Such literature was proscribed by the government. In fact, an Indian trader in Livingstone, Bhanabhai Govanbhai Nana, appeared in the High Court on a charge of being in possession without lawful excuse of an extract from a proscribed publication. Nana was acquitted.[57] Nonetheless, this episode underscores the point that Indian traders in Livingstone played an important role in the struggle for independence by raising the political consciousness of the African people through the reproduction and dissemination of militant and political literature.

Others who participated openly in the struggle for independence were H. B. Oza, and Govind H. Parbhoo. Parbhoo was a member of the UNIP Treasury Committee in Livingstone in the early 1960s. He became a UNIP Councillor in 1963. R.V. Nayee was another Indian in Livingstone who supported African nationalism. He supported the ANC when it was formed and then shifted his allegiance to UNIP when the latter party was established in 1959. Nayee attended political meetings when he was in ANC and later on in UNIP. He supported UNIP by supplying mealie meal and financial help to freedom fighters and their family members. Since UNIP did not have adequate transport during the period of the struggle for independence, Nayee often ran errands on its behalf using his vehicle. Some of his shops in Kalomo, Zimba and Livingstone were even given to UNIP to be used as offices. Nationalist leaders such as Kenneth Kaunda, Mainza Chona, Reuben Kamanga, Mungoni Liso,

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54 Shakumbila, 'Devalia – A fighter for social justice'.

55 Interviews with Wamulwange Siyambango, Livingstone, 2 October 1999, and William M. Chipango, 21 October, 1999.

56 Interview with Robert Kapasa Makasa Lusaka, 1 February, 2000. In fact, Yash Ghai & Dharam Ghai noted that African nationalist leaders were helped by individual Indians in various ways and that UNIP finances were supplied by Indian traders. Yash Ghai & Dharam Ghai, *The Asian minorities of East and Central Africa* (London, 1971), Minority Rights Group Report no. 4, p. 12.

57 'Indian trader acquitted of charge of possessing prohibited publication', *Livingstone Mail*, 22 May 1959.

Sikota Wina and others frequented his house in Livingstone. Though Nayee supported African nationalism, in 1959, he was also an executive member of the Livingstone branch of the United Federal Party (UFP).[58] This demonstrates that, in a state of political uncertainty, Indians in Zambia tended to have one leg in the then ruling party and the other in the party that seemed likely to take over.

Protection of their minority interests was the Indians' overarching motive. In the furtherance of this aim, they were certainly prepared to cooperate with, and, occasionally, vote for, the UFP. In fact, around this time, most Indians in Livingstone, as was the case with Indians all over the territory, enjoyed political franchise.[59] Most Indian males in Livingstone had sufficient education and property and were therefore on the roll of registered voters. In fact, as Nina. Robbins noted, "although Indians constituted less than ten percent of non-European population of Livingstone, they registered in high numbers and comprised more that twenty percent of the voters roll."[60] Any politician who dared to ignore Indian voters did so at his own risk. In 1958, for instance, they agreed to support Northern Rhodesian UFP candidates in the federal elections in exchange for the construction of a secondary school in the territory for Indian children. The agreement bore fruit, for shortly after the elections, construction began in Lusaka of what later became Prince Phillip High School (now called Kamwala High School).[61]

Despite the aforementioned examples, the majority of Indian traders who supported the nationalist struggle did so in secret because they feared victimisation from the white settler authorities.[62] Nonetheless, in 1964, the year Northern Rhodesia became independent under the new name, Zambia, an Indian, R.V. Nayee, became the first non-white mayor in Livingstone.[63] Undoubtedly, Nayee's rise was partly in recognition of the contribution the Indian community in Livingstone had made to the struggle for independence.

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58 *Livingstone Mail*, 20 March 1959.

59 Nina Turner Robbins, 'A Study of African Participation in Urban Politics in Livingstone, Zambia, 1905-1966', PhD Thesis, (Howard University, 1977), pp. 34-35.

60 Robbins, 'A Study of African Participation in Urban Politics in Livingstone, Zambia, 1905-1966', p. 285.

61 Dotson & Dotson, *Indian minority*, p. 320.

62 Interviews with W. Siyambango, Livingstone, 2 October, 1999; Parbhoo Harkishan Govind, Livingstone,14 October, 1999, and W.M. Chipango.

63 'Councillor, R.V. Nayee, Newly elected Mayor of Livingstone', *Livingstone Mail*, 10 April 1964.

Conclusion

The participation of Indian traders in the political development of colonial Zambia was primarily driven by their concern for survival in a plural colonial society in which they were a minority racial group. Consequently, their initial participation was driven by the desire to remove such inequality as existed between them and the Europeans, particularly in the area of immigration and trade. Wanting to enjoy the same rights and privileges as the Europeans, they worked within the framework of the colonial government, thereby evoking the wrath of African nationalists. Indians were seen as collaborators with the colonial government in suppressing and frustrating African aspirations towards self-government. As a result, their businesses became targets of politically motivated boycotts from the mid-1950s.

When the issue of Federation came up, Indian traders vehemently opposed it, as they feared that the Southern Rhodesian restrictive laws on Indian immigration would become part of Federal laws, thereby hampering Indian immigration into Northern Rhodesia. This essay, therefore, does not subscribe to the view espoused by most scholars that all Indians in Central Africa welcomed the Federation because they stood to benefit from it economically. Indians in colonial Zambia never welcomed it, but rather accommodated to it when it became a reality and after trying all they could to stop it. However, with the passage of time, as Indians saw more and more economic benefits from the expanded Federal market, they became reluctant to abandon it. They did so only when it became clear that African majority rule was on the cards.

During the politics of independence, Indians in colonial Zambia contributed morally, materially and financially to the cause of African nationalism. However, this was mostly done secretly because they feared persecution from the colonial government. Even so, a few Indian traders like R.V. Nayee and B.J. Devalia identified themselves openly with African nationalism. This essay therefore challenges the generalisation that all Indians were opposed to African nationalism because they doubted the Africans' ability to rule effectively due to lack of education.

11

Cinemas, spices and sport: Recollections of Hindu life in 1950s Northern Rhodesia

Joan M. Haig

Introduction

In contrast to the histories of other Indian communities in the region, Zambia's Indian population has a comparatively more recent and linear trajectory.[1] Indian migration and settlement in Northern Rhodesia began in the early 1900s.[2] The

[1] In East Africa, sea-faring merchants from India traded along the coast for centuries, and, from the 1800s, began infrequently to venture and settle inland. From the 1860s indentured labour was used there and in South Africa on plantations and railway projects. Some of these labourers stayed on as 'free' Indians after their contracts ended, carving a space for themselves in the early colonial economy as porters, clerks, street vendors and laundry boys. They were later joined by relatively affluent and well-educated 'Passenger' Indians, from across the sub-Continent, who were predominantly Muslim. See T. Thomas, *Indians overseas: A guide to source materials in the India Office records for the study of Indian emigration 1830-1950* (London, 1985), p. 6; M. West, 'Indians, India, and race and nationalism in British Central Africa' *South Asia Bulletin,* 14 (1994), p. 86; and P.K. Rao, 'Indians abroad', *The Indian Year Book of International Affairs* (1955), p. 44.

[2] For more details on the early migration and settlement of Indians in Northern Rhodesia see F. Dotson and L. Dotson, *The Indian minority of Zambia, Rhodesia and Nyasaland* (London, 1968), B.J. Phiri, *A history of Indians in Eastern Province of Zambia* (Lusaka, 2000), and J. Haig, 'Crossing colonial boundaries: The "Indian Question" and early Indian immigration to Northern Rhodesia', in C. Baker and Z.

majority of Indians first entering Northern Rhodesia did so as 'Passengers' – affording their own passage on the various steamships. This first group of immigrants were skilled artisans or commercially-driven traders. Unlike elsewhere in Africa, the Northern Rhodesia-bound Passengers were mostly Hindus from the Gujarat region of north-west India, new to Africa, and their numbers remained small until the mid-1940s.[3] This immigrant experience is distinctive to Central Africa and unexpected; therefore some authors have assumed that the Indians migrating to Northern Rhodesia did so under the indentured labour scheme.[4] On the contrary, this first group of immigrants is proud of their Passenger status and contrasts it with the indentured labour experience of Indians in South Africa and East Africa. Among the Indian community today, this group and their descendants – many locally born and holding Zambian citizenship – are know as the 'residents'.

A second set of Indians came to independent Zambia in the late 1960s and early 1970s. They were contracted from across India to work as educators and medical practitioners, and were of varying religions and castes. Although many of them have now settled in Zambia, they are known among the Indian community as the 'expatriates'. There are observable and informally-recorded divisions between 'residents' and 'expatriates', one example of this being articles sketching each group's distinct characteristics included in a series of Lusaka Hindu Association *Samachar* magazines. For this chapter on Indian, and specifically Hindu, recollections of the 1950s I necessarily draw on interviews with the 'residents', although such recollections themselves reinforce this internal division in the community.

Before discussing the ways in which these memories of the 1950s are used, I will examine the representation of Indian immigrants in official records, where they appear as problematic migrants subject to restrictions and segregation. The second and most substantial part of this chapter, however, focuses on how

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Norridge (eds.), *Crossing places: New research in African studies* (Newcastle, 2007).

3 In the first two decades of the twentieth century no more than ten Indians entered per year. In 1911 there was a total of 39 Indians in Northern Rhodesia. See L. Gann, *The birth of a plural society: The development of Northern Rhodesia under the British South Africa Company, 1894-1914* (Manchester, 1958), p. 155.

4 This assumption is made by J. Geber, in 'Southern African Sources in the Oriental and India Office Collections of the British Library', *African Research and Documentation* , 70 (London, 1996), p. 11; Gann, *Birth of a plural society*, p. 179; N. Prithvish, 'Basis of Zambian settlements', *African Quarterly,* 17 (1977), p. 64, and Phiri, *History of Indians*, 4. Interestingly, several of my Indian informants said they thought their forefathers had been railway workers from South Africa or from the east coast – there may have been cases of cross-border entrances of 'free' Indians.

Indians today, when asked to think back to this period of political, social and racial struggle, tend to gloss over the difficulties they encountered and look instead with nostalgia to the 'good old days'. I will relate how, for my Indian informants, the 1950s was the era of great journeys, film circuits, spice exchanges; it was the era of inaugurations, sport, and rock and roll. Thirdly and finally, I will consider what part these very positive, first-hand recollections might play in theorising about national belonging and the construction and persistence of cultural or racial boundaries.

Reading the records: Indians in the 1950s

It is clear from the archives that from the beginning white settlers and administrators in Northern Rhodesia felt deeply threatened by Indian incomers. To combat this threat they implemented policies and engaged in practices intended to prevent a 'great influx of Indians'.[5] Discrimination against the Indians in Northern Rhodesia during the first half of the century was typical of other British African territories, and by the 1950s the community was subject to significant restrictions. Families were all but quarantined into 'Second Class' housing areas, and shop owners confined to strict retail zones. Kamwala and 'Madras', Indian-dominated retail and residential areas, are the most compact examples of this in Lusaka. Limitations on trading licences often pushed fledgling Indian businesses from the main municipalities and European settlements found along the 'line of rail' and into rural outposts. The Closed Towns Policy of 1945, for example, was ostensibly introduced to control competition in order to protect the local African sellers and consumers from price hikes. In reality, it merely granted British and Jewish traders a monopoly in business by denying Indians the right to trade inside towns.[6] Indian children were segregated at primary school level together with the Coloureds, and to obtain secondary education they had to travel to Southern Rhodesia or further afield, to Tanzania, Kenya, India and the UK. The community had limited access to public facilities and spaces, and individuals' movements between and within colonial territories were closely monitored and inhibited.[7]

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5 04/04/25 Proposal to Adopt a Policy of Excluding Asiatic Immigrants, from India Office to Colonial Office, India Office Records, British Library, L/E/7/1332 File 763/1924.

6 28/03/45, Letter from Mr. U.B. Merai, regarding restriction of trading rights in Northern Rhodesia (forwarded by the High Commissioner for India to the Secretary to the Government of India, Dept. of Commonwealth Relations), India Office Records, British Library, L/P&J/8/335 Collection 108/40C.

7 10/07/53, Inter-Territorial Movement of Persons (Control) Ordinance, Northern Rhodesia, National Archives of the UK (NAUK), Kew, CO1015/1256. This became an Act in 1954 and banned Indians (and others) from entering Southern Rhodesia

Such discrimination was based upon white settler perceptions that Indians were a threat to their society and that their numbers should be controlled. The sentiment is best summed up by Lord Delamere, who expounded:

> In all countries the backbone is the small man, the white colonialist with small means, but there is no place for him in the country once the Asiatic is there (…) It means, if open competition is allowed, the small white colonialist must go to the wall.[8]

It is clear from the internal government correspondence that the policies and practices that were put in place to prevent 'open competition' in Northern Rhodesia were based more on the experiences of other colonial territories, specifically Kenya and the Transvaal, than on any significant local Indian migration or presence. Lilian and Floyd Dotson, the authors of an authoritative text on Indians in central Africa, described the pre-war flow of Indians as a mere 'trickle'.[9] Data in the archives supports this claim – the official statistics detail fewer than ten Indians arriving each year prior to World War II, and some years no Indians arrived at all.[10] However, after the war, this trend changed. The post-war expansion of the Northern Rhodesian economy was rapid: the country's net output was estimated to have risen more than ten-fold between 1945 (£14 million) and 1955 (£143 million).[11] British ex-servicemen 'flooded in' to the central African region, where land and trading rights were reserved for their procurement.[12] The pace of Indian arrivals also quickened. Table 11.1 shows the origin of all immigrants to Northern Rhodesia for the year 1952 from the four most significant contributing countries.

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from the north. In addition, the Federal Immigration Act (No.3F) placed certain restrictions generally on crossing intra-federal borders; see H.H. Patel, 'Indians in Uganda and Rhodesia', *Studies in race relations,* 5 (1973), p. 5.

8 Quoted by Elspeth Huxley in J. Nehru, *Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru* (New Delhi, 1976), p. 357.

9 Dotson, and Dotson, *Indian minority* , p. 51.

10 See India Office Records, British Library, L/E/7/1332 File 763/1924 'Indians in Northern Rhodesia November 1916-1930'; see also Phiri, *History of Indians*, p. 18.

11 W.J. Barber, 'The Political Economy of Central Africa's Experiment with Inter-Racial Partnership' *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, 24 (1959), p. 330.

12 J. McCracken, 'Economics and ethnicity: The Italian community in Malawi', *Journal of African History*, 32 (1991), p. 315.

Table 11.1 Immigrants to Northern Rhodesia in 1952[13]

Union of South Africa	3,289
United Kingdom	1,963
Southern Rhodesia	1,463
India	284

Suddenly there were hundreds of Indians coming in. We can also assume that the figures for the other countries included small numbers of Indians in the break-down of their ethnic composition.[14] Despite this increase in Indian immigrants, it is clear from the table that, compared with other immigrants, the Indians remained a distinct minority. In 1950 only 2000 of a total Northern Rhodesian population of 2 million were classed as Indian; furthermore, in 1951, for every Indian there were 17 Europeans.[15] The idea that Indians were 'taking over' in the early 1950s, as local newspapers such as the *Northern News* reported, remained a white settler fear, rather than a reality, and this was admitted regularly by the authorities.[16] Nevertheless, during the 1950s, the fear was enhanced by the steep increase in the number of immigrants, and by the end of the decade Indians had a significant hold on the economy.

Exacerbating the demographic threat, white settlers and the colonial authorities from the outset were concerned that the Indians had low 'standards of habits of life' which rendered them 'undesirable inhabitants'.[17] This claim had been used to justify the separation of Indians and Europeans in restaurants, hotels, cinemas, and clubs. Even Indian and Pakistani government representatives after 1947 were 'routinely denied admission' to these venues.[18] Segregation in public areas intensified after the war. As noted, at that time, housing areas, premium trading plots and agricultural land were kept aside 'to

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[13] Compiled from figures in 19/03/53 Northern Rhodesia *Viewpoint*, No.11. NAUK, CO1015/244.

[14] In the immigration statistics for the second quarter of 1952 there is also a category for British incomers born in countries other than those in Table 11.1. It is not possible to say whether or not this included Indians, but even if it had, the numbers were proportionately small (78 out of the quarter total of 1,921). Even if there were Indians coming in from other territories, however, the official discourse mainly concerned those immigrants arriving direct from India. 05/09/53, Government Gazette No. 1550 (1952), NAUK, CO1015/498.

[15] Compiled from figures in Dotson & Dotson, *Indian minority*, p. 51.

[16] National Archives of Zambia (NAZ), Lusaka, SEC 5/192; 24/09/50: Brief for the Minister of State at Discussion with Indian High Commissioner, NAUK, CO1015/501.

[17] 31/05/24, Letter from J.C. Brundell (Chief Immigration Officer, Southern Rhodesia) to T. Hamilton (Chief Immigration Officer, Northern Rhodesia).

[18] West, 'Indians, India, and Race', p. 99.

protect the interests of the ex-servicemen', who were offered the right of first refusal to purchase as a reward for their efforts in the war.[19] Although many of these families, and other whites that began to arrive, were less educated, less wealthy and less wise to colonial etiquette than the settled Indians, the marriage (albeit an uneasy one) of race and class prevented any change in policy or practice regarding segregation.

Nevertheless, Indians continued to be attracted to the territory, and there are a few explanations for the sudden rise in Indian migrants after the war and in the early 1950s. The pattern of employment was by now well established whereby Indian store-keepers preferred to recruit from their own kin-groups in India rather than from the local pool of black African workers.[20] Perhaps the financial capacity of the settled Indians had by then expanded to allow more Indians in; unfortunately there are no records tallying the relationships of incoming Indians to those already settled. It has also been suggested that the literacy test, to which all applicants for entry were subject, was no longer a serious barrier to Indians, since the Indian education system had improved sufficiently since 1947.[21] Historian Michael West, writing on Indians in the late colonial period, attributes the sudden jump in immigrant numbers in the early 1950s to the falling of an 'iron curtain' around the borders of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.[22] Official correspondence in the archives reinforces that there were widespread expectations that the future settler-dominated government of the planned Federation would 'lose no time in clamping down hard on Asian immigration'.[23] The British High Commissioner in India perceived that 'immigration into Northern Rhodesia is at present increasing on account of fear that the new Federal Government will severely restrict it.'[24]

The predictions were accurate; policy did tighten, if only for a few years. There were a series of dramas in 1953 involving Indian immigrants struggling to enter Northern Rhodesia, and these caught the attention of the British newspapers, which followed the stories attentively. In the first incident, some 50 Indian immigrants, sailing on the British India steamship, the *Kampala*, were

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[19] 21/11/46, Letter to Dept. of Commonwealth Relations, New Delhi, from Acting Chief Secretary to the Government, India Office Records, British Library, L/P&J/8/335 Collection 108/40C.

[20] According to the Dotsons' study, 4/5 shop assistants in Indian stores came from India at this time; clearly they were interested in bolstering their community; *Indian Minority*, p. 51. This mode of employment is called 'chain migration' and documented in studies of Indian minorities elsewhere.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 49.

[22] West, 'Indians, India, and race', p. 87.

[23] Extract from letter to Commonwealth Relations Office, NAUK, CO1015/501.

