Authoritative voices: informal authorities and conflict resolution in Kano, Nigeria

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AUTHORITATIVE VOICES:
Informal Authorities and Conflict Resolution in Kano, Nigeria

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Philosophy in Development Studies at the University of Oxford

by

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APRIL/2007

Authorship Declaration

I hereby certify that this thesis is the result of my own work
except where otherwise indicated and due acknowledgement is given

SIGNED DATE

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANPP	All Nigeria People's Party
BUK	Bayero University Kano
CAN	Christian Association of Nigeria
CHRI	Centre for Human Rights in Islam
CPRC	Conflict Prevention and Reconciliation Committee
DAG	Democratic Action Group
dRPC	Development Research and Project Centre
ECCN	Evangelical Church of Christ of Nigeria
GRA	Government Reserve Area
IMN	Islamic Movement of Nigeria
IPCR	Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