[24] 21/08/53, Inward telegram to commonwealth relations office from British high commissioner in India (Acting), NAUK, CO1015/505.

held at Beira, in Portuguese East Africa, and denied transit permits to Northern Rhodesia by Portuguese authorities.[25] A second set of 30 Indians, on the passenger liner *SS Karanja*, were held in Mombasa, despite having passports appropriately endorsed for travel inland.[26] In the ensuing months, a further 23 immigrants were held at Beira and a separate group of 36 were turned away upon reaching the inland border post of the Federation. In reaction to these events, and to the group entry by air of Indians several times a week, the *Manchester Guardian* surmised that the Indian government itself was financing the influx of Indians to the continent generally – and specifically, that India's Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru, whose anti-colonial activism was gaining ground in Africa and attention in Britain, was behind the early Federation immigration flow. In *The Times* newspaper, Deputy Prime Minister of the Federation, Sir Roy Welensky, responded ambiguously to the allegation that India had master-minded the influx of immigrants. Welensky had had previous altercations with the Indian government, whose inquisitiveness into the proposed immigration policies of the Federation had prevented an outright ban on Indian applications.[27]

Although these incidents involved a small number of Indians, this was no small matter. Shri Apa Pant, the High Commissioner for India in East Africa, flew to London especially to discuss the controversy. His retort to Welensky and the British media, printed in the *Central African Post*, was that it 'is very easy to make political capital out of the old bogey of the teeming millions of Asia looking for an outlet.'[28] In fact, Indians moving to and living in Africa during the 1950s were very poorly represented by Nehru's government. India, after all, had won her independence in 1947, and although it is true that Nehru believed strongly that Indians in other colonies should fight against the white minority authorities, he also withdrew much of India's support to non-resident Indians and by 1960 had developed harsh policies regarding their rights to Indian citizenship.[29]

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[25] 11/03/53, Article in *The Times*, 'Indian immigrants to Northern Rhodesia: Dispute with Portuguese', and n.d., Reuters report, Lusaka, 'Immigrants', NAUK, CO1015/505.

[26] 18/08/53, Telegram to Sir E. Baring, Kenya, from Secretary of State for Colonies, NAUK, CO1015/505.

[27] 22/08/53, Letter from Jasper to Gibson, NAUK, CO1015/505.

[28] 31/08/53, Press Resume. This opinion and the denial of India giving financial support to the immigrants is also expressed in 02/09/53 *Manchester Guardian,* 'No Indian Influx into Rhodesia: Allegation "Ridiculous"', and 02/09/53, *The Times*, 'Indian Immigrants in N. Rhodesia: High Commissioner's Denials', NAUK, CO1015/505.

[29] Anon., 'Seminar on Indians abroad: Asia and Africa', *African Quarterly*, 9 (1970); C. Heismath & S. Mansingh, *A diplomatic history of modern India* (Bombay, 1971);

It is an interesting, and open, question to ask why Indians residing in newly-independent India would choose to migrate from being 'equals' to being, once again, second class citizens under British rule. My informants invariably cited economic reasons for first migrating to Africa; one can surmise that the challenges of immigration and racial prejudice in Africa were still preferable to the crowded and competitive conditions of life in India.[30] Indeed, the point I want to make next is that even though there was complex political wrangling taking place in Northern Rhodesia, and while very real restrictions on Indians' rights and representation did exist, Indians today do not recall and describe this era in terms of political segregation and hardship.

Remembering Indian life in the 1950s

Among the first things to be recalled by my informants is that the 1950s was the decade in which Indian men were joined by Indian women. Previously there had been very few women in the territory, primarily because the nature of their migration was economic rather than social. However, by the end of the 1950s – and after the initial strict Federal immigration policies were loosened up – female immigrants from India outnumbered their male counterparts, making the gender ratio among the Asians in the Federation 8 women to 10 men.[31] One reason why the number of Indian women in Northern Rhodesia increased in this decade was the difference between that country and its southern neighbour's immigration policies. Southern Rhodesia had a larger population of Indians, just under double the population of those in Northern Rhodesia.[32] Immigration policy in Southern Rhodesia tightened under Federation and did not allow resident Indian women to bring in spouses, although resident Indian men were entitled to bring in their newly-wed wives. The result was that many of the Indian women born or brought up in Southern Rhodesia and who married Indians from outwith the Federation simply moved, upon marriage, to Northern

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A.D. Gupta, 'Old and new Indians in East and Central Africa'. In: I.J. Bahadur Singh, ed., *The other India: The overseas Indians and their relationship with India, Proceedings of a seminar* (New Delhi, 1979); A. Mazrui, 'Africa between Gandhi and Nehru: An Afro-Asian interaction', *African Quarterly*, 39 (1999); A.K. Dubey, 'India and the experience of the Indian diaspora in Africa', *African Quarterly*, 40 (2000).

30 See M. Swanson, review of B. Pachai, The South African Indian question, 1860-1971, in *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 6 (1973), p. 141

31 W.V. Brelsford, ed., *Handbook to the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland* (London, 1960), p. 7.

32 In 1951 there were 4,292 Asians and 135,596 Europeans in Southern Rhodesia. Dotson & Dotson, *Indian minority*, p. 42.

Rhodesia, where their spouses could join them.[33] Another reason was that the eligible men of Livingstone and Lusaka and elsewhere who had worked hard in the territory were finally wealthy enough to travel back to India to marry. One of my informants, who had brought his wife out to Africa in 1951, recalled that it was from 1955 that 'all the ladies started coming in'.[34] By this time, too, daughters born of earlier migrants had grown to be marriageable young women. Suddenly, recall my informants, for the men who had been toiling behind shop counters and monitoring factory floors, Northern Rhodesia was not such a bleak place to be.

Indeed, for the Indians I spoke to (and these were mostly men), the arrival of women in the 1950s altered more than the social dimension of their lives. The changes to life in the Indian community in the 1950s indicate that women were the primary carriers of Indian national identity and culture. This manifests itself in subtle, but important ways: for one informant, when the women came, the food got better.[35] For Indians, food is central to identity and a sense of well-being, and although many Indian men can cook extremely well, it was the women that brought with them the flavours of home.[36] In the 1950s, one of the first market gardens was established in the Southern Province to grow the necessary spices for complex Indian dishes. Poppy seeds and other, more exotic ingredients were increasingly requested of incoming Indians.[37] In short, the presence of women in society made the Indians feel more at home.

One informant centred his memories of the 1950s on his mother, who was born in East Africa and who spoke many African languages. She had worked in local council in Kenya, and, when in Livingstone, she worked behind the family shop counter in the main street, a space more commonly occupied by Jewish

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[33] Interview with Mr. Oza, Lusaka, 7 March 2007. Mr Oza first arrived in Northern Rhodesia, via Kenya, in 1941. His wife was born in Southern Rhodesia in 1920. With financial assistance from her brother they opened 'Oza's Store'. He left Zambia during the 1970s and acquired British citizenship in 1990. He is now retired and living with his son in Lusaka; his son runs Saro's agricultural supplies, the family business.

[34] Interview with N.K. Patel, Lusaka, 23 April 2007. Mr. Patel came by steamer via Durban to Northern Rhodesia in 1941. He opened a business in Monze where he lived until 1963; he then moved to Lusaka where he has now retired. He lives with one of his three sons.

[35] Interview with N.K. Patel, 23 April 2007.

[36] For an explanation of the centrality of food to identity amongst Indian immigrant communities, see L. Naidoo, 'Re-negotiating identity and reconciling cultural ambiguity in the immigrant community in Sydney, Australia.'

[37] Conversation with J. Patel, Lusaka, 4 May 2007. Mr. J. Patel moved to Northern Rhodesia in the 1930s; I spoke with him shortly before he joined his family in the UK for his retirement.

traders. Since she spoke English well and quickly learned the local languages, she was well-connected across racial groups. This family had a laundry business and also 'Premier Mineral Water and Ice-Cream Factory', and my informant remembered the tasty ice-cream they produced.[38] Another informant recalled the culinary offerings of the Rana family of Southern Rhodesia. The Ranas were one of several families dotted from the coast inland to which a great many Indians in Zambia today attribute their safe arrival into Africa. These families kept open houses where Indian migrants would find shelter, food and local knowledge. My informant wrote down, 'Up to the late 1950s there were very few Indians from NR who had not savoured the famed Rana hospitality.' He remembered the Rana's cook, Old Man Sam, whose younger brother incidentally became a minister in Kaunda's government.[39]

The Ranas and other families like them played a vital role in the movement and mood of the Indian community in Africa.[40] The crossing to Africa was reportedly harrowing; Passenger Indians slept for a month on the open deck on wet mattresses and at the end there was no guarantee of civility or, worse, permission to remain. The journey itself and the racial immigration policies that met the incomers could easily have given rise to very negative memories. On the contrary, these journeys are discussed with great pride and used by Indians today to legitimate their belonging in Zambia. One romantic informant admitted that he has conflated in his memory the experience he had of the steamships with the stories he heard from his parents, but he remembered that on his own journey in the 1950s he had met a pretty girl on deck.[41] Another gentleman, in his written memoirs, recounts travelling to Africa in the mid-1950s on the *SS Karanja* as a young boy:

> (T)he most affordable method was to travel on deck, the very few affluent (Indians) travelled in second class cabins (…) The luggage consisted mostly of black metal trunks with the names painted in white containing clothing not forgetting a few cardboard boxes of Bombay Mithaiwala's *halwa* as proof that you had indeed arrived from India. To keep the clothes safe from bugs mothballs were placed in between and around the clothes, too bad if as a kid you were forced to eat a piece of

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38 Interview with H. Devalia, Lusaka, 30 November 2006. H. Devalia was born in Livingstone in 1949. He is a businessman in Lusaka and at the time of interview was on the executive committee of the Hindu Association of Zambia.

39 Interview with K.P. Ranchod, 21 May 2007. Old man Sam's brother was Nalumino Mundia. Mr. Ranchod was born in Tanzania in 1935, and moved to Northern Rhodesia as a schoolboy. He lives in Lusaka and is a Zambian citizen.

40 Personal correspondence with M. Valand, July 2008. Mr. Valand was born in Broken Hill in 1949 and moved to Atlanta in 1979; he is a citizen of the USA.

41 Conversation with P. Patel, Lusaka, 30 July 2007. P. Patel moved to Northern Rhodesia in the 1950s and worked for his father. He moved to the UK in the 1980s and is a British citizen.

brittle halwa worse for wear after 28 days of sea travel and carrying the pungent smell of naphthalene. With the trunks there was the ubiquitous *bistro* (bedding), comprising of a padded quilt, which doubled as a mattress, a couple of blankets and a pillow, rolled up and strapped with leather belting. [42]

Figure 11.1 Catching the train to school, mid-1950s

Many Indians mentioned the steamships, which have come to reify for them the perseverance of their community in central Africa. The overland journey from the coast was also challenging, but itself occupies a less central place in memories. In the 1950s some Indians returning from visits to India, or coming for the first time to Northern Rhodesia, travelled by air, at least for the East African leg of the journey. This was expensive and one reason for the allegations, mentioned in the previous section, that the Indian government was financing an influx of immigrants. Rather, it is evidence of the individual wealth that could be, and was, accumulated by the mode of Indians' work. Accounts of travel in this period are nostalgic and the steamships and early

[42] K.P. Ranchod, 'The family: From India to Africa and beyond – A brief insight', Unpublished MS, 2002.

flights remain status symbols within the community – one interpretation of James Clifford's combining of 'routes' and 'roots'.[43]

Another positive recollection of the 1950s that mingles home cooking with great journeys is that of the train to Bulawayo. Figure 11.1 is a photograph of Indian children embarking on the journey from Livingstone to the south, where they were boarders at the Indian school.[44] Segregated education was used by the British in asserting control over other minorities as well as over the African population: there were only a few secondary schools allocated to the Asians and Coloureds under Federation, and these were, for the majority of the 1950s, in Southern Rhodesia. Rather than having embittered accounts of this experience, however, the Indians I spoke with have light-hearted memories – perhaps because the education and experience they gained was in itself exclusive and privileged, and perhaps because they were children at the time. The man I interviewed is the boy closest to the carriage, and he fondly remembers the school train as an adventure with siblings and friends; he was delighted to think back to the tiffin box, filled with home cooked rice and sweets, that his mother prepared for him for the train journey every school term. He also remembered the conversion of government stables in Northern Rhodesia into a primary school for Indians, and the opening, attended by Sir Gilbert Rennie and his wife. (This event, which my informant places at the time of his secondary schooling in the mid-1950s, actually took place in 1947; it has shifted in his memory.) For him it was a great and vibrant event, rather than the example of institutionalized second class treatment that it was.[45] Similarly, an informant, who was born in Broken Hill in 1949, wrote to me about the racial segregation of the 1950s: 'I can remember segregated schools, cinemas, theatres, restaurants, etc (…) The colonial system was clearly defined (…).' He went on to describe two events that stand out in his memory, both of which are positive. The first was recalling that a Polish Jew had served him 'the best hot bread at the front counter' of his bakery, rather than 'old stale bread at the rear door.' The second was

> (W)hen our Queen Mother and Queen Elizabeth after coronation came in a Rolls Royce motorcade. We kids in uniform were lined up forcefully by the segregated school system. Imagine! Separate groups, all in uniform, all welcoming Her Majesty the Royal Highness. It was a privilege to wave the Union Jack, for us to show off! And we got a day off school – a holiday.[46]

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43 J. Clifford, *Routes: Travel and translation in the twentieth century* (Cambridge, MA, 1997).

44 Harshad, Subhash & Indrajit Devalia taking the train to Que Que (now Kwekwe).

45 Interview with H. Devalia, Lusaka, 9 July 2007.

46 Correspondence with M. Valand.

Recalling his access to sporting grounds, another interviewee said,

> The Lusaka Club was predominantly for white people, (the Municipal Sports Club) was for white people, I mean, I remember when I was a youngster I couldn't go to these clubs, that's just how it was.[47]

And yet another said: 'They don't allow us (into) hotels, they don't allow us in theatres or cinemas, in those days'.[48] The racial discrimination is evidently remembered; what is remarkable is *how* it has been remembered. The experiences related to me were positive, and ideas of victimhood were never expressed in the narratives that I collected.[49]

Partly, this is because while its growing numbers were prevented from accessing European services, the Indian community was quietly working towards carving out a social space for itself by strengthening its own associational and recreational networks. There was a Northern Rhodesian Indian Shop Assistant's Union, although my archival and interview work did not reveal about what or to whom they petitioned, if they did at all.[50] There was also, in Lusaka, an Indian library; the Secretary of the library between 1951 and 1960 was proud to have made the institution non-racial shortly before it closed.[51] Up until the 1950s there had been a Northern Rhodesia British Indian Association,[52] but with the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 the Muslim and Indian communities began to drift apart. Separate Hindu and Muslim associations were formed in all the major, and some minor, towns.[53] In Lusaka there had been a communal sports area allocated by the authorities for Indian use, and this too was divided in the early 1950s. One prominent member of the Lotus (Hindu) Club explained,

> Initially there was no (sports) club for Indians to go to at that time. And those days the Northern Rhodesia government allocated this ground – actually it was three grounds which were allocated to the whole Asian community. But what happened, Hindus have a different way of doing things to the Muslims, so the two communities

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47 Interview with Mr. Joshi, Lusaka, 14 May 2007. Mr. Joshi was born in Zambia and holds Zambian citizenship. At the time of the interview he was the President of the Lotus Club in Lusaka.

48 Interview with N.K. Patel, 23 April 2007.

49 Robin Cohen attempts to categorise 'diasporas' on functionalist terms: victim, labour, trade, imperial, and cultural. The Hindu communities of Zambia, however, bridge several of these categories. *Global diasporas: An introduction* (Seattle, 2007).

50 T.A. Bhatt, *Indians in Africa, Volume one: Zambia* (Nairobi, 1969), p. 21.

51 *Ibid*.

52 See F. Mufuzi, this volume.

53 Registrar of Societies, Lusaka, ORS/107/67/3, ORS/102/67/108, ORS/102/67/22, ORS/102/67/51.

went and approached the government and said within the Asians there was Muslims and Hindus.[54]

These distinctions within the community give weight to the claims by Indians that such clubs and associations were initially for cultural, rather than political, gatherings. Moreover, the Hindu associations and their community halls that figure so prominently in Hindu life in Zambia today were first started not as religious or community centres but as cinema houses and places of entertainment. One informant told me that 'normally the Hindu Halls had an auditorium for showing films, a stage for plays, and attached to that, later on was the temple'.[55] The Livingstone venue was the first to open, in 1952. It was named after V.K. Naik, who bid the most in a fundraising auction for the honour.[56] The Lusaka Hall followed in 1954. Indeed, the 1950s is most often remembered by my informants for the great film circuit that was established, which helped to unite Indians across the territory. I asked one elderly Indian if the films had been important in keeping people aware of Indian culture and politics. No, he responded: they were purely for entertainment; and he went on: 'In those days it was a good film, not like in the present movies (…) All that dancing, singing, it was nothing like that.'[57] The film reels themselves had been on long and winding journeys. From India they were sent to East Africa and then either to Southern Rhodesia and then up to Livingstone or directly by air freight to Lusaka. They were then transported by rail and shown wherever there was a Hindu Hall, on Friday and Saturday nights; most of the community would show up for the occasion. It is claimed that it was from this film circuit that the territory-wide Hindu Association was formed, although there are divergent accounts of this.[58] Hindu Halls were also rented out for social functions: in one letter to the Lusaka Hindu Association, the Mine school in Broken Hill requests

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54 Interview with Mr. Joshi, 14 May 2007.

55 Interview with H. Devalia, 30 November 2006.

56 Interview with Mr. Oza, 7 March 2007.

57 Interview with N.K. Patel, 23 April 2007.

58 Interview with K.P. Ranchod, 21 May 2007. This is supported by N.K. Patel. Suresh Patel, 5 June 2007, cites the film circuit as the reason for the establishment of the Lusaka Hindu Association. Several others promote the idea that the territory-wide Hindu Association pre-dates the cinemas, and that the film circuit merely drew the network of smaller town associations under its 'umbrella'. Suresh Patel was born in India in 1950 and in 1959 his family joined his father, who had moved to Northern Rhodesia in 1935; at the time of the interview Suresh Patel had just completed his tenure as President of the Lusaka Hindu Association.

'permission to use your famous Indian Hall'.[59] Later on, they were the venues for political meetings by members of the ANC and UNIP.[60]

Several informants recalled helping in the African national liberation struggle, or named others who did so. As one informant tellingly put it, 'Like all pioneers in any country, Hindus who came to Zambia struggled and contributed in their own way of building a nation.'[61] Their help was in 'cash and in kind', and it included printing pamphlets, purchasing air tickets, and giving lifts or office space 'on and off' to activists, such as Mainza Chona, Harry Nkumbula and Kenneth Kaunda.[62] Indians clearly recall having the financial capacity to help the independence struggle: perhaps one of the reasons that the 1950s is remembered fondly by my informants is that, despite the web of restrictions placed upon them, in terms of business they flourished. Their success warranted the establishment of another association of interest – the Lusaka Indian Chamber of Commerce. From conversations about this time, and from analysing an intriguing catalogue of Indians that was put together by T.A. Bhatt, an Indian on tour in the 1960s, it is clear that the community's role in the economy was remarkable and not limited to shop-keeping. From the mid-1950s, Indians began to diversify: they ran factories, wholesale and import businesses, they worked as barbers and tailors, they trained as mechanics and bought into the transport sector, they set up farms and maize mills, pharmacies, restaurants and teashops[63]. In spite of the unfair taxes on their incomes, and policies such as the Closed Town Policy that were designed to limit their economic reach – the denial of 'open competition' prescribed by Delamere – Indians did extremely well during Federal years.[64]

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59 Letter to Lusaka Hindu Association from Mine School, Broken Hill, 17 February 1955, Records of the Lusaka Hindu Association.

60 See the chapter by F. Mufuzi, in this volume. Also note that, in addition to the use of the Hindu Hall in Lusaka, several private Indian spaces were used by African nationalists during the 1950s and 1960s: one example is the offices of Ratilal Kapadia, who subsequently donated his property on Freedom Way to UNIP.

61 Correspondence with M. Valand.

62 Personal correspondence with K.P. Ranchod, n.d.; correspondence with M. Valand; interview with Mr. Oza, 7 March 2007.

63 Bhatt, *Indians in Africa*; interview with R.B. Desai, 1 August 2007.

64 There are several explanations for this, including the Indians' credit scheme, their work ethic, and the apprenticeship system that enabled individuals to gain experience and initial capital. For an excellent summary see Dotson and Dotson, *Indian minority*, pp. 198-210.

Figure 11.2 The Northern Rhodesian cricket team, 1957

With typical discretion, however, few of the Indians I spoke to referred to the financial aspect of their lives in that decade. They preferred to tell me about their successes elsewhere, such as on the sports field. Figure 11.2 shows the Northern Rhodesian Indian Cricket Team at a tournament in Bulawayo.[65] The team was drawn mainly from players in Livingstone. Matches there would take place in the main Showgrounds, which Indians were periodically permitted to use. Despite the rules, public spaces were sometimes used informally. For example, one of the Indians who was a teenager in the late 1950s, and whose family restaurant had the first Juke Box and one of the first pin-ball machines in Northern Rhodesia, recalled,

> The youngsters used to hang around there (the restaurant) (…) So we had the Teddy Boys or the Duck Tails as they are known (…) They used to hang around there and smoke (…) And then we had the Boy Scouts as well. These were the squeaky clean guys. Every now and then we used to have rumbles. At the Showgrounds on the Royal Mile (…) they used to meet there on Saturday afternoons and have fights, the Duck Tails versus the Boy Scouts![66]

While teenagers were sporting among themselves, adult Indians were fighting against the authorities: in the 1940s a public swimming pool had been built in Livingstone, accessible only to the white community. In the 1950s

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[65] The Northern Rhodesia cricket team, second inter-territorial tournament for the Ramabhai Trophy, Bulawayo 1957. Personal collection of H. Devalia.

[66] Interview with H. Devalia, 30 November 2006.

several individuals campaigned to make the pool accessible to all. The spokesman for the British Indian Association at the time recalls that the Mayor of Livingstone had said: 'You people are using oil and that's the reason why; it will spoil the swimming pool.'[67] This memory is consistent with the longstanding objections to Indians that are recorded in the archives regarding hygiene and standards of living. Eventually, a Racial Discrimination Committee set up in 1960 found that the Public Health Ordinance, which separated by race even the latrines in public venues, was unnecessary.[68] Again, the end point of the swimming pool narrative was not that Indians had been victims of discrimination but that, in 1960, they had won their case and the pool was opened to the general public.

(Re)constructing identities

Historical records of the late colonial period, both in British imperial and Zambian archives, flag up immigration, housing, education and trade as key areas of Indian segregation engineered by the colonial authorities. The literature on Asians in Africa generally emphasises the role of such colonial policy, and also the treatment of Indians by the newly independent government of India, in hindering integration and constructing lasting cultural boundaries.[69] Certainly, across the continent Indians occupied what has been popularly dubbed by fiction writer M.G. Vassanji an 'in-between world', with one foot in Africa and the other in Asia, one hand loyal to the white authorities and the other offering clandestine help to rising African nationalists[70]. Individual recollections of the 1950s, told to me by Hindu men and women living in Zambia and elsewhere today, reinforce this in-between position and the social and political difficulties that were faced by the Indian community. Importantly, however, the interview material also brings to light what the official records do not: individual and positive experiences and representations of Indian life in the protectorate at the time.

The individual accounts of the 1950s recorded here demand that we shift our emphasis from politics and economics to culture, and thereby shift away from

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67 Interview with Mr. Oza, 7 March 2007.

68 26/01/60, Northern Rhodesia select committee on race relations report, NAUK, CO1015/2502.

69 B. Pachai, *The South African Indian Question* (Cape Town, 1971), S. Pandit, ed., *Asians in East and Central Africa* (Nairobi, 1963), Patel, 'Indians in Uganda and Rhodesia', and J.C. Mangat, *A history of the Asians in East Africa, c. 1886 to 1945* (Oxford, 1969). For India's role in the marginalisation of Indians abroad, see references in note 30 above.

70 M.G. Vassanji, *The in-between world of Vikram Lall* (London, 2004).

other recent approaches to the history of Zambian society, such as Hugh Macmillan and Frank Shapiro's *Zion in Africa: the Jews of Zambia*. This book focuses largely on the stories of successful Jewish traders and entrepreneurs, and touches on elite Jewish visitors to Northern Rhodesia; in so doing it unfortunately neglects the wider context of the Jewish community as a whole and its social relations with other settler groups. Furthermore, in their treatment of inter-minority business relations, the authors misrepresent the competition among Jews, Greeks and 'Asians'. Regrettably, this work, and also the autobiography of Andrew Sardanis, a Zambian of Cypriot origin, fails to detail the importance of Greeks as a distinct community against which the Jewish settlers and others defined themselves in business.[71] Instead, in *Zion in Africa*, competition against Jewish business, particularly in the post-war years and 1950s, is characterised mainly as the Indian shopkeeper community, who, it is reiterated throughout the book, had succeeded in excluding Jews from African trade.[72] The Dotsons' study serves as a useful correction to this overstatement: they write that, although Indians did set up shops and buy shops from Jews in the rural areas and second class zones, 'Europeans everywhere tended to hold on indefinitely to that portion of the African trade which was really profitable.'[73] They use trade in cattle, over which the Jews presided, as their example. Whereas Macmillan and Shapiro hold that Indians were, like the Jews, first attracted to African trade because they lacked both capital and proficiency in English, my research suggests that the restrictions placed upon Indians by the authorities and by their relations with white settlers was rather more relevant here.[74] In discussing the Indians only as business competitors, *Zion in Africa* misses the individual, day-to-day social interactions that took place between Jews and Indians: for example, the authors describe the beginning of the 'hatches' at the sides of shops for serving Africans, but my correspondence with Mr. Valand revealed that this was also the customary way for Indians to be served by the Jewish baker in Broken Hill.[75] It is memories of this nature that

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71 A. Sardanis, *Africa: Another side of the coin. Northern Rhodesia's final years and Zambia's nationhood* (London, 2003).

72 H. Macmillan & F. Shapiro, *Zion in Africa: The Jews of Zambia* (New York, 1999), pp. 51, 56, 62, 93, 167, 171. Note also that Macmillan and Shapiro (pp. 51, 56) suggest that Asian competition in Livingstone and Broken Hill was related to the opening of the Great East Road. The connection between the two events is unlikely. Although the road did encourage Indians, mostly Muslims, from Fort Jameson (Chipata) to move further towards Lusaka, the majority of Indians settling in Livingstone, Broken Hill and the Copperbelt had arrived via Livingstone, through Southern Rhodesia, and were Hindus.

73 Dotson & Dotson, *Indian minority*, p. 79.

74 Macmillan & Shapiro, *Zion in Africa*, p. 56.

75 Macmillan & Shapiro, *Zion in Africa*, p. 43.

breathe a valuable sense of life into social histories of minorities in Zambia, and can instruct us on the daily cultures of the past.

Despite the restrictions on their movement, on their education, and on their access to public services and representation, Indians remember having significant control over their own cultural spaces and activities.[76] I would like to suggest that, while colonial structures prevented their integration in both white and African society, the Indians themselves established networks and activities and new traditions that were exclusive to their communities and in many ways have remained so until today. This is not to suggest that, at the time or in their memories, Indians were not the 'victims' of discrimination – clearly they were. But it must also be recognised that the 1950s was crucial in the cementing of a new identity for these migrants in Africa; they chose not to identify themselves as victims. In fact, my informants chose to tell me stories about this era that demonstrate their own successes as a group, such as establishing their own clubs and building their own club houses, or playing intra-Federal cricket and campaigning for public use of a swimming pool.

Importantly, they also described the internal divisions of the Indian community, which were overlooked by the authorities and are consequently largely absent from archival records. They carved out separate Hindu and Muslim spaces within the racially-defined areas allocated to them by the colonial government. The Hindus also competed among themselves in terms of status: the mode of naming Hindu Hall in Livingstone is evidence of this. An additional anecdote on the divisions of caste in the community came from one informant whose family was lower in caste than the predominant Patels. He recalled that many young Indians joined the Federal armed forces, and his memory of this was how he enjoyed leading the drills because he could 'take his revenge' on the 'pot-bellied, curry-munching Patels'.[77]

It is clear that Indians were partly constructing social spaces and mechanisms to represent their heterogeneous identities in response to the colonial blanket that was thrown over them.[78] This construction is a continual process: these memories, occasionally divergent or contradictory, and sometimes presented as facts, are used today to distinguish 'resident' Zambian

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[76] The creation of social spaces, according to Henri Lefebvre, implies 'demand' and 'command' over the space; analysing the space forces the questions, '"Who?", "For whom?", "By Whose Agency?"' *The production of space* (Oxford, 2004), p. 116

[77] Interview, Anonymous, 21 May 2007.

[78] While social spaces, and the networks and traditions within and across them, may have been established in response to colonial strictures and imaginings, new social and physical surroundings were of equal importance. See T. Ranger, 'The invention of tradition in colonial Africa'. In: T. Ranger & E. Hobsbawm, *The invention of tradition* (Cambridge, 1983).

Indians from subsequent migrant waves. There is status in story-telling; respect is given to those who can remember Old Man Sam, or the inauguration of Hindu Hall, or giving a car ride to a budding African politician. There is a continuing negotiation of social spaces and status among the Indians, and also between the Indians and others in contemporary society, in which memories of the past are utilised. K.P. Ranchod's notes tracing the roots of his Lusaka Hindu community include a section entitled, 'To know our history is to know who we are'.[79] The movement of spices, cricket teams, film reels, and school children is indicative of a more important movement – that of identity. It was in the 1950s that Hindus today recall the first feelings of collective belonging to Zambia.

[79] Ranchod, K.P., 'The family: From India to Africa and beyond'.

PART IV:
PARTICIPATING OBSERVERS

12

Historiography on the Luapula: Ian Cunnison's 'fishing area', Mweru-Luapula, 1948-1959

Christopher M. Annear

Introduction

As a member of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute (RLI) in Northern Rhodesia, Ian G. Cunnison was sent to study a 'typical fishing area' in 1948,[1] for which the Luapula valley was chosen. Lyn Schumaker notes that Cunnison was selected for the Luapula assignment ahead of his more senior colleague, Elizabeth Colson, even though she already had experience studying fishing communities in North America, because the RLI director, Max Gluckman, felt the border region was too dangerous for a female researcher.[2] Cunnison initially lived among fishers on the southeastern corner of Lake Mweru at Mulwe before settling for most of his two years of research in the village of Chubulwa, just north of the Mwata Kazembe's palace, on the Luapula River, near where the river and Lake Mweru meet. Despite this assignment and Cunnison's proximity to lake and river fishers, his work largely omits description and analysis of the

1 M. Gluckman, 'Seven-year research plan', *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal*, 4 (1945).

2 L. Schumaker, *Africanizing anthropology: Fieldwork, networks, and the making of cultural knowledge in Central Africa* (Durham and London, 2001).

fishery. Instead, he chose to discuss the strong role clans and clan histories played in the valley's socio-cultural life.

In this chapter I ask why he did not explicitly engage the fishery in this fishing area. Further, I argue that although Dr. Cunnison left in-depth study of fishing to others, the economic and ecological aspects of the Mweru-Luapula fishery implicitly permeate, even generate, many of the behaviors he documented in his published and unpublished works. By reconsidering Cunnison's research in the context of the fishery, we further our understanding of Northern Rhodesia in the 1950s, as well as present-day life in the region. When situated in this manner, such past anthropological research becomes historical evidence of a time and place that can be compared to future study.

Cunnison describes the Luapula valley of the late 1940s and early 1950s as a territory that played host to a multiplicity of sub-clans and ethnic groups, interconnected by kinship and political ties. He makes clear this perspective in the first line of *History on the Luapula*: 'A visitor to the Luapula Valley must be struck after a short time with the emphasis given in every-day life and conversation to the topics of clans and tribes and their histories. They are dominant themes.' A few sentences ahead in the same paragraph he advances the topic for the article and the thematic foundation for much of his future work in the region: 'History and interest in the past are here so all-pervading that they merit a somewhat wider treatment than they normally receive in studies of primitive peoples'.[3]

Fifty years later, contemporary Zambians still tell stories, but the terrain has shifted. In the mid-2000s, in the Mweru-Luapula valley I encountered, only a few people were interested in such genealogical stories, but I found quite a few recounting them on the adjacent Luapula plateau. Contemporary valley lowlanders rely on a more secure, widely accessible, but only marginally profitable, fishing industry than was the case in the 1950s, and they no longer typically reiterate narratives that underscore matrilineal affiliation. Today, it is highland Luapula plateau residents, sixty kilometers east/southeast, concerned about claims to land, who recount 'personal' histories.[4] The stories Cunnison encountered, like those told today on the Luapula plateau, were generated by a desire to secure rights to land. For fishers in the late 1940s and early 1950s, this insecurity connected intimately with socio-economic and ecological events occurring in the fishery. In order to understand the relationship between the

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[3] I.G. Cunnison, *History on the Luapula: An essay on the historical notions of a Central African tribe* (Cape Town, 1951), p. v.

[4] Cunnison uses the term 'personal' to refer to stories about matrilineage movements and claimed rights. This term operates in contrast to 'universal' stories told about ethnic polities. See the next sections for further characterization of these types of stories.

fishery and the narratives associated with it, I will discuss the format and content of Luapula histories, both past and present. Last, as a student benefiting from Cunnison's past scholarship, I will conclude this chapter with a reflection upon the meaning, use, and recent proliferation of anthropological restudies in Zambia.

Historiography on the Luapula

Cunnison's work is remarkable in many respects. It is thorough and engaging with a particular focus on history and indigenous concepts of the past, especially in relation to the social interests of the Luapula valley residents in the 1950s. The influence of theoretical models, such as Max Gluckman's orientation toward continuity and change in the African village unit, is present, if somewhat muted, in Cunnison's work. Cunnison focused more on the depth and character of social memory among corporate clan groupings than on the significance to individuals of contemporary lateral kinship ties. In this manner, he explained Luapula kinship through the concepts he termed 'positional succession' and 'perpetual kinship', which emphasized the inherited character of formal political social ties, but did not leave extensive material about informal and network relations.

In addition to his analytical contributions, Cunnison was the first anthropologist in the region, and therefore set a benchmark for future sociocultural studies. Although not as well-known as his colleague Victor Turner, who studied the Lunda-Ndembu from the vantage point of North-Western Northern Rhodesia, Cunnison's historiographical legacy reverberates throughout modern scholarship of the Luapula region. His presence can be discerned in any work that relies on his translations of the Portuguese explorer Gamitto's early travelogue depicting the Luapula valley of the early 1830s and, as the current Mwata Kazembe reminded me,[5] of the Lunda-Kazembe historical account, *Ifikolwe Fyandi Na Bantu Bandi* (My Ancestors and My People).[6] In total, he published eleven articles and a monograph on the area, which are well known to regional scholars. Even now, more than fifty years on, Cunnison's Bemba language name, *Kalanda Mikowa*, or discusser of clans, is still mentioned by residents of the Luapula valley and plateau.

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[5] Personal communication from Mwata Kazembe XIX, Paul Kanyembo, Mwansabombwe, Zambia, July 2005.

[6] Mwata Kazembe Chinyanta XIV, trans. I.G. Cunnison (London, 1951). See G. Macola, 'Literate ethnohistory in Colonial Zambia: The case of *Ifikolwe Fyandi na Bantu Bandi*', *History in Africa*, 28 (2001), and D.M. Gordon, 'History on the Luapula retold: Landscape, memory and identity in the Kazembe Kingdom', *Journal of African History*, 47 (2006) for further discussion.

While his published work emphasizes, even champions, the roles of clanship and political succession in the Luapula valley's sociocultural life, Cunnison is rather coy in his engagement with the fishing industry of the region. In several of his publications he makes passing references to the Luapula fishery in opening descriptive sections, but it rarely receives enhanced mention in the central analyses of each work. This is surprising, considering the area's reliance on fishing production prior, during, and after his study period, and the influence of the fishery in stories and daily social affairs.

Cunnison describes the valley as a cosmopolitan environment akin to the mining cities of Northern Rhodesia. Perhaps the most evocative quip from his monograph is, '*kuno ni ku migote*' – it is the mines, or the Copperbelt, here,[7] which, he says, was a comment commonly expressed to him throughout his fieldwork in the large village of Mwansabombwe, the seat of power of the Lunda-Kazembe people.[8] By comparing their rural region to the pulsating, thriving urban Copperbelt, local residents were expressing a sense of vitality, fueled by fishing wealth. But Cunnison wrote of the fishery merely as an economic backdrop, much like the copper mining industry for cities on the Copperbelt, that sustained cultural practice.

Although Cunnison references the occasional colloquial story about the fishery in his work, by characterizing Luapula inhabitants as essentially a history-telling people, he disconnected valley residents from their ecological and economic base. Nevertheless, Cunnison's scholarship can be read as a moment in time in the Luapula valley's sociocultural, economic, and ecological life. He arrived in 1948 during an extended period of low rainfall (see Chart 1 below). That year there was a robust take of Luapula Salmon (*Labeo altivelis*; local name, *Mpumbu*), which comprised half of the annual commercial catch. But by 1953, two years after Cunnison's departure, this species accounted for less than 6 percent of fish sold.[9]

This was an alarming period for those connected to the fishery – one that sparked, among other institutions, a government sponsored commission to inquire into why Luapula Salmon numbers had dropped so precipitously.[10] Commercial fishing, of course, had a long history in Mweru-Luapula. Zambian historian Mwelwa Musambachime discusses at length and in rich detail the pre-

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7 I.G. Cunnison, *The Luapula peoples of Northern Rhodesia: Custom and history in tribal politics* (Manchester, 1959), p. 25.

8 Personal communication from Ian G. Cunnison, Hedon, England, 13 December 2003.

9 D.M. Gordon, *Nachituti's gift: Economy, society, and environment in Central Africa* (Madison, 2006).

10 Fisheries Advisory Committee, Report of the Fisheries Advisory Committee on the Fisheries of Northern Rhodesia (Lusaka, 1951).

colonial origins and later practice of fishing, trade, and settlement in Mweru-Luapula in his doctoral dissertation.[11] South African historian David Gordon similarly writes about the ecological basis of ethnic narratives, trade, and power in Mweru-Luapula throughout the colonial and into the post-colonial period.[12] Each shows the long trajectory with ebb and flow of the commercial fishery. This chapter restricts discussion to the events that influenced perceptions of, and practice in, the fishery in the decade that roughly corresponds to the 1950s.

The Mweru-Luapula allotrophic ecosystem and commercial fishery during this time played a role in the cultural data collected during Cunnison's 26 months of fieldwork, even if he did not directly recognize these factors in valley life. Cunnison's period of research coincided with several political, demographic, and ecologically significant events: not only the aforementioned regional extinction of the prized Luapula Salmon, but also a considerable ongoing immigration into the valley on the party of former residents of the Luapula plateau. His fieldwork preceded by just a few years the political transition from British colonial rule to the incorporation of Northern Rhodesia into the Central African Federation. These issues receive only cursory, if any, attention in his published work. Rather, he suggested that storytelling provided compelling evidence that the Luapula valley's residents were people with a particular proclivity to keeping and recounting their histories. In the long view, however, this does not appear to be the case.

This is for two reasons. First, today's valley residents express scant discernable interest in histories. Second, and more significantly, those people who told histories in the 1950s were recent migrants to the valley. Virtually all of the 'personal' narratives compiled by Cunnison were associated with ethnic groups whose members were flooding into the valley from the Luapula plateau (see Table 12.1). Furthermore, the focus of these histories, at least in part, was to claim and maintain residence on land proximal to the fishery. Cunnison's fieldnotes show that he was aware of the significance the fishery had to the region, but he still portrayed it as discrete from social and political life. I contend that by foregrounding ecological history and the social and ethnic profile of Cunnison's storytellers, it becomes clear that Cunnison's work does not describe the essential character of *The Luapula Peoples*. What it does is to record a moment in time that can be charted both historically and ecologically.

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[11] M.C. Musambachime, 'Development and growth of the fishing industry in Mweru-Luapula' (PhD thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1981).

[12] Gordon, *Nachituti's gift*.

History on the Luapula

In *History on the Luapula*, Cunnison argued that historical narratives permeated daily cultural life in the Luapula valley. He suggested that such narratives were not merely common but elemental to the character of the valley's cultural life. As Cunnison described them, such stories of origin varied from describing sub-clan matrilineages to chiefly 'kingdoms'. The former were 'owned' by individual raconteurs, while the latter projected general accounts intended to concretize regional political hegemony.[13]

In the Luapula context, history, or *ilyashi*, translates through practice to talk, discussion, stories, gossip. Since nearly everyone at that time knew his or her own sub-clan or 'personal' histories and most were familiar with the grander, differentiated narratives of immigration by ethnic group from the common origin of Kola in the Congo, such talk acted to justify the present on the basis of the authority of the past. Furthermore, histories were regularly renewed and enlivened 'mainly through travel (…) Travel, and travel by dug-out especially, provides a never-ending opportunity for the association of places with people and events, and this chance is regularly indulged'.[14] Whereas histories coalesced people together in a web of relative familiarity, positional succession drew the past into the present tangibly through living incarnations of past political positions. Last, perpetual kinship crosscut the depth of history and positional authority with unending lateral relationships between offices, polities and villages.

In *History on the Luapula* and several other works published in the 1950s Cunnison discussed two basic forms such stories took: personal and impersonal or universal. Personal histories comprised 'tribal', sub-clan, and house and individual histories. These were 'owned' narratives that recounted diasporic movements of ethnic or clan groups. They could also be egocentric yarns meant to self-aggrandize the speaker during social occasions. In this manner, Cunnison arrived at possible solutions to the structural-functional problem of social cohesion and perpetuation by focusing on clanship and history as his dominant themes. Cunnison's work articulated a social space of fluid interaction, a mystical cosmos in which the present and the past intermingled within a safety structure of renewable relations. He seemed to imply a physical territory eclipsed by a network of stories that was unaccountable to time. When taken at face value, Cunnison's published materials often appear alien to the contemporary Luapula valley. But, by reinserting time and the physical space of the fishery itself, his work of 1951 looks very much like a predecessor to the present-day fishery.

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[13] Gordon, 'History on the Luapula retold'.
[14] Cunnison, *History*, p. 23.

Cunnison's fieldwork coincided with a series of low rainfall years and took place amidst a massive increase in fishing pressure on the most desired species in the fishery, the Luapula Salmon. Despite the routine periodicity of low water seasons (see Chart 1), his informants interpreted the lack of rain as a catastrophic event brought by God in retaliation for the colonial government's imposition of stricter fishing regulations.[15] What they could not explain at the time was the relationship between rainfall and fish stock growth.

A fish follows water: The relationship between rainfall and fish catches

Rainfall and the consequent water level are one of the central drivers and predictive indicators of catch robusticity in the Mweru-Luapula fishery. Williams noted (well after Cunnison's period of field research) there was a positive relationship between water level and fish catches.[16] Further, he proposed that the rainfall in a given year predicted with accuracy the relative numbers of most adult slow- and medium-growth fish species two years later. Slow- and medium-growth Mweru-Luapula fish species include those with the greatest commercial value in the 1950s: the Luapula Salmon, Tigerfish, and Green-headed Bream. For the sake of contrast, there are other species that are less dependent on rainfall cycles for maturation, because they experience faster growth cycles. These include the Red-breasted Bream and open water swimming Silver Alestes and Large-mouthed Bream. Such latter fast-growing species join the yet more rapidly maturing Lake Sardine, *Chisense*, as mainstays of the present-day fishery, largely because the viability of these stocks is less vulnerable to fishing pressure in any given year. Zwieten et al. likewise show a correlation between spikes and dips in the prized cichlid,[17] Green-headed bream (*Oreochromis macrochir*, locally called *Pale*), catches preceded two years earlier by high water levels.

The Mweru-Luapula fishery is a pulsed, allotrophic system highly reliant on the vicissitudes of annual rainfall patterns. It is therefore inherently variable,

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15 Cunnison, *History*, p. 21.

16 R. Williams, 'Relationship between the water levels and the fish catches inlLakes Mweru and Mweru wa Ntipa, Zambia', *African Journal of Tropical Hydrobiology and Fisheries*, 2 (1972).

17 P.A.M. van Zwieten, P.C. Goudswaard & C.K. Kapasa, 'Mweru-Luapula is an open exit fishery where a highly dynamic population of fishermen makes use of a resilient resource base'. In: E. Jul-Larsen *et al.*, eds, *Management, co-management or no management: Major dilemmas in Southern African freshwater fisheries: Case studies* (Rome, 2003).The term cichlid derives from its family taxonomy, Cichlidae. Also known as breams, this is the most commercial group in the fishery. It includes the genuses *Tilapia* and *Oreochromis*.

although generally ecologically stable. It is governed by periodic inputs or 'pulses' of nutrients, which cause it to be especially fertile and nutrient-rich in certain seasons and years, but not in others.[18] These pulses push nutrients through the fishery, effectively distributing them to its four ecological strata zones and setting the conditions for high and low breeding years depending on the ecologies of various endemic species. Good and bad years for the most valuable fish stocks can therefore be read as functions of the rainy seasons preceding them by two years. By extension, economic, social and cultural events are tied to ecological conditions driven by rainfall.

I noted in 2004-2005 that residents of Mweru-Luapula frequently recite the Bemba language axiom: '*Isabi, ilekonka amenshi*': a fish follows water. Its core concept lies in the cultural notion that people are compelled by habit and opportunity. Fishers and traders use it to describe their reasoning for moving to the region. The saying also alludes to an ecological truth of the Mweru-Luapula fishery. When rain falls, causing water to flow, it is typically two-years later that fish will follow. The following chart illustrates this ecological truism graphically.[19]

1949 was a drought year in the Mweru-Luapula fishery. Residents believed the excessively low water levels to be the work of mystical forces angry about the imposition of stricter fishing regulations by the British colonial government of Northern Rhodesia. Additionally, there was another crisis bubbling to the surface of the fishing industry. In 1949 the most important commercial species in the fishery was the Luapula Salmon. This is a fish that typically spawned every January from Lake Mweru southward up the Luapula River. In 1949 the Luapula Salmon did not spawn. Chart 1 shows the annual rainfall of each year.

I have superimposed several notable events that occurred on the fishery during and after 1949, the disappearance of the Luapula Salmon being one. Each year, catches, whether high or low, are precipitated and largely determined by corresponding high or low rainfall two years earlier. For example, two years prior to 1949, Cunnison's first year of fieldwork, rain fell by volume significantly less than average. Numerically, the average rainfall each year in northern Zambia from 1925 to 2004 has been 99.5 millimeters. In 1947, the year that would predict the numbers of the most commercially valuable fish stocks in 1949, twenty percent less rain fell than normal (79.3 mm). To make

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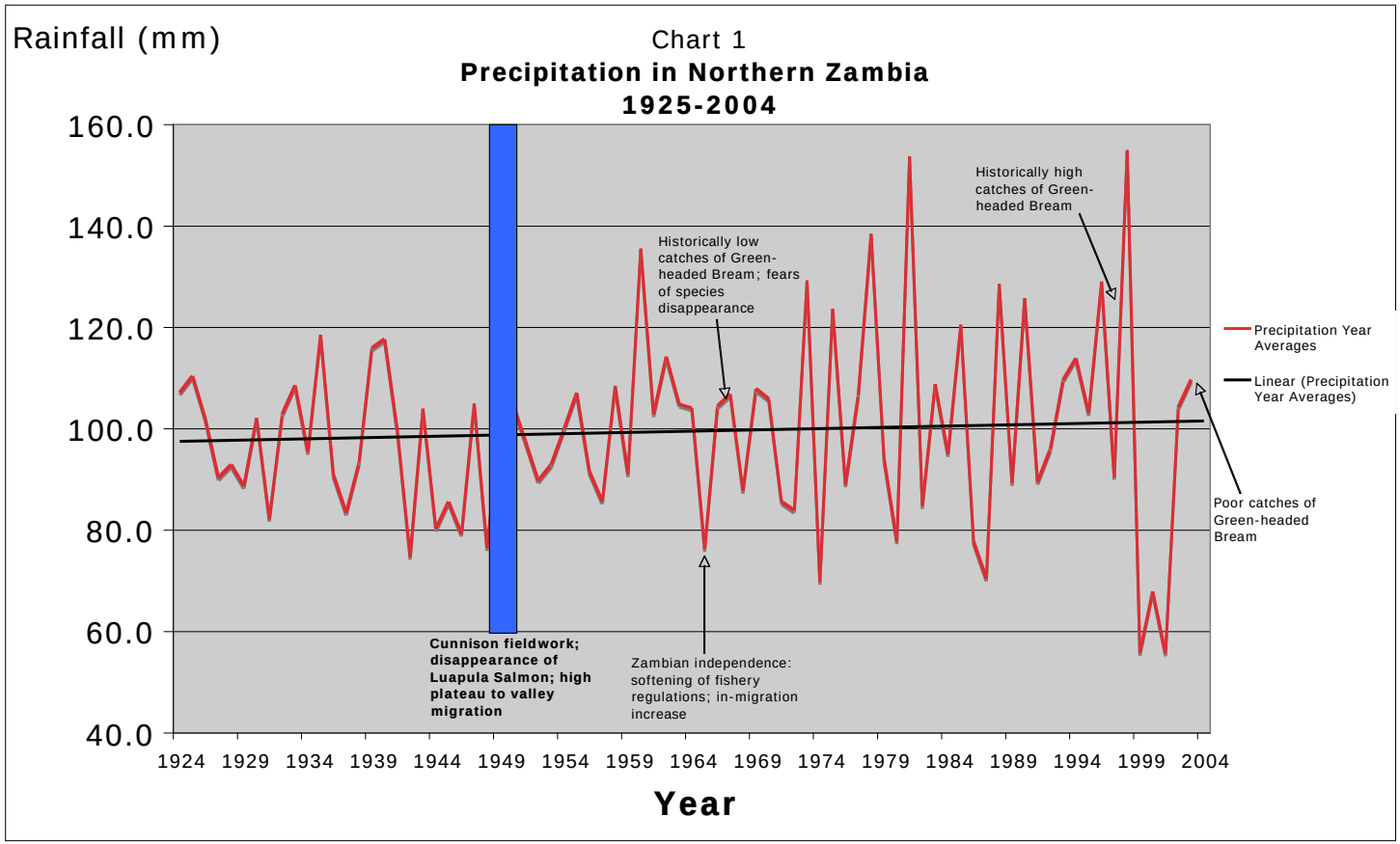
[18] Jul-Larsen *et al*., *Management, co-management or no management*.

[19] Graph based on annual rainfall data for northern Zambia from the National Climate and Data Center NCDC, 'Rainfall data from Kasama Station, Zambia 1925-2004', NNDC Climate Data Online: Kasama Station, 1925-2004 (Washington, DC, 2009). http://cdo.ncdc.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/cdo/cdoprod.pl (accessed 4 February 2009).


Rainfall (mm)
Chart 1
Precipitation in Northern Zambia
1925-2004
160.0
140.0
120.0
100.0
80.0
60.0
40.0
1924
1929
1934
1939
1944
1949
1954
1959
1964
1969
1974
1979
1984
1989
1994
1999
2004
Year
Historically high catches of Green-headed Bream
Historically low catches of Green-headed Bream; fears of species disappearance
Cunnison fieldwork; disappearance of Luapula Salmon; high plateau to valley migration
Zambian independence: softening of fishery regulations; in-migration increase
Poor catches of Green-headed Bream
Precipitation Year Averages
Linear (Precipitation Year Averages)

matters worse for fish catches during this period, five of the seven years preceding the onset of the 1950s indicate below average rainfall. While the low water level Cunnison witnessed in 1949 was not unique, it had been particularly depressed by a series of below average rainfall in the preceding six years.

Despite the cyclical nature of Mweru-Luapula ecology, 1949 was far worse than a typical low water year for the Luapula Salmon. The species fell prey to an especially poor nutrient cycle allied with virtually unchecked commercial fishing pressure. Gordon documents the ramping up of Greek and African fishing operations during the late 1940s that caught unprecedented numbers of Luapula Salmon in nets that stretched across the mouth of the Luapula River.[1] For their part, Luapulans told Cunnison the fish failed to spawn because the lake monster *Winkonkelela* chose not to lead them in such low water conditions. While this interpretation has significant social meaning, it belies the ecological and commercial pressures that caused these circumstances.

Of monsters and fish

Local interpretation of the ecological and political events that colluded to cause the non-spawning of the Luapula Salmon in 1949 concern the monster of Lake Mweru, *Winkonkelela*. This character was said to lead the spawning Luapula Salmon out of the lake and up the Luapula River every January. Its name translates to 'don't follow me', which refers to fishers who might get stranded chasing the monster. In 1949 *Winkokelela* was not 'seen'. Cunnison primarily uses this story to illustrate the role of gossip as the predecessor to collectively agreed upon truth, but this non-event was understood to be the reason no fish were observed spawning in the fishery that year.[2]

While *Winkonkelela* becomes an example of storytelling in his published work, in his fieldnotes, Cunnison connects the character to ecology. He writes, 'The fish did not go right up the river to spawn this year because the big snake which leads them up from Mweru decided there was not enough water (handwritten: "*mukonkeleka*")'.[3] Perhaps it was this collusion of ecological and human-propelled events, resulting in the poor fishing year of 1949, that led Cunnison to underemphasize the fishing economy of the Luapula valley. However, there are occasional passing references that suggest he was aware of the importance of commercial fishing to valley inhabitants. He writes in *History on the Luapula*, 'Recently a fish trade, centred on the Luapula, and run by

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1 D.M. Gordon, 'Growth without Capital: A Renascent Fishery in Zambia and Katanga, 1960s to Recent Times', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 31 (2005); *Nachituti's gift*.

2 Cunnison, *History*, pp. 21-22.

3 I.G. Cunnison fieldnotes, 'Miscellany on economics & fish', n.d.

Greeks, has attracted great numbers of immigrants from all sides for the material benefits which the valley undoubtedly affords'.[4] Similarly, the following quote from Cunnison's fieldnotes expresses the reality of the changing composition of fishers in the fishery. A fisher referred to as M. K. talks about differences between the past and present fishery:

It was not many people who fished, and *bakalamba* (old men) at that. There are not the boatloads of *baice* (young men) that there are now every night. People were rather afraid of the water (except of course for the *bashila* (fishers)), and hippos and crocodiles were more common than they are now. Youngsters would learn by being taken out as *bayana* (apprentices) with elders; not necessarily a son taught by father: but a *mukalamba* (old man) would arrange with a youngster to have him help him, they would go and tell the boy's father who would say, oh good, that's the way to learn to fish.[5]

This makes clear that people perceived the past fishery to be populated by fewer older men, whereas, from M.K.'s point of view, in the early 1950s there were relatively more fishers who tended to be young. However, Cunnison does not point directly to this apparently large population of young fishers in his published works.

His publications do not suggest ignorance of the central role of fishing, but instead a conscious decision to side with 'History'. Maybe this was a means toward documenting the social practices that were proliferating with the arrival of migrants from the Luapula plateau, who were insecure about their claim to land near the banks of the Luapula River and, therefore, access to the fishery. One of the consequences of this perspective was a depiction of corporate clanship that may have been less a contemporary norm than a declining force. Whereas fishing in the 1940s was widely a subsistence activity and narrowly commercial for most Africans, today on Lake Mweru it is the centerpiece of a great many household economies and the region as a whole.

Since the 1950s, as economic concentration has been diluted, and opportunity – if not high profit margins – has spilled out within reach of many more individuals, the corporate cohesiveness of clanship has also melted away. Today, people can usually recite their matrilineal affiliation, but find it meaningful, if at all, only in lateral terms that connects them to other local and living individuals. There are two reasons typically cited for this ignorance in relation to their ancestors of half a century ago. One is that he or she is an *umweni* (guest; Cunnison's 'stranger': see next section), and therefore reliant on extant lateral relationships through blood, marriage, church, economic alliance,

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4 Cunnison, *History*, p. viii.

5 Cunnison fieldnotes, '"Bushila pa li M.K" (Fishing with M.K.)', March 1951.

and friendship, rather than historically established ones. The other is labor relations.

Migrants and histories

> The primary reason for histories is the justification of a claim for a piece of land, or the justification of the *status quo* of a person who has lost the ownership of a piece of land (…) Myths and histories reflect the present relationships between groups of people, and that the greater the tension in a situation the more elaborate will be the myth or history connected with it.[6]

Histories and other formulaic stories have long been told in Luapula, but not because valley residents are a storytelling people. As indicated in Cunnison's excerpt above, stories are ways of articulating temporal relationships between people and among groups. Although a storyteller's narrative may imply the timelessness of past events, his content often reveals interests in the present. In the last section, I referred to valley immigrants who live as 'guests' or 'strangers' in previously founded villages. These were the people most likely to tell stories; to cement their claim to land in proximity to the Mweru-Luapula fishery. Far from expressing tales about an unchanging past, histories narrate relations of an uncertain present – or even a sketch of a hopeful future.

Cunnison depicted a Luapula valley populated by a near contiguous stream of villages abutting one another with no discernable order save the road that passes within sight of the vast majority of them. Each of these villages was a discrete unit within a diverse hodgepodge of ethnic, occupational, and clan assemblies. Cunnison described the typical village as a constellation of residences clustered about a core *cikota* or sub-clan, which was anchored by a headman who is senior in his matrilineage. People located on the outskirts of such clan-based settlements tended to be only loose affiliates or even complete strangers from the headman and his relatives.

I suggest that by dismissing these 'strangers' as near invisible satellites to the village core, Cunnison missed the fishery, too. Present-day Luapula valley residents tend to describe themselves using the same term, *abeni*, although they typically translate it more favorably as 'guest' instead of stranger. It is a highly mobile and transient population in which even those who have lived in the region dating back to Cunnison's era often do not consider themselves to be rooted locals. Most likely, this casual notion of residence – that allows people of long-term residence to call themselves guests to the region – is present in direct proportion to security of access to the fishery. In 1950s Luapula, such access for

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[6] Cunnison, *History,* 14.

recent immigrants was not so assured. Telling histories purporting their right to land was one means of trying to solidify claim to the fishery.

In order to show this relationship between migrant storytelling and land claim, I provide here a typical narrative presented by Cunnison. This one was told by Chisamamba, the title of the founding ancestor of a subclan of the BenaƆoma or Drum Clan living in the Luapula valley at the southern end of the Luapula Salmon annual spawning run. The narrator used several narrative devices, including admission of personal guilt that lead to accession of the land by the Lunda overlords.

> At our home on Bangweulu[7] our young girls were washing and one of them took a *cisungwa* (wooden doll) and threw it into the water. The owner of the doll said: 'You have thrown my child into the water', and took a real child of the other girl and threw it into the water. There was a case about this and they were told it should have been a matter of payment only, and so Chisamamba, the owner of the girl who had thrown in the doll, came away.
>
> In this country we found Nkuba, and he was of the Drum Clan too[8] but we could not get on with him. So we went to Nkambo, and then came here. We saw Malebe across the river, and asked him if there was no-one else living here and he replied: 'No'. Then I went to Bangweulu again to get Kampombwe and Chikungu (his 'brothers'), and when they came I shared out the country with them.
>
> Then the Lunda came from Kola. They found Chisamamba Munsanshya and tied him up. Then they found the *mfutu* tree and asked me if they could make oil from it. I offered to show them how.[9] So the Lunda told me to draw water from near the shore. I said that to make the oil it was necessary to draw water from the middle of the river. So the Lunda untied me, and I swam across the river and escaped. Then I shouted to them: '*Mubele wabepele Chisamamba mfutu kwesu twenga mafuta*'.[10]
>
> Later Makungu came with Lumbwe, his sister's husband. I had given a part of the land to Muonga and he used to skin the children of his sisters. He was my brother. Now Muonga's sister heard that Makungu was coming, and told him the case. So they decided on a plan; the sister called to Muonga who was sleeping on an anthill: 'Come Muonga and seize the chieftainship'. He asked: 'Why, is Chisamamba dead?' She replied that he had been killed. Muonga came down off the anthill and Makungu's men caught him, after he had killed three men. Then Makungu said to the princess: 'You must pay for this work'. Chisamamba said that they had no wealth to give him, they could only give him the country of Kanshiba, and in this way Makungu got the country which had been Muonga's.[11]

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7 Lake Bangweulu sits to the east of the valley. It feeds the Luapula River from the Luapula plateau.

8 Cunnison notes correctly that this claim is not true. Nkuba is the chief of the Shila, regional overlords prior to usurpation by the Lunda-Kazembe.

9 Another Cunnison note: 'one cannot make oil from this fruit.'

10 'It is a lie that Chisamamba told, in our country we make oil from *mfutu*.'

11 Cunnison, *History*, pp. 11-12.

This gruesome sounding detail is a formulaic element of a great many change-of-ownership stories. To regional scholars it is readily recognizable as the reason why Nachituti, the sister to Nkuba, the Shila owner of the lower Luapula Basin, solicited help from the Mwata Kazembe of the Lunda-Kazembe to kill her brother. When this is done, having nothing else to give, she endows the Mwata with political power over all the land and water previously ruled by the Shila. This, you will note, is what Makungu, the enforcer in Chisamamba's story, receives in return for his service to the sister of the slain previous owner of Kanshiba.

Put another way, Belgian historian Jan Vansina stresses the functional practicality of telling such stories of origin, which support the status quo of power relations:

> It cannot be sufficiently stressed that (…) every tradition exists as such only in virtue of the fact that it serves the interests of the society in which it is preserved, whether it does so directly, or indirectly by serving the interests of an informant. Its significance in relation to society is what I call its function (…) Let me add as a general remark that all social functions can be reduced to two main functions: that of adaptation of the society to its environment, and that of permanently maintaining the social structure.[12]

These stories do serve purposes, and not only in historical antiquity. Luapula stories about the past were employed in the 1950s in order to negotiate access or convince others that the teller and his people had a right to be where they are. Cunnison wrote that he was immediately struck by emphasis in the Luapula valley upon historical narratives, and that these stories indicated a great interest in the past. This may be the case, but social context and the histories themselves show that the primary impetus for telling stories was in order to argue for the legitimacy of relatively recent resettlement, and accompanied access to a fecund fishery. Cunnison suggested that stories simultaneously discussed changes that occurred in the past, while annulling the continuation of such dynamism in the present. He noted that in many of these stories there are accounts of clan fissions that led to migration, 'but there is no change implicit in the course of the name which is the here (sic, but 'heir') as well as the owner or repository and narrator of the story'.[13]

These stories, therefore, were not being told in a vacuum. Cunnison is quite right: residents of the Luapula valley were intensely interested in narratives of migration – because they were involved in one. World War II had generated great demand for copper production, which further fueled preexisting rural-to-urban labor migration in colonial Zambia. Scholars have long discussed the

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[12] J. Vansina, *Oral tradition: A study in historical methodology* (Chicago, 1965), p. 78.
[13] Cunnison, *History*, p. 40.

important demographic shifts that occurred from the 1920s on.[14] Nevertheless, although Luapula fed its share of labor migrants to the Zambian Copperbelt and the Katanga mines in the Congo, the valley was also experiencing significant immigration from the Luapula plateau. The greatest number of immigrants landed in the Chishinga Rat Clan villages of Lubunda and Mulundu, and in Mwata Kazembe's constituency, Mwansabombwe. Note in the table below from Cunnison's monograph on the Luapula valley, the changing village composition. In particular, the number of Chishinga villages increased from under 10 to nearly 30 per cent of the total between 1900 and 1950. It should not be surprising, then, that quite of few of the stories found in Cunnison's works are told by formerly plateau residents.[15]

I find the Rat Clan narratives to be of particular interest because they correspond with the script conveyed to me on the plateau fifty years after Cunnison recorded his set of histories. One such story seems to foretell the exodus of the Rat Clan from the plateau, described to me in narratives about the Drum Clan. Speaking from his village in the valley, Chishinga Rat Clan Chief Mulundu suggests that the Chishinga ethnicity literally originated from being lost on a trek:

> When Mupeta, a chief of the Drum Clan died (Mupeta is widely considered to be a member of the Rat Clan), the people called in another man from elsewhere to take his place. His mother, when they brought him, was afraid, and told the people that if her son died because of their homage it would be a bad thing. Many people praised him. Fearing he would grow thin, she decided to call him away. In the middle of the night the chief fled through the bush to his mother, carrying with him a firebrand (also known as '*icishinga*'). The people saw he had gone, and gave chase, and found him warming himself in the forest before his firebrand. They brought back the firebrand, and (…) (his joking clansmen) started to laugh, saying 'Now you are BenaChishinga'. This name went over the whole country. And then when we Rat Clan people came from Lake Bangweulu and lived near the Drum Clan we were called BenaChishinga too because that was the country of the BenaChishinga.[16]

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[14] It should be noted that this trend has not continued to the present. Internal migration from rural to urban locales appears to have trailed off earlier than popularly thought – in the late 1970s, with census figures from the 1980s to the present showing a net loss in urban populations versus continued gain in rural areas. D. Potts, 'Counter-Urbanisation on the Zambian Copperbelt? Interpretations and Implications', *Urban Studies*, 42 (2005), pp. 583-609.

[15] See also G. Macola, *The Kingdom of Kazembe: History and politics in North-Eastern Zambia and Katanga to 1950* (Hamburg, 2002), p. 222, which suggests that the significant increase in immigration from the plateau to the valley over this period very likely led to the 'historically charged' atmosphere found by Cunnison. I want to thank Giacomo Macola for alerting me to lateral migration during this time.

[16] Cunnison, *Luapula Peoples*, pp. 49-50.

Table 12.1 Headmen/villages by ethnic group, Luapula Valley: 1900 and 1950[17]

Ethnic Group	*1900*	*1950*	*% 1900*	*% 1950*	*Difference %*
Chishinga	5	122	7.1	27.1	+20
Lunda-	31	109	44.3	24.1	--20.2
Kazembe	--	43	---	9.8	+9.8
Lungu	14	36	20	7.7	--12.3
Shila	---	31	---	6.9	+6.9
Tabwa	---	14	---	3.1	+3.1
Mukulo	---	14	---	3.1	+3.1
Bukanda	13	11	18.7	2.4	--16.3
Bwilile	3	10	4.3	2.2	--2.1
Lwashi	1	8	1.4	1.8	+0.4
Bemba	---	7	---	1.6	+1.6
Luba	---	7	---	1.6	+1.6
Aushi	---	7	---	1.6	1.6
Sanga	1	2	1.4	1.3	--0.1
Lomotwa	1	4	1.4	0.9	-0.5
Yeke	1	2	1.4	0.4	-1.0
Swahili	---	2	---	0.4	+0.4
Ɗumbo	---	1	---	0.2	+0.2
Lamba	---	1	---	0.2	+0.2
Bubu	---	1	---	0.2	+0.2
Malugu	---	1	---	0.2	+0.2
Bwile	---	1	---	0.2	+0.2
Kasongo	?	14	?	3.0	?
Totals	70	452	100	100	---

Cunnison remarks at the opening of *History on the Luapula* how impressed he was to encounter so many stories being told during his research in the Luapula valley. Having arrived for my field study fifty-five years later, I was struck, quite conversely, by the disinterest in historical narrative in the valley. I instead found others telling stories. Some residents on the central Luapula plateau are now emphasizing their claim to place as a response to threats of expulsion by the local sub-chief by recounting origin histories.[18] Alternatively, the only valley residents who are currently evoking similar narratives belong to the group living illegally on Kanakashi Island.[19]

[17] Adapted from Cunnison, *Luapula Peoples*, p. 44.

[18] S.M. Makumbi, 'Bufumu bwa Bena Ɗoma mu Zambia', 21 May 2005 [Drum Clan Chiefdom in Zambia]. This oral history was transcribed and translated by the author.

[19] For stories claiming autochthony by residents of Kanakashi Island in Lake Mweru see my 'Navigating Constricted Channels: Local Cooption, Coercion, and

'This tradition has been confused': Luapula plateau storytelling, 2005

> This tradition has been confused. We see it and the problems it causes such as the high incidence of suicide and how relish (e.g. meat, fish) previously seen in the country is now finishing. Caterpillars are ceasing to come; fish in the waterways are no longer seen; rain does not fall; and the rivers and streams do not fill. Alas, my friends, tradition should not be played with![20]

Like those told by the insecure Chishinga immigrants in the valley fifty-five years ago, this narrative is told by elderly Headman Stanley Mwemena Makumbi of the Nshima Clan, who is also known locally as 'Sadamu' after the former Iraqi president, Saddam Hussein, who is viewed in many parts of Zambia as a folk hero and trickster who stood up against American military power. Stanley Makumbi was dubbed this moniker for his opposition to the Drum Clan Chief Mwenda.[21] His interest in using history to secure his status in the present becomes very clear, even though he talks almost exclusively about Drum Clan overlords. Early in the narrative he takes pains to underscore the significant supporting role his Nshima Clan ancestor played in Drum Clan usurpation of the land where they currently live:

> When Chuluŋoma (the place of origin for all plateau peoples) broke apart (Drum Clan chief) Chikumbi took with him many chiefs (…) (Among them was) Chindoloma, the founding ancestor of the Nshima Clan who came from Lungu country (and) married Chikumbi's sister.

Next, we learn how Drum Clan chief conquered Chishinga country from the previous rulers, the Rat Clan:

> The sister to Rat Clan chief and erstwhile ruler of Chishinga country Mupeta Nkasa was married by Kamungu Bwalya (Chikumbi's brother). That is how Chikumbi would come to fight Mupeta. This is the incident that arose because Mupeta ordered his soldiers to kill Bwalya since the latter had been hunting elephants from Mupeta's forest, but giving the tusks to his brother Chikumbi. Mupeta's soldiers then blamed an elephant for killing Mupeta's brother-in-law Bwalya.
>
> Upon learning of the manner of her husband's death, Mupeta's sister empowered Chikumbi to act. This is when Chikumbi started out for Mupeta Nkasa's place in

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Concentration under Co-management, Mweru-Luapula, Zambia', *Journal of Political Ecology*, 16 (2009).

[20] S.M. Makumbi, 'Bufumu bwa Bena Ŋoma mu Zambia (History of the Chishinga Drum Clan Chiefdom of Zambia)', 2005, unpublished manuscript. Variously written and dictated by Makumbi; transcription and translation from Chibemba by C.M. Annear.

[21] The current Chief Mwenda is female. Headman Makumbi will refer to her later in his narrative as the 'chieftainess'.

> Chishinga country, along with his warriors, and his brother-in-law Chindoloma: Drum and Nshima Clans together (…).
>
> Chikumbi asked Mupeta to come to an understanding in order to reach settlement concerning the death of Kamungu Bwalya, but Mupeta refused. So Chikumbi said, then we shall fight! Just there and then the fight began.

Note how Chief Mupeta's killing of his brother-in-law and therefore betrayal of his sister precipitate the conflict that will lead to a usurpation of the land. Likewise, a possible settlement is discussed, but concluded to be untenable. These techniques appear in virtually every such story. The narrator is also at pains to make known any and all contributions of his ancestor to the cause of the ruling Drum Clan. He continues:

> Chikumbi crossed the Luongo River then took leave of his warriors near Mupeta's palace. His fighters continued on to the protective boundary trench of the village (…) The warriors of Chikumbi were very active; they surmounted the trench and began to cut down the palace stockade fencing.
>
> While the palace (…) was burning Mupeta's soldier evacuated him into the Mawewe forest (…).
>
> Chikumbi's soldiers set fire to the forest. Mupeta's soldiers became disoriented from the smoke and left. They fled for the shores of the Luapula where the Luongo flows into the Luapula River at the palace in Kabila Village (this is the Luapula Valley at Mulundu).
>
> Chief Chikumbi and his in-law Chindoloma of the Nshima Clan sent an envoy to Mupeta to ask if the fight was to continue or to conclude.
>
> Chief Mupeta Nkasa of Chishinga responded through the envoy, telling Chikumbi: 'I surrender. I do not want to cross the Luapula. In order for Chief Chikumbi to accept, I give these two people, a man and woman, and this small basket of earth for you to carry to him. The earth signifies me giving him my entire country, and the man and woman, all of my people'. When Chief Chikumbi received these gifts, the fight ended.

The usurpation is now complete, but we have not yet reached the *status quo* aspired to by the author. As the story continues Chikumbi fights and defeats encroaching Yeke from the Congo and meets David Livingstone:

> Dr. Livingstone found Chikumbi in his palace in the large village at Lusaka built by the stream that flows into the Chibalashi River. Dr. Livingstone was shown the way by people given to him by the great Lunda chief Mwata Kazembe in the year 1873. The big chief of the Chishinga people Chikumbi discussed many issues with Dr. Livingstone. Dr. Livingstone liked it very much because his heart yearned to see the two chiefs Mwata Kazembe and Chikumbi.

The narrator conspicuously pulls in star power both in the characters of Livingstone and the Mwata Kazembe in an attempt to raise his own profile. In another section he elaborates on Chikumbi's friendship with the Mwata Kazembe, while retelling the Lunda-Kazembe conquest of Nkuba's Shila. The

final third of this history discusses Nshima Clan ancestors and their importance to the success of the Drum Clan.

> Chindoloma (of the Nshima Clan and Chikumbi's brother-in-law) was an elephant hunter. He killed elephants and removed their tusks. With the elephant tusks there was much wealth for Chief Chikumbi. Chief Chikumbi respected Chindoloma because Chindoloma has a very great and large family (…).
>
> The Nshima and Drum Clans of the Chishinga people are one family, because they have begotten many children together. That is, men of the Nshima Clan have married women of the Drum Clan, and men of the Drum Clan have married women of the Nshima Clan (…).
>
> Members of the Nshima Clan have been given much respect from Chishinga Drum Clan chiefs, evident in the (clan) praise name: 'Son-in-law who makes roots; he is the father who sires chiefs'. This respect has led to many villages being built throughout Chishingaland (…).
>
> Chitipa cemetery is where all Nshima Clan ancestors are buried, with their families (…) This is how both Nshima and Drum Clans came to be buried together.

Finally, the narrator arrives at his chief concern:

> When (the selected Chief Mwenda) (…) succeeded (…) in 1993 he left his sister (…) to keep the country and people for him so that he could finish his remaining years in employment. The chieftainess, however, rose up powerfully against the Nshima Clan, saying, 'I take from you Ntondo and Makumbi (the narrator) villages and the Chitipa Cemetery. I prohibit you from burying your people there. It is where the Drum Clan shall be buried, children and grandchildren of chiefs. That is all.' Since we Nshima Clan of Ntondo and Makumbi do not agree, if one of ours dies we carry him to Chitipa up until today, because that is where our ancestors rest. Of course the chieftainess does not want this.
>
> This argument will end in us (i.e. Drum and Nshima clan members) cutting each other with axes, because we do not understand this chieftainess who would make us change where we carry our deceased people to rest, the spirits of our ancestors. This chieftainess has in her heart stopped giving the respect of her ancestors, given to our forebears who sired the previous Mwenda chiefs.

In 1951, Cunnison suggested that storytelling provided compelling evidence that Luapula valley people expressed a particular proclivity toward keeping and recounting their histories. This apparent storytelling nature found expression in two related, but discrete ways. Ethno-political polities such as the Kazembe-Lunda chiefdom and specified 'owners of the land' built and maintained political power, control over resources, and elite status by, among other modes, establishing the grand, mythical histories that Cunnison termed 'impersonal'.[22]

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[22] Cunnison, *History*; Gordon, *Nachituti's gift*. The changes in storytelling I witnessed in 2004-2005 in the Luapula valley and plateau, respectively, seem to be restricted to the telling of matrilineage or personal histories. This does not apply to the impersonal, universal ethno-histories that Gordon persuasively argues buttressed power structures in the region for centuries leading up to the present.

Alternatively, the less politically connected at this time frequently told 'personal' stories that recounted corporate matrilineage movements, structure, and ties to the region.

In 2005, people in the Luapula valley no longer told these latter types of stories. When I arrived, people expressed scant interest in history-telling. Upon further research into past local histories recorded by Cunnison, I discovered that it was recent migrants who told virtually all of these 'personal' histories. On the Luapula plateau, those who feel they are treated as recent migrants now are the ones who tell stories. Cunnison was right when he stated that 'the primary reason for histories is the justification of a claim for a piece of land'. What he appears not to have entirely grasped is that at the time of his stay in the valley, storytelling was especially significant to recent migrants, who were most interested in claiming and maintaining residence to land proximal to the fishery.

Conclusion

> It was like this. Kabosha's Village was for the Chishingas. So his relatives started to come – coming from Muyembe in Mushota's area. You see? Now, after settling they became citizens and people started to come. And now my father started to give plots to every arriving immigrant to build houses for their settlement. That is what happened (…) There is progress and development – and people have to mix. It is because of business and development – because of the lake.[23]

Boniface Kabosha, a second-generation village headman in Kashikishi, on the southeastern bank of Lake Mweru describes above how immigration, residence, and even ethnicity are processes and tools necessary for accessing livelihoods on the fishery. Although his father's village once comprised mostly members of the Chishinga ethnic group, soon after the social amalgam became, in his words, mixed. The fishery – and its ongoing capacity to provide livelihoods for residents – is the central consolidating mechanism for moving to the Luapula valley. Headman Kabosha underscores this relationship of residence to livelihood by suggesting that when the fishery fails to produce, people move to another, more productive locale:

People shall start moving out, and start looking for another place where there is development. As we say, the proverb, 'a fish follows water'. Because a man has to go for a big pasture, and even myself, I cannot stay where there is no progress. I have to stay where there is progress and special things to assist me in my life.[24]

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[23] Interview with Headman Boniface Kabosha, Kabosha Village, Kashikishi, 28 January 2005.

[24] Ibid.

In terms of studying life in the Luapula valley, Cunnison appears to have been aware of his particular interest in histories, at the expense of the fishery. In the opening passage of *History on the Luapula* he refers to the possibility that '(an) investigator is most deeply impressed by those subjects which are of the most significance to him personally (…)'; yet he is vehement that 'history and interest in the past are (in the Luapula valley) (…) all-pervading'.[25] Nevertheless, many years later, Elizabeth Colson, fellow researcher and eventual director of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, quipped that her younger colleague's extensive interest in stories of origin did seem to be pursued at the expense of the fishery. She remarked dryly, 'You can lead an anthropologist to water, but you can't make him study it!'[26]

Elizabeth Colson is right, of course. Ian Cunnison did not explicitly engage the Mweru-Luapula fishery in his anthropological research and subsequent publications. In this chapter I have investigated why he chose the academic path he did, but also how Cunnison's work implicitly documents the fishery through the migrant stories that he collected in the Luapula valley during the 1950s. Omitting the fishery's ecological dynamism and patterned fluctuation of fish stocks may have caused him to misread passing events as standard behaviors. By disconnecting the fishery from social and cultural life, both were only partially understood. Large-scale regional and smaller scale trans-local demographic shifts driven by the fishing economy have long shaped the cultural character of this 'typical fishing area'. With the benefit of relevant ecological and economic fishery data, it becomes possible to compare Cunnison's research with present-day fieldwork in order to reveal patterns and specific discontinuities over time. This chapter has been a product of just such a comparison.

What I call comparison and earlier, reconsideration, others term restudy. I am hardly alone in this endeavor. Zambia, in particular, seems to court such spatially relative studies. Why is this? Since Johan Pottier's 1988 book, which followed William Watson's research on the Mambwe in the 1950s,[27] anthropologists have worked in many of the same areas of Zambia as had hosted previous RLI studies. Such regional continuity appears to be both by design[28] and, in some cases, by coincidence.[29] David Gordon characterizes the

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[25] Cunnison, *History*, p. v.

[26] Personal communication from Elizabeth Colson, Lusaka, 12 August 2005.

[27] J. Pottier, *Migrants no more: Settlement and survival in Mambwe villages, Zambia* (Bloomington, 1988); W. Watson, *Tribal cohesion in a money economy: A study of the Mambwe people of Northern Rhodesia* (Manchester, 1958).

[28] Pottier, Migrants no more; H.L. Moore & M. Vaughan, *Cutting down trees: Gender, nutrition, and agricultural change in the Northern Province of Zambia, 1890-1990* (Portsmouth, NH, 1994); J. Ferguson, *Expectations of modernity: Myths and*

relationship between present and past anthropologists who both worked in the same or similar geographic areas as sometimes producing rites of academic slaughter and commonly leading to 'an attempt to distance present-day anthropology from that of the RLI anthropologists'.[30] This has been true to an extent among a few of these works, but it is not the case for most. Nor need it be.

The Rhodes-Livingstone Institute produced prodigiously and in a fashion that was theoretically coherent.[31] Institutional support factors in greatly toward the success of any long-term research. But this cannot be the main reason why so many anthropologists of Zambia have followed their disciplinary predecessors. While RLI funding, social and, later, institutional support played a fundamental role in attracting scholars to Northern Rhodesia, this case cannot be made for more recent researchers, who each entered the country with their own, privately procured means. The same may be stated in terms of the RLI's theoretical foci. These provided a significant coalescing force for 'Manchester School' scholars, but recent studies show little coherency of theory.

Instead of being drawn together by institutional or specific theoretical interests, most recent anthropological works in Zambia exhibit kinship through their methodologies. This is illustrated by the incorporation of empirically rigorous historical perspectives into dynamic social studies that include breadth of scale and discipline. James Ferguson describes it as the ambition to write 'simultaneously about social change (changing empirical patterns in social arrangements) and "social change" (the historically constituted way of seeing that formed an "ethnographic record" that can never be taken simply as a "baseline")'.[32]

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meanings of urban life on the Zambian Copperbelt (Berkeley, 1999); L. Cliggett, *Grains from grass: Aging gender, and famine in rural Africa* (Ithaca, NY, 2005).

29 K. Crehan, *The fractured community: Landscapes of power and gender in rural Zambia* (Berkeley, 1997); J. A. Pritchett, *The Lunda-Ndembu: Style, change, and social transformation in South Central Africa* (Madison, 2001).

30 D.M. Gordon, 'Rites of rebellion: Recent anthropology from Zambia', *African Studies*, 62 (2003), p. 136.

31 For institutional interactions between the RLI and researchers see especially, L. Schumaker, *Africanizing anthropology: Fieldwork, network, and the making of cultural knowledge in Central Africa* (Durham, 2001). For theoretical structure and continuity, in addition to Schumaker, see R.P. Werbner, 'The Manchester school in South-Central Africa', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 13 (1984); J. Goody, *The expansive moment: Anthropology in Britain and Africa* (Cambridge, 1995); and A. Kuper, *Anthropology and anthropologists: The modern British school* (New York, 1996).

32 Ferguson, *Expectations*, p. xvii.

In the strict sense of the term, my research does not constitute a restudy of Cunnison's *The Luapula Peoples*, or any other of his publications. Henrietta Moore and Megan Vaughan write that their initial plan to restudy Audrey Richards' classic research on the Bemba, *Land, Labour and Diet*,[33] was scuttled by their inability to reexamine the specific villages Richards had studied sixty years earlier.[34] I, like all other recent anthropologists working in Zambia,[35] have neither researched in precisely the same geographical nor topical areas as my RLI predecessor. By extension, my work is not part of a longitudinal study, either.[36] Still, I believe that, like Pottier's relationship toward his 'father' Watson,[37] each of us is the fictive progeny of our disciplinary progenitors.

If I have fulfilled my ambition, my work will serve to amplify, update, and perhaps at times reorient Cunnison's highly impressive and edifying research on the Mweru-Luapula valley, undertaken between the 1948 and 1959. It is my desire to link to his research in productive and correlatable ways. I do not fear or back away from any association with the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, although I intend to continue to elaborate a methodology based on my understanding of empirical events over time rather than on prescribed theory. To the contrary, I felt an exhilarating cool tingle run up my spine on the hot day when a Zambian friend thought about what I was doing in the country and then remarked offhandedly, 'You are like *Kalanda Mikowa*!'[38]

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33 (London, 1939).

34 H.L. Moore & M. Vaughan, *Cutting down trees: Gender, nutrition, and agricultural change in the Northern Province of Zambia, 1890-1990* (Portsmouth, NH, 1994), pp. xi-xviii.

35 With the possible exception of Lisa Cliggett, who works in explicit coordination with Elizabeth Colson.

36 For a discussion of long-term social science research, see the superb R.V. Kemper & A.P. Royce, eds, *Chronicling cultures: Long-term field research in anthropology* (Walnut Creek, CA, 2002). The following two chapters are most pertinent to my thinking: T.S. Scudder & E. Colson, 'Long-term research in Gwembe Valley, Zambia', & L. Cliggett, 'Inheriting fifty years of Gwembe Tonga Research'.

37 Pottier, *Migrants*, p. viii.

38 This is the name by which Cunnison was known in the Luapula valley. It means roughly 'discusser of clans'.

13

Frances Bolton, Margaret Tibbetts and the US relations with the Rhodesian federation, 1950-1960[1]

Andrew DeRoche

In the early 1950s, the British government combined Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), and Nyasaland (Malawi) into the Rhodesian, or Central African, Federation. The United States supported the British policy, and began to build significant ties to the area, particularly related to the mining industry. However, American officials were concerned about race relations and thus withheld diplomatic recognition.[2] The Federation disintegrated in 1963, but the challenge for the United States of balancing economic and strategic interests with racial issues would complicate its policies towards southern Africa for many years.

Although the general story of US-Federation relations has been told before, the specific role of two American women, Frances Bolton and Margaret Tibbetts, has not been examined thoroughly. In doing so, this essay contributes key pieces to the bigger historical puzzles of the Rhodesian Federation, US

[1] Thanks to Jan-Bart Gewald for inviting me to present an earlier version of this essay at the CART II workshop in Leiden, The Netherlands, in September 2008. Comments during the workshop, especially from Andrew Roberts, were very helpful. I would also like to thank Ann Sindelar and her staff at the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland for assistance with my research in the Bolton Papers.

[2] For an overview of US relations with the Rhodesian Federation see A. DeRoche, *Black, white, and chrome: The United States and Zimbabwe, 1953-1998* (Trenton, 2001), pp. 13-96.

relations with Africa, and women in diplomacy. Bolton, a member of the US House of Representatives, and Tibbetts, a Foreign Service officer, helped construct the foundations of American relations with the Rhodesian Federation, put their stamps on US policy towards Africa, and blazed trails for future women diplomats.

Tibbetts and the Rhodesian Federation

In the early 1950s, the task of monitoring the creation of the Rhodesian Federation was assigned to an American diplomat in London named Margaret Joy Tibbetts.[3] Born and raised in Bethel, Maine, where her father was a doctor, Tibbetts had received a strong education at Gould Academy. She played several sports including basketball, participated in numerous activities such as debating, and graduated at the top of her class in 1937.[4] She earned a bachelor's degree from Wheaton College and a doctorate from Bryn Mawr University. She worked as a research analyst for the Organization of Strategic Services during World War II, and then joined the State Department in 1945. In 1949 Tibbetts became a Foreign Service officer, and her first assignment was in the political affairs section of the US embassy in England.[5]

Tibbetts' responsibilities included reporting on England's policies towards its African colonies, so she 'wrangled an invitation' to a conference for US diplomats working in Africa, held in Mozambique in 1950. Getting there on a British Overseas Airways Corporation plane was a 'slow process', flying through the days and then spending the nights in Sicily, Egypt (where she visited pyramids), Uganda, and finally Southern Rhodesia. Tibbetts enjoyed the opportunity to see Victoria Falls, as well as the local flora and fauna.[6]

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3 In spite of a long and successful career in the Foreign Service, Tibbetts has received hardly any attention from scholars of US foreign relations. She is briefly mentioned in an essay by J. Hoff-Wilson in E. Crapol, ed., *Women and American foreign policy* (Wilmington, 1992; 2nd ed.), but erroneously referred to as Marjorie Jay Tibbetts.

4 R. Bennett, *Bethel, Maine: An illustrated history* (Bethel, 1991), pp. 180, 205; Gould Academy, *Academy Herald* (1937), 13. Thanks to Bennett for sending me copies of the relevant pages in the *Herald* from the Bethel Historical Society archives.

5 For the basic details of Tibbetts' career, see H. Calkin, *Women in the department of state: Their role in American foreign affairs* (Washington, 1978), pp. 109-110, 172, 215.

6 Author's interview with Margaret Joy Tibbetts, Bethel, Maine, USA, 22 December 1993. At the time of our interview, Tibbetts lived on Paradise Hill, just few houses up from my aunt and uncle. My grandparents had lived on a farm nearby, and my parents would later build a house across the street.

What made more of an impression on Tibbetts than the natural beauty of the region, however, was the racism of her companions, most of whom were Englishmen living in Southern Rhodesia. As the British Overseas Airways Corporation plane had carried them further south, they had become more outspoken in their views regarding black Africans and how the colonies should be managed. They were 'candid' about their support for 'a very firmly racist policy.' According to Tibbetts, these settlers were the 'most reactionary British or English people on the face of the earth.' During her stay in the luxurious Victoria Falls Hotel, Tibbetts was amazed at how her white counterparts would share their frank opinions regarding Africans right in front of the staff, as if these workers were not even there. She was similarly shocked by the African men standing in the bathroom with soap and towels. According to the racial attitudes among whites in Southern Rhodesia, this was perfectly acceptable because these men did not really 'exist' as adult human beings; Tibbetts was uncomfortable because 'they did exist of course.'[7]

Her observations of the prevalent racism in Southern Rhodesia may well have allowed her to empathize more easily with the African representatives who came to London in the spring of 1952 to present their case against the Rhodesian Federation. At a meeting with sympathetic members of parliament, seventeen men expressed their concern that federation would mean the expansion of not only Southern Rhodesian racism into the other two territories, but also the spread of even more racist South African influence. The leader of the group was Harry Nkumbula, who Tibbetts characterized as a good speaker but also as 'an angry and bitter man.' She contended that his argument was not entirely logical, but his commitment to the cause was commendable. Nkumbula and his associates were 'determined men', and their opposition was significant.[8]

At the same time, Tibbetts observed that Nkumbula's group had very few allies. The left wing of the Labor party did express opposition to Federation. However, most members of parliament, like the general public in England, cared very little about what was happening in southern Africa. Attention to the Rhodesian situation may even have declined later in 1952. In November Tibbetts commented that 'public interest in the question of Federation has yielded somewhat to the more dramatic issue of the Mau Maus in Kenya.'[9] Early in 1953 she concluded that 'there would appear to be no political obstacle

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7 Author's interview with Tibbetts.

8 Tibbetts to the State Department, 1 May 1952, National Archives II (NA2), College Park, State Department Decimal File, 745.00/5-152. This was the first of seven lengthy reports regarding the proposed federation sent by Tibbetts. On Nkumbula's 1952 trip to London, see also Giacomo Macola's essay, in this volume.

9 Tibbetts to the State Department, 25 November 1952, NA2, State Department Decimal File, 745.00/11-2552.

in the United Kingdom for putting Federation through.'[10] With little opposition in parliament the Colonial Office strongly supported federation, focusing primarily on economic benefits. England was broke after World War II, and consolidating control of the three territories was seen as a way to foster big profits from the copper mines of Northern Rhodesia.[11] Their view won the day.

In mid-1953, Tibbetts reported that 'the final steps in the creation of the Federation of Central Africa' were being taken in parliament. She contended that the Colonial Office knew what it was getting into. She characterized the British diplomats as realistic individuals who truly believed that this step was in the best interests of the United Kingdom. She also assured her superiors that Colonial Office officials were not racists or supporters of apartheid, and that they saw real opportunities for black Africans in the proposed Federation government. She strongly believed that the United States should support this policy. 'Admittedly Federation is a gamble and there are many rocks in the road ahead', opined Tibbets, but 'the responsible leaders and officials of the British Government would not have been convinced of its necessity if they had not seen in Federation the possibility of creating in Central Africa a stable society which would ultimately strengthen Britain's position.'[12] The US government, partly motivated by anti-communism, accepted Tibbetts' advice and seconded England's policies towards the Rhodesian Federation throughout its ten-year existence.[13]

Bolton's 1955 trip to Africa

While Tibbetts was helping to shape Washington's policy towards the new Rhodesian Federation, one member of the US Congress was starting to show interest in southern African affairs. While serving on the American delegation to the United Nations in the fall of 1953, Representative Frances Bolton criticized South Africa for its apartheid policy and occupation of Namibia.[14] She would soon visit the region to observe conditions personally. Who was this outspoken woman with a nascent interest in Africa?

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[10] Tibbetts to the State Department, 27 March 1953, NA2, State Department Decimal File, 745.00/3-2753.

[11] Author's interview with Tibbetts.

[12] Tibbetts to the State Department, 30 July 1953, NA2, State Department Decimal File, 745.00/7-3053.

[13] In her 1993 interview with the author, Tibbetts contended that the influence of anti-communism on US policy towards southern Africa was very detrimental.

[14] D. Loth, *A long way forward: A biography of congresswoman Frances P. Bolton* (New York, 1957), pp. 270-278.

Frances Payne Bingham was born in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1885. She attended local private schools, and then finishing schools in New York and Paris. In 1907 she married Chester Bolton, and the couple had four children. As a young woman Frances Bolton became involved in charitable work, focusing on nursing. During World War I she served on a committee in Washington which established an army school for nurses. Chester Bolton was elected to the House of Representatives in 1928, and subsequently re-elected five times. He died unexpectedly in 1939, and Frances Bolton won a special election to take his place. In 1940 she ran again and earned a House seat in her own right. She would be re-elected 13 more times. She left Congress in 1969, and died in 1977 at the age of 92.

In 1941 Bolton was appointed to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, remaining a member for 28 years. In the 1950s she chaired the subcommittee on Africa, resulting in her greatest contributions to US foreign relations. At her own expense, Bolton conducted a spectacular study mission of the continent in 1955, which included a noteworthy visit to the Rhodesian Federation.[15] Her trip significantly increased the attention paid to Africa by the highest officials in Washington and, in many respects, set the stage for future US/Zambia relations.

In spite of her remarkable career, her life has attracted almost no attention from scholars.[16] Although she was probably the single largest influence on US/Africa relations during the presidency of Dwight Eisenhower, recent studies of this period have ignored her completely.[17] Although Bolton was briefly mentioned in Thomas Noer's groundbreaking study of US policy toward

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[15] Bolton's study trip to Africa, although perhaps the most influential, was certainly not the first conducted by an American woman. In 1936 the black American anthropologist Eslanda Robeson (wife of Paul Robeson) and her son Pauli spent two months in South Africa, Kenya, Uganda, Congo, and Egypt. For her fascinating account, which includes over fifty photos, see E. Robeson, *African Journey* (New York, 1945). Thanks to Andrew Roberts for telling me about Robeson's trip, one of several examples which he cited in a fine review essay some years ago. See A.D. Roberts, 'Americans in Africa', *Journal of African History*, 28 (1987).

[16] The only biography of her was published over fifty years ago. See Loth, *A Long Way Forward*. It is a well-written book, but obviously includes nothing about the last two decades of her life. There is also a chapter on Bolton in M. Kaptur, *Women of congress: A twentieth-century odyssey* (Washington, 1996), pp. 70-83, but it is based almost entirely on material from Loth's book.

[17] Three otherwise excellent works on US/Africa policy in the 1950s which fail to even mention Bolton are J. Meriwether, *Proudly we can be Africans: Black Americans and Africa, 1935-1961* (Chapel Hill, 2002); E. Nwaubani, *The United States and decolonization in West Africa, 1950-1960* (Rochester, 2001); G. White, *Holding the line: Race, racism, and American foreign policy toward Africa, 1953-1961* (Lanham, 2005).

southern Africa, she was incorrectly identified as a man.[18] Peter Schraeder quoted her once, regarding Ethiopia, and at least did not mistake her for a man, but made no mention of her 1955 trip or overall significance.[19] The few historians who have noted her study mission have underestimated its impact, particularly regarding the creation of a separate African Bureau in the State Department in 1958, which inaccurately has been attributed almost entirely to vice president Richard Nixon.[20] A recent article by the African Bureau itself credited Nixon and Ralph Bunche, but failed to mention the congresswoman.[21] By ignoring Bolton's influence in the birth of the African Bureau, scholars (including myself) have distorted the historical record.

Of the 435 members of the House of Representatives in 1955, only 17 were women. None of these women contributed as much in foreign relations as Frances Bolton, and indeed few women in all of American history have been as active in international affairs. However, just as her role has been ignored by historians of US/Africa relations, she has also received very little attention in studies about women. Bolton garnered a brief mention in the major work by Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, but only regarding her views on World War II. The important volume edited by Edward Crapol left her out completely.[22] One female contemporary of Bolton whose international involvement has been thoroughly examined is Senator Margaret Chase Smith. The excellent biography by Patricia Wallace discusses Bolton's close friendship with Smith,

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[18] T. Noer, *Cold War and black liberation: The United States and white rule in Africa, 1948-1968* (Columbia, 1985), pp. 38-39. Pointing out Noer's mistake regarding Bolton's gender is meant to highlight how little attention has been paid to her career, not to discredit Noer's scholarly abilities. His *Cold War and black liberation* is an extremely insightful and useful book.

[19] P. Schraeder, *United States foreign policy toward Africa: Incrementalism, crisis and change* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 130.

[20] Bolton's trip is briefly discussed in T. Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the color line: American race relations in the global arena* (Cambridge, 2001), 123, and in Andrew DeRoche, 'Establishing the centrality of race: Relations between the US and the Rhodesian Federation, 1953-1963', *Zambezia*, 25 (1998), p. 215. Both of these authors, as well as others such as Noer and Schraeder, inaccurately give Nixon the lion's share of credit for convincing the US Congress to create an African Bureau and authorize an assistant secretary for African affairs.

[21] G. Garland, "Nixon, Bunche Saw the Future of U.S.-African Relations," www.america.gov, and also published on allafrica.com (accessed on 18 July 2008). Garland is the Africa Bureau's chief of public affairs.

[22] R. Jeffreys-Jones, *Changing differences: Women and the shaping of American Foreign Policy, 1917 -1994* (New Brunswick, 1995), pp. 95-96, 108, 222; Crapol, *Women and American foreign policy*.

but never indicates that she was equally important in foreign relations.[23] Finally, while Homer Calkin's book on women and the State Department does briefly describe Bolton's experience as a US delegate to the United Nations, it includes nothing about her key role in the birth of State's African Bureau.[24] By examining her 1955 Africa trip in some detail, this essay attempts to shine some light on Bolton and her tremendous contributions to American foreign relations.

On 30 August 1955 representative Bolton departed from Washington, D.C., on an American Airlines plane, beginning a three-month epic journey of discovery. Her brother Will had died earlier in the year and left her a substantial sum of money, which she used to pay for her ambitious adventure. 'I am sure he is happy he could make it all possible (…) rather than have the taxpayers charged with the costs', Bolton explained.[25] After changing planes in New York, London, and Paris, Bolton touched down in Dakar late in the evening of 1 September. For the next six weeks she and her three companions experienced a whirlwind tour of West Africa, utilizing planes, cars, and boats.[26] Setting the pattern for her entire trip, she observed Africans in their living quarters and visited local clinics and schools. She met with US diplomats and American businessmen. She also talked with important political leaders, most notably Kwame Nkrumah, future prime minister of Ghana. Many of her interactions were photographed or even filmed, and she produced three educational movies from the footage.[27]

Bolton and Tibbetts in the Belgian Congo

In mid-October the congresswoman crossed from Brazzaville on a small ferry into the Belgian Congo for a lengthy stop, beginning in Leopoldville (Kinshasa). Among the personnel she encountered at the US consulate there was Margaret Tibbetts, who was in the middle of a two-year stint focusing on economic issues.[28] Tibbetts was an old family friend, whom Bolton had met

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[23] P. Ward Wallace, *Politics of conscience: A biography of Margaret Chase Smith* (Westport, 1995). There is also a chapter on Smith in Jeffreys-Jones' book.

[24] Calkin, *Women in the Department of State*, pp. 206, 287.

[25] Loth, *A long way forward*, p. 289. Bolton's brother, William Bingham II, coincidentally was a major benefactor of Gould Academy, where Margaret Tibbetts was educated. For details on Bingham's contributions to Gould see Bennett, *Bethel, Maine*, pp. 152, 170-171.

[26] Throughout the journey she was accompanied by Dr. Corrin Hodgson, of the Mayo Clinic, William Dunbar, a transportation expert from the Defense Department, and Kenneth Elk, of the Army Signal Corps.

[27] One of the movies, *Africa: Giant with a future*, was released in June 2008 by the US National Archives on DVD and is available on Amazon for only $15!

[28] Author's interview with Tibbetts.

while staying at her brother's summer house in Maine. The congresswoman took time out from her busy schedule to write a letter to Tibbetts' father, the doctor. 'Imagine my surprise when I found your daughter here', she remarked. 'All the many Bethel memories swept over me once again – Gould – and your own many years of consecrated service', she added. She assured him that Margaret was 'doing a fine job.' Her athletic and academic training at Gould Academy and beyond were serving her well, and 'America is better for her being here.'[29]

During her two years in the Congo, Tibbetts often took charge of the consulate while her boss travelled. Although as a woman she was not allowed to attend meetings of businessmen's clubs, she gathered useful information by visiting them individually in their offices. She also made strong contacts with professors at the university. Her resourcefulness allowed her to submit thorough reports on the economic and political situation in the Congo.[30] She warned the State Department that by not addressing the issue of wages in the mines, the Belgian government was creating a 'Frankenstein's monster' in the form of an African union movement.[31] During her later debriefing after completing her two-year tenure, Tibbetts accurately predicted serious trouble in the Congo's future.[32]

After the chance encounter with Tibbetts in Leopoldville, Bolton continued her journey by flying east to visit Ruanda-Urundi (Rwanda and Burundi), a UN trusteeship administered by Belgium. She had an audience with the Queen Mother of the 'Watusi'. The two powerful women discussed the challenges involved in raising children, and then watched a display of dancing. Departing the ceremony, Bolton met a group of mothers with babies. She took one child in her arms and he began to cry. Instinctively shifting the boy to her hip, she was relieved when the baby and mother relaxed. A real human connection was made, and she was 'flooded with a curious sensation of love and understanding, of belonging, quite impossible to describe.'[33] These encounters suggest that there was a unique benefit to having Bolton conduct a study mission, as it is

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[29] Bolton to Dr. Tibbetts, 11 October 1955, Western reserve historical society (WRHS), Cleveland, Frances Payne Bolton Papers (BP), container 146, folder 2571.

[30] Interview with Tibbetts in A. Morin, *Her Excellency: An oral history of American women ambassadors* (New York, 1995), pp. 47-48, 54.

[31] Tibbetts quoted in J. Helmreich, *United States relations with Belgium and the Congo, 1940-1960* (Newark, 1998), p. 168.

[32] Interview with Tibbetts in Morin, *Her Excellency*, pp. 47-48, 54.

[33] Loth, *A long way forward*, pp. 287-288.

hard to imagine a male official such as Richard Nixon or Lyndon Johnson having such experiences in Africa.[34]

Back in the Belgian Congo, Bolton took a break from her political and diplomatic duties to visit Albert National Park. She observed a wide range of animals including hippos, wart-hogs, water buffalo, antelope, and an incredible variety of birds. At one point her party found itself nearly surrounded by hundreds of elephants. When one old bull elephant trumpeted loudly and charged them, they luckily escaped by driving about 30 miles-per-hour in reverse.[35] After the exhilarating experience in the park, she flew to Elisabethville (Lubumbashi) in the mineral-rich Katanga region of the Congo and got back to business. She toured the large Prince Leopold mine at Kipushi, which produced huge quantities of copper and zinc, operated by the powerful Union Minière syndicate. She inspected the company schools and clinics. While in Elisabethville, Bolton also visited a government hospital and met with the head of the American Methodist Mission in the Congo. She visited the US consulate and granted a lengthy interview with the local press. 'For the Elisabethville people it was a unique experience to meet an American lady in public life', observed US consul Thomas Murdock, who added that 'everybody who met Mrs. Bolton found themselves fascinated by her charm and obvious sincerity.'[36]

One individual who was not as 'fascinated' by the congresswoman's charm, evidently, was the local Ford motor company agent in Elisabethville. Ford representatives provided vehicles at many points along Bolton's route, usually with enthusiasm, but in this case the employee of *Generale d'Automobiles et d'Aviation au Congo* offered only a 'beat-up old station wagon' for the drive into Northern Rhodesia, and he did that 'grudgingly.'[37] With this less-than-stellar send off, Bolton and her party motored south toward Northern Rhodesia, accompanied by Murdoch. She observed that the countryside was quite desolate, with lots of giant ant hills and only an occasional native hut. After ten exciting days she was 'sorry to leave the Congo.'[38] As they crossed into the Federation, signs warned them that they must drive on the left side. This shift

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[34] Both Nixon and Johnson visited Africa during their tenures as vice president, but there are no reports of either one of them getting a baby to stop crying.

[35] Bolton, 'Belgian Congo and Albert National Park', 22 October 1955, WRHS, BP, container 146, folder 2571. This five-page report by Bolton also covers the meeting with the Queen Mother of the Watusi.

[36] Thomas Murdock, consul in Elisabethville, to the State Department, 'Visit of the Honorable Frances P. Bolton', 29 October 1955,WRHS, BP, container 146, folder 2569.

[37] Bolton's report, 'Met by Ford', WRHS, BP, container 146, folder 2575.

[38] Bolton's handwritten journal, 25 October 1955,WRHS, BP, container 146, folder 2567.

from right to left was not surprising since they were moving from an area under Belgian rule to one under British rule, but nonetheless it must have seemed a somewhat arbitrary requirement at this isolated border post.

Bolton in Northern Rhodesia

Bolton's excursion into the Rhodesian Federation occurred during real boom times for the mining industry. Partly due to the war in Korea, demand for copper increased dramatically, and so did the price. Great amounts of money were being poured into developing the Copperbelt in Northern Rhodesia, and the monetary value of the ore produced had soared from 13 million British pounds in 1945 to 50 million in 1950, and 95 million in 1953. Life was especially comfortable for white employees, who enjoyed high wages, special bonuses, and modern facilities. The good times on the Copperbelt continued throughout the 1950s. Additional mines were opened with American funding as the US government focused on expanding its strategic stockpiles.[39]

The congresswoman's first stop in Northern Rhodesia was at Nkana, to see the Rhokana mines owned by the Anglo-American group, which was primarily a South African company. Bolton and her companions drove around the African houses at Nkana for a brief inspection. They then proceeded on to Luanshya and the Roan Antelope Mine, owned by the Rhodesian Selection Trust, which was controlled by American investors. The United States had imported over 60,000 tons of copper from the Copperbelt in 1954, and the metal was critical for American consumer goods, such as televisions, and for military needs, such as ammunition. In order to ensure future access to Northern Rhodesian copper, major loans were granted to the Federation by the US government and by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.[40] Visiting this operation was therefore an important item on Bolton's agenda.

The general manager of the mine, Jack Thompson, hosted an 'extremely cordial reception' for the congresswoman.[41] It is not clear if Thompson was American, but Bolton included him in her summary of contacts with American businesses during the trip. In any case he was a friendly and popular man, and the main hospital in Luanshya would later be named after him. In her official final report, Bolton singled out the management at the Roan mine for high praise. Unlike the Anglo-American group, which reflected South African

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[39] A.D. Roberts, *A history of Zambia* (London, 1976), p. 212. See also Ian Phimister, in this volume.

[40] DeRoche, *Black, white, and chrome*, pp. 17-18. The largest loan to the Federation from US-led institutions, $80 million from the World Bank, would come in 1956 for the Kariba Dam.

[41] Bolton's summary, 'Met by Ford'.

influence and defended racial discrimination in the mines, the leaders of Rhodesian Selection Trust such as Thompson took a stand against the industrial color bar. Bolton considered this a commendable and courageous position. She concluded that 'this group has done a great deal for the cause of future racial harmony in Africa, and news of the part played in the struggle by Americans should be more widely disseminated.'[42]

On 26 October, Bolton spent the whole day touring Luanshya and the Roan mine facilities. Combined with her earlier visits to the operations of Union Minière in the Congo and Anglo-American at Nkana, this meant she had inspected the social welfare efforts of the three major corporate entities operating in the Katanga/Copperbelt region. She was therefore able to reach some conclusions as to what it was 'possible to achieve in the way of social progress, with a mineral economy.'[43] Bolton had long been involved in medical issues in the United States, specifically doing much to advance nursing education, so it was only fitting that she paid particular attention to health care during this trip. In Luanshya she inspected an 'interesting hospital', at which over 25 operations were performed each day. Shots were administered outdoors. Over 2,000 children had been born there, but sadly birth 'malformations' were common. Bolton speculated that these may have somehow reflected a 'tribal' influence, but it seems more likely that they were an early sign of the toxic effects of mining practices that would later have such tragic repercussions in Zambian cities such as Kabwe.[44]

Representative Bolton departed Luanshya at 5am on 27 October and was driven to Ndola. From there she flew on Central African Airways to Lusaka, arriving just before 8am. In the capital city of Northern Rhodesia she continued her focus on health care, stopping at the Tuberculosis X-Ray Detection Center, the Training School for Native Assistants, and the General Hospital for Natives. At the hospital, Bolton talked with a 'very nice matron' who struggled with the task of preparing over 1,000 meals per day in a very old kitchen. They had too many patients for the facility, but fortunately the staff was 'more than usually adequate.' She also informed the congresswoman that there were 'many abortions' performed at the hospital.[45]

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[42] Frances Bolton, Report of the special sudy mission to Africa, South and East of the Sahara by Honorable Frances P. Bolton Ranking Minority Member of the Subcommittee on the Near East and Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (Washington, 1956), p. 58.

[43] Murdoch to State, 29 October 1955, WRHS, BP, container 146, folder 2569.

[44] Bolton's journal, undated entry following entry for 25 October, WRHS, BP, container 146, folder 2567. Kabwe has recently been ranked as one of the ten most polluted places in the world and has very high rates of cancer.

[45] Bolton's journal, 'Lusaka' entry, WRHS, BP, container 146, folder 2567.

The Chileshe family hosted Bolton at their home in Lusaka. Safeli Chileshe was a successful businessman and one of four blacks appointed to the Northern Rhodesian legislative council. His wife Martha was equally influential. A leading figure in the Girl Guides movement, she was the first black woman in Northern Rhodesia to earn a driver's license. The white examiners had repeatedly failed her, but she would not give up and eventually succeeded.[46] This triumph had inspired other blacks in the colony who aspired to drive cars such as John Mwanakatwe, who recalled that 'we were all very proud' of Martha Chileshe for getting her license.[47] During the visit, Bolton talked mostly with the irrepressible Martha, who detailed the difficulties of black woman living in Lusaka. She described their situation as being 'very bad', mentioning 'stone throwing' and a lack of trust by their husbands.[48] This enlightening conversation with Martha was undoubtedly a key reason that in her final report Bolton praised the Federation's black woman, whom she characterized as 'making the most of the opportunities.'[49]

The visit to the Chileshe home had evidently been organized by Harry Franklin, who afterwards took Bolton's party to the 'Club' for lunch. Franklin was one of two whites nominated to the legislative council to represent black interests. His friendship with Safeli Chileshe personified the philosophy of racial 'partnership' for which the Federation supposedly was striving, and this helped convince Bolton that Northern Rhodesia was an ideal place for American involvement.[50] Had the congresswoman met with other nationalists such as Kenneth Kaunda, however, she would have gotten a more critical view of 'partnership' and the role of Harry Franklin. Kaunda's disgust with Franklin's arrogance was one of the factors which convinced him to leave the African National Congress.[51]

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46 J. Chileshe, *Alderman Safeli Hannock Chileshe: A tribute to (the man) his life and history* (Ndola, 1998), p. 157.

47 J. Mwanakatwe, *Teacher politician lawyer my autobiography* (Lusaka, 2003), p. 84. Mwanakatwe purchased his first car from the Chileshe family, a 'big old American Chevrolet.'

48 Bolton's journal, 'Lusaka' entry.

49 Bolton, Report of the special study mssion to Africa, p. 59.

50 For a discussion of Chileshe's support for Federation and the efforts by him and Harry Franklin to promote cooperation between blacks and whites see B.J. Phiri, *A political history of Zambia: From the colonial period to the 3rd Republic* (Trenton, 2006), pp. 47, 68, 72-73.

51 K.D. Kaunda, *Zambia shall be free: An autobiography* (London, 1962), pp. 94-95. For a different perspective on the events leading to the formation of the Zambia African National Congress in 1958, see Macola, in this volume.

In the afternoon of 27 October, Bolton's party flew on a Central African Airways plane from Lusaka to Livingstone, where they stayed for two days.[52] On 28 October the congresswoman viewed Victoria Falls and 'walked on the edge.' She took a cruise up the Zambezi River and observed hippos, herons, and egrets. Perhaps most exotic of all, a small group of American tourists from Minnesota was also on the boat.[53] On 29 October representative Bolton departed from Northern Rhodesia on a British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) plane. The flight afforded her the opportunity to write a lengthy letter to her executive assistant in Washington, Marjorie Clough. She explained that her departure had been delayed a day by 'stupid hotel administration and absurd flying business.' Although BOAC had a reputation as being 'entirely undependable', it was the only 'decent line.' She was not taking any chances in 'little planes', because 'Africa is too big and the dense jungles far too formidable.'[54] BOAC's big planes were actually not necessarily any safer than small planes, and had crashed several times in the early 1950s; fortunately, Bolton's flight reached Johannesburg smoothly.

South Africa and Southern Rhodesia

In South Africa, Bolton first visited the US embassy in Pretoria. She then flew to Cape Town and made her way back up the coast, stopping in Port Elizabeth and Durban. The congresswoman had expressed her negative opinion of apartheid clearly in her December 1953 speech at the United Nations, and her 1955 tour did nothing to change that view.[55] In her official report she summed up her view of South Africa: 'So utterly beautiful, so rich, so full of misunderstanding and fear. Everywhere there is the cloud of anger, of indignation too well known for me to discuss here.' Regarding Southwest Africa (Namibia), which was essentially a colony of South Africa, she advocated a referendum among the residents, conducted by the UN.[56]

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[52] Bolton's arrival and departure from the old Lusaka airport evidently went smoothly. That would be the location where the most famous Assistant Secretary of African Affairs, G. Mennen Williams, was assaulted by a Rhodesian in August 1961. See DeRoche, *Black, white, and chrome*, pp. 56-57; Noer, *Soapy*, p. 241.

[53] Bolton's journal, 'Oct 28 Victoria Falls' entry, WRHS, BP, container 146, folder 2567.

[54] Bolton to M. Clough, Oct. 27 to 29, 1955, WRHS, BP, container 146, folder 2571.

[55] Noer, *Cold War and black liberation*, pp. 38-39; Loth, *A long way forward*, pp. 277-278.

[56] Bolton, Report of the special study mission to Africa, pp. xiv, 10. For the brutal colonization of Namibia, see J.-B. Gewald, *Herero heroes: A socio-political history of the herero of Namibia, 1890-1923* (London, 1998).

From Durban she flew to Lourenco Marques (Maputo) in the Portuguese colony of Mozambique for a brief visit, and then she returned to the Federation, this time focusing on Southern Rhodesia. Bolton arrived in Salisbury on 10 November and spent a few days meeting with the local US diplomats and Federation politicians, as well as attending receptions and dinner parties. Sunday 13 November found her at a Methodist mission in Mrewa, where she inspected the school and clinic. The highlight of the day was the church service. About 250 boys and girls marched into the church to the beat of drums. They sang hymns, including one by Brahms, in their native language. The congresswoman, a professionally trained singer herself, was overwhelmed: 'Such music! Only at Tuskegee Institute have I heard anything to equal it. The young rich voices have a rare quality which the perfection of pitch and rhythm give an effect which no words of mine can possibly describe. Singing without accompaniment of any kind with a simple reverence that brought tears to the eyes and a great lump in the throat.'[57]

After the minister preached a lengthy sermon on the need for Christian education, he asked Bolton if she had a message from the people of the United States. She felt honored to address the congregation. She explained that the USA was 'a land of many races' and that Americans were 'indeed their brothers and sisters.' Bolton and her party went for a hike in the nearby hills to see cave paintings, and then enjoyed a fine chicken dinner at the missionaries' residence. It had been an 'exquisite' day, she concluded, 'one which will stay with each of us for many years to come.'[58]

The wonderful day at Mrewa highlighted her time in Southern Rhodesia, which generally convinced her even further of the potential of the Rhodesian Federation. She believed that efforts at racial partnership were sincere and represented a promising middle path. 'The racial policy issue as exemplified in the Federation', she wrote in her final report, 'may well determine the success or failure of the struggle between the forces of racial evolution as epitomized by the extreme nationalism of the Gold Coast and on the other hand by the forces of white supremacy in the Union of South Africa.' She realized that race relations were not perfect. 'Here and there one noticed indications of the same type of racial segregation sentiment as was evident in the Union of South Africa', she admitted, 'but it seemed insignificant when compared with partnership efforts.' She optimistically concluded her assessment of the

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[57] Bolton's notes: 'Methodist mission, Mrewa, Southern Rhodesia', 13 November 1955, WRHS, BP, container 146, folder 2573.

[58] Ibid.

Rhodesian Federation by exclaiming, 'It is here that we Americans can give of our know-how as in few of the areas.'[59]

From Southern Rhodesia, Bolton and her party journeyed to Tanganyika. After two days there, they visited Zanzibar, Kenya, and Uganda. In Ethiopia, Bolton met with the Emperor Haile Selassie. She then flew to Eritrea, Sudan, and finally Egypt.[60] During her 6 December flight from Khartoum to Cairo, she found time to write lengthy letters to President Dwight Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. She summarized her experiences and encouraged these architects of US foreign policy to pay more attention to Africa in the future. She explained to the president that 'we need to re-evaluate our methods and our policies.' Eisenhower was greatly impressed by her efforts and insights and believed that she would 'be able to cast a lot of light and understanding in the Congress and among the people.'[61]

Bolton, Tibbetts, and African Affairs in 1956

She took off from Cairo on 10 December, and her 99-day African adventure came to an end. Almost immediately upon returning to the United States, Bolton began lobbying for improvements in US relations with Africa. In January of 1956 she shared her views with George Allen, the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs. Bolton informed Allen that in general the US Foreign Service officers in Africa were doing solid work. 'There were, of course, some instances where for one reason and another they were not quite up to my standards for the Service', she added. Bolton concluded optimistically: 'It is my hope, Mr. Secretary, that we shall really begin to build an African Section that will be made up of men and women with a real interest in, and love for that great continent.'[62]

Margaret Tibbetts felt even more strongly than Bolton about the caliber of US diplomats in Africa in the mid-1950s, who 'were not always the outstanding officers in the Foreign Service, by any means.'[63] Partly due to her negative opinion about the quality of personnel working on African issues, Tibbetts shifted her energies back to European diplomacy. She requested a transfer out of African Affairs and into European Affairs, which she considered more

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59 Bolton, Report of the special study mission to Africa, pp. 10, 58.

60 'Itinerary', n.d., WRHS, BP, container 147, folder 2579. This 4-page document clearly shows the complicated arrangements that Bolton's trip required.

61 Bolton letters to Eisenhower & Dulles, 6 December 1955, WRHS, BP, container 146, folder 2571; Eisenhower to Bolton, 20 December 1955, WRHS, BP, container 146, folder 2569.

62 Bolton letter to Allen, 17 January 1956, WRHS, BP, container 146, folder 2578.

63 Tibbetts quoted in Morin, *Her Excellency*, p. 54.

interesting, and she got her wish.[64] Representative Bolton was not the only one impressed by the work of Tibbetts in the Congo, and the Maine native would rise quickly through the ranks in the European Bureau and become ambassador to Norway in the 1960s.[65]

Bolton, on the other hand, decided to keep pushing for reform regarding African affairs. In late July of 1956 she submitted her official report to Congress, detailing each of the 24 countries or colonies in Africa which she had seen. For several reasons, among all the places she visited, the Rhodesian Federation appealed in particular to Bolton, and perhaps this was because she saw many similarities with the United States. The Federation featured widespread Christianity, the official language was English, the diversified economy included agriculture, mining, and tourism, and the population was multiracial. She was not alone in observing these similarities. When Doris Lessing visited the region at about the same time, she observed that 'This is American.' The Federation featured immigrants from a range of European countries, displayed a rootless spirit, and was a place where a person's income was more important than his family background. The icing on the cake was the ubiquitous Coca-Cola sign, on display 'from the high new blocks of offices and flats to the scruffy little store in the Native Reserve.' Salisbury and the Copperbelt settlements did not resemble English cities, but instead each resembled 'an American small town.'[66]

Bolton, then, correctly characterized Northern and Southern Rhodesia as places where Americans could feel at home. She was, however, somewhat overly optimistic about partnership. Whereas she believed the Copperbelt towns and Salisbury would grow to resemble her home cities of Cleveland and Washington, they would instead follow more closely in the footsteps of Birmingham and Montgomery. As in the American south, non-violent protests against segregation and discrimination by blacks in the Federation would result in violent repression by white government officials. As conflict escalated, the US Department of State debated formal recognition of the Rhodesian Federation.[67]

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64 Author's interview with Tibbetts.

65 For details on her experience as ambassador see Morin, *Her Excellency,* pp. 45-60.

66 Doris Lessing, *Going home* (Frogmore, 1968), pp. 63-65. The first edition was published in 1957, a year after her visit.

67 DeRoche, *Black, white, and chrome*, pp. 23-24.

Debating diplomatic recognition

Given the economic boom times on the Copperbelt, the decision regarding whether or not to expand formal ties was not easy. The American Consul General, Loyd Steere, contended that 'practical reasons already exist for the establishment of diplomatic relations' between the US and the Federation. He emphasized the potential for a full embassy to facilitate financial agreements and estimated that 'the present value of private American investment in this country must be somewhere between $100,000,000 and $200,000,000.' At the same time he was 'somewhat concerned about evidence of a less enlightened attitude recently on the part of the Federal Government toward the problem of race relations.' He speculated 'that some influence for the better might be exerted by delaying diplomatic recognition – and letting the reasons be discreetly known.'[68] In spite of his concerns about race, however, Steere recommended the appointment of a US ambassador to the Federation.

Officials back at the State Department weighed Steere's assessment very carefully. They acknowledged that there were 'several cogent reasons for establishing diplomatic relations with the Federation.' First and foremost, 'in recent years its rate of economic development has been unsurpassed by any other country in the world', and the substantial US investment could be expected to keep increasing. However, they decided that race should be the deciding factor. Black leaders had opposed the formation of the Federation, and their resistance was intensifying. White politicians were showing no signs of granting real power to people of color in the near future. Therefore the US government decided not to upgrade its relations with the Federation. 'Such an initiative and precedent on the part of the United States might be construed as a gratuitous endorsement of the racial *status quo* in the Federation', the State Department officials concluded, 'and serve to encourage the latter country's pressures on the United Kingdom to grant full independence before the future political and social position of the Africans is adequately clarified.'[69]

Bolton, perhaps, had been too optimistic about the racial situation in the Rhodesian Federation. In other respects, however, the congresswoman's specific interests in Northern Rhodesia, which she characterized as 'such a wonderful area', presciently foreshadowed future American activities in

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[68] Steere to the State Department, 1 August 1957, NA2, State Department Decimal File, 601.0045c/8-157.

[69] 'Diplomatic Relations with the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland', Department of State to Salisbury, 15 October 1957, NA2, State Department Decimal File, 601.0045c/10-1557. This document was drafted by an official named Nagoski, approved by C. Vaughn Ferguson, and sent out over the signature of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles.

Zambia.[70] In emphasizing the need to improve healthcare and education, she accurately identified arenas in which the USA could constructively contribute. She was sincere about wanting to help, and she did her part. As the State Department was debating whether or not to recognize the Federation in 1957, she collected over 500 books from her constituents and sent them to Oliver Kabungo, a young Northern Rhodesian who had requested assistance in stocking a library for blacks in Ndola.[71] Fifty years later, the most positive American contributions to Zambia continue to be in education and healthcare, with the popular Martin Luther King library in Lusaka, a major Peace Corps presence in the rural areas, and a huge nationwide effort to fight HIV/AIDS in place.[72]

Bolton, the birth of the African Bureau and Eisenhower's views

While Bolton correctly identified education and healthcare as two of the most crucial areas for American contributions in the Rhodesian Federation, she did underestimate somewhat the degree of racial antagonism there. Her official report to her congressional colleagues incorrectly predicted a great future for the Federation. The report had more impact, however, in advocating for the creation of a separate 'Division for Africa' within the State Department. Bolton proposed that the new division be 'lead by an Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs.'[73] Her efforts helped convince the US Congress to authorize the creation of the Bureau of African Affairs in July 1958. As her colleague Edith Rogers (R-Mass.) stated moments before the new division was approved, 'I have never known anyone more deserving of greater credit for this important work than the gentlewoman from Ohio.'[74]

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70 Bolton to O. Kabungo, 15 April 1957, WRHS, BP, container 27, folder 458.

71 Letters between Bolton & Oliver Kabungo, WRHS, BP, container 27, folder 458. Kabungo died in the early 1960s. His daughter would marry Reuben Kamanga, Zambia's first vice president.

72 In late June 2008 a US congressional delegation led by House Foreign Affairs chairman Howard Berman visited Zambia to see some of the projects funded by President George W. Bush's initiative against HIV/AIDS. The US spent over $260 million in Zambia in 2007. See www.zambia.embassy.gov for figures and story about Berman's visit (accessed on 18 July 2008).

73 Bolton, Report of the special study mission to Africa, p. xv.

74 Congressional record: Proceedings and debates of the 85th congress second session volume 104 Part 10 June 27, 1958 to July 14, 1958 (Pages 12423 to 13766) (Washington, 1958), p. 13391. For Bolton's contributions to the 10 July debate see p. 13390, and for the debate on 26 June see the previous volume (part 9) of the Congressional Record, pp. 12389-12392. Rogers served in the US Congress from 1925 to 1960, the longest tenure on Capitol Hill for a woman in American history.

Shortly afterwards, the African Bureau began operations and Joseph Satterthwaite took the reigns as the first Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs.[75] Meanwhile, President Dwight Eisenhower actively took part in an unprecedented high-level discussion of African issues with the National Security Council on 7 August 1958. In addition to the president, the major contributor to the conversation was Clarence Randall, chairman of the Council on Foreign Economic Policy. Randall, who had visited five African countries including the Rhodesian Federation in April, has been characterized as 'perhaps the administration's most sympathetic expert' on Africa.[76] Other key participants included Vice President Nixon (who had paid a brief visit to a few African countries early in 1957), Acting Secretary of State Christian Herter, and US Information Agency Director George Allen, who had previously overseen policy toward Africa.

Eisenhower initiated the discussion by inquiring how the US coordinated African affairs with the European colonial powers, and Randall replied that it was a 'delicate problem.' The president then opined that the US should 'be careful not to get ourselves hated by both the colonies and the mother countries.' Herter contended that some Europeans who were getting raw materials from Africa wanted to delay independence. At that point Eisenhower remarked that 'rather than slow down the independence movement, he would like to be on the side of the natives for once.' Herter and Randall both cautioned that doing so would create problems in American relations with NATO allies.[77]

The conversation next turned to some of the ways the United States could realistically contribute to development in Africa. Herter underscored the opportunities in the educational field, and Randall added that American missionaries were creating 'a great reservoir of good will.' The president summed up the central challenge for US relations with Africa as wanting to support the rights of colonized people to achieve independence, while not pushing so hard for decolonization as to irritate European allies. Eisenhower then wondered why Americans 'could not foster education and religion, leaving the mother country to prepare the colony for independence?' Randall followed

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[75] For some recollections of his tenure as assistant secretary and subsequent posting as US ambassador to South Africa, see the interview with Satterthwaite by William Moss, 2 March 1971, John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, Oral History Project.

[76] Description of Randall in white, *holding the line*, p. 21. For recommendations based on his trip, see C. Randall, 'Report to council on foreign economic policy on US foreign economic policy in Africa, South of the Sahara', April 1958, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library (DDE), Abilene, Council on Foreign Economic Policy, Office of the Chairman, Special Studies Series, Box 1.

[77] Memorandum, 'Discussion at the 375th Meeting of the National Security Council, Thursday, 7 August 1958', 8 August 1958, DDE, Ann Whitman File, p. 11.

up by specifying that education be provided in Africa, as 'there were risks in bringing Africans to the United States.'[78]

Then, perhaps for the only time during the eight-year Eisenhower presidency, the National Security Council discussed the Rhodesian Federation. George Allen argued that 'Africa was usually thought of in terms of the black man, but that one area in Africa – Rhodesia – was eminently suitable for white settlement and development.' He praised Salisbury as a 'booming town', and enthusiastically described the Kariba project as 'a tremendous dam on the Zambezi supplying power for copper extraction.' The president asked how the Federation accessed the ocean, and Allen responded that the link was through Mozambique. Randall then commented that the Rhodesian Federation was 'undecided whether to adopt a racial policy similar to that of South Africa, or to continue its concept of racial partnership.' He ended the National Security Council's brief focus on the Federation by contending that 'US capital invested in the copper mines was one favorable influence in Rhodesia.'[79]

For the last few moments of the meeting, the discussion returned to more general issues. After listening to a presentation on the strategic significance of southern Africa for bases and tracking stations, Eisenhower agreed that the region was strategically important. However, he warned that 'military activity is usually ineffective as the first step in establishing close relations with a country.' The president elaborated on the point, stating that in Africa the US 'should first work through education and cultural relations', and that military ties might follow. 'We must win Africa', he concluded, 'but we can't win it by military activity.'[80] These certainly were wise words from one of the heroes of allied victory in World War II, and would sadly prove prophetic as the US and the USSR competed to arm African states over the following two or three decades.

Overall, this brief discussion by Eisenhower and his advisors correctly identified many of the most significant challenges for US relations with Africa, and more specifically with the Rhodesian Federation. The National Security Council displayed a relatively sound grasp of what was at stake, highlighting factors such as nationalism, racism, economics, and security. Furthermore, the president had put forth some very interesting ideas, but no substantive initiatives resulted from the meeting. His hope that the US government could be 'on the side of the natives for once' sounded promising, but his administration would not be the ones to do it.

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[78] Ibid., p. 11.

[79] Ibid., p. 12. Allen, who grew up in North Carolina and later became president of the Tobacco Institute, evidently empathized with Rhodesian whites.

[80] Ibid., p. 13.

In the early months of 1959, Representative Bolton continued her activism for Africa. On 28 February 1959 she met with Satterthwaite, the new assistant secretary, and they discussed a speech of his which had been quoted out of context and thus had evidently encouraged African nationalism. He assured Bolton that this had not been his intention, and the responsible United States Information Service officials had been informed that they should be more careful in the future. The new assistant secretary would certainly not be orchestrating a sudden shift to the 'side of the natives.' In any case, Bolton reminded Satterthwaite of the upcoming session of the House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee, which she had finally convinced the chair to call, after a year of trying.[81]

Racial conflict in the federation

At the Africa Subcommittee meeting on 5 March 1959, Satterthwaite discussed the Rhodesian Federation, displaying either delusion, or disregard for the facts. Regarding the policy of racial partnership, the assistant secretary claimed that 'quite a bit of progress had been made along these lines.'[82] Blacks in the Federation would clearly have disagreed. In February a state of emergency had been imposed because of protests in Nyasaland. The Federal government had banned the Nyasaland African Congress and imprisoned its leaders, including Hastings Banda. In his testimony, Satterthwaite briefly mentioned these events, but downplayed their significance. A few days after the subcommittee meeting, the American Committee on Africa (a lobby group led by George Houser) denounced the racial discrimination in the Federation and demanded its dissolution.[83] Satterthwaite and the State Department, however, refrained from criticizing the excessive use of force which had been used to quell the Nyasaland demonstrations.

President Eisenhower had praised the potential of cultural relations instead of military ties. Events in the Federation in the fall of 1959, however, demonstrated that cultural relations could in reality be problematic in their own right. On 7 September, the American-owned Royal Cinema in Salisbury staged a grand opening and benefit for the Red Cross. The extravaganza excluded all

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81 Satterthwaite, Memorandum of conversation between Satterthwaite & Bolton, 28 February 1959, NA2, State Department Decimal File, 770.00/2-2859.

82 Statement by Satterthwaite, 5 March 1959, *Hearings before the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives* (Washington, 1959).

83 American Committee on Africa, 'Statement on the Crisis in the Central African Federation', 9 March 1959, Martin Luther King, Jr., Library, Atlanta, Martin Luther King, Jr., Papers, Box 124, Folder 10.

black Africans. The fact that a 'whites only' event occurred at an American movie theater infuriated Clarence Randall. He remarked that the incident 'greatly damaged the image which Africans have of our country.'[84]

According to Joseph Palmer, the American Consul General in Salisbury, the really important point was the ongoing exclusion of non-whites from several American-owned theaters in Southern Rhodesia. Palmer pointed the finger of blame at Spyros Skouras, the president of 20th Century Fox. Palmer clearly objected to Skouras' policy of banning black from his theaters in Salisbury, and explained the situation to assistant secretary Satterthwaite. The assistant secretary replied: 'Because of the public identification of African Consolidated as an "American" firm, I certainly agree that its policy is most unfortunate (…) However, as the issue has been pointed out to Mr. Skouras (…) I frankly doubt whether there is much more we can properly do at this juncture.' Satterthwaite did not think any more could be done, because 'the US Government has no control over the American parent firm.'[85]

The parent firm in this case, 20th Century Fox, conducted business in a manner that several American officials considered injurious to the reputation of the United States. The US government lacked the power to control the policies of 20th Century Fox, and this inability exemplified the potential dangers of private investment in foreign countries. Eisenhower had recommended increasing cultural relations in order to establish good will in African countries. However, the American-owned theaters in Southern Rhodesia clearly showed that cultural relations could do more harm than good.[86] This example also underscored the fact that Eisenhower administration appointees such as Satterthwaite were not likely to push for racial equality in southern Africa.

The 1960 election and beyond

At about the same time Satterthwaite resolved that the State Department could do little to address segregation in Salisbury, the 1960 presidential campaign kicked into gear, and it would have considerable significance for US relations with Africa. Senator John Kennedy, partly in hopes of courting black American voters, emphasized the importance of Africa throughout the election year, a

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[84] C. Randall to E. Johnston, 19 October 1959, DDE, Council on foreign economic Policy Records, Box 1, 10/59, Chronological File.

[85] J. Satterthwaite to J. Palmer, 20 January 1960, DDE, Council on Foreign Economic Policy, Randall Series, Subject Subseries, Box 1, Africa #2.

[86] For a more thorough examination of this incident see DeRoche, *Black, white, and chrome*, pp. 32-33.

tactic which helped him defeat Nixon.[87] Upon attaining the presidency, he almost immediately appointed the outspoken liberal governor of Michigan, G. Mennen 'Soapy' Williams, to replace the moderate Satterthwaite as assistant secretary of state for African affairs. Williams soon asserted that 'Africa is for the Africans', and committed himself to reforming US policies.[88] The Kennedy administration enacted some significant changes which benefited Africans, most notably the Peace Corps. Kenneth Kaunda, the emerging African leader in Northern Rhodesia, met Kennedy in the spring of 1961. He was greatly impressed by the president and hoped for close ties with Washington.[89] After achieving independence in 1964, Zambia did enjoy positive relations with the United States, although there were many ups and downs as Kaunda sought to maintain neutrality in the Cold War while battling racism in southern Africa.[90]

Margaret Tibbetts and Frances Bolton had done much in the 1950s to build the foundations of US policy towards Zambia in the 1960s. Furthermore, if we look ahead to the 1970s and beyond, it becomes clear that Tibbetts and Bolton's involvement with Africa blazed trails for future women who would take center stage in US/Africa relations. Soon after Bolton retired from Congress, President Richard Nixon appointed Jean Wilkowski as ambassador to Zambia. Wilkowski was the first American women ambassador in Africa and played a key role in increasing US diplomatic involvement in the region.[91] Had Bolton lived until the late 1990s, she would have seen women at the highest echelons in Washington. Madeleine Albright became Secretary of State. Susan Rice was named Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, the position Bolton helped create.

The presence of women among the leadership of US foreign relations early in the 21st century continued to reflect the legacies of Bolton and Tibbetts to a phenomenal extent. A US ambassador to Zambia (Carmen Martinez), deputy assistant secretary for African Affairs (Linda Thomas-Greenfield), assistant

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87 J. Meriwether, '"Worth a lot of Negro votes": Black Voters, Africa, and the 1960 Presidential Campaign', *Journal of American History*, 95 (December 2008).

88 On Williams and Africa, see Noer, *Soapy*, pp. 223-269.

89 A. DeRoche, 'Dreams and disappointments: Kenneth Kaunda and the United States, 1960-64', *Safundi*, 9 (October 2008).

90 A. DeRoche, 'Non-alignment on the racial frontier: Zambia and the USA, 1964-68', *Cold War History*, 7 (2007); '"You can't fight guns with knives": National Security and Zambian Responses to UDI, 1965-1973'. In: J.-B. Gewald, M. Hinfelaar & G. Macola, eds, *One Zambia, many histories: Towards a history of post-colonial Zambia* (Leiden, 2008).

91 For her recollections of working in Zambia, see J. Wilkowski, *Abroad for her country: Tales of a pioneer woman ambassador in the U.S. Foreign Service* (Notre Dame, 2008), pp. 234-299. Her role will be thoroughly analyzed in my forthcoming book on US/Zambia relations.

secretary for African Affairs (Jendayi Frazer), UN Ambassador (Susan Rice), and two Secretaries of State (Condeleeza Rice and Hilary Clinton) were all women.

Margaret Tibbetts and Frances Bolton, with their contributions to US policies towards Africa in the 1950s, had helped make this possible. Their careful surveying of the situations in places such as the Rhodesian Federation, while not always perfect, clearly demonstrated that women diplomats could do the job just as well as men. They both argued for the significance of economics on one hand and race relations on the other. They also emphasized the importance of cultural ties in fields such as education and health care. The United States remained closely connected to the three nations which had constituted the Federation, particularly Zambia, through the 1960s, 1970s, and beyond, building on the foundations established in great part by Tibbetts and Bolton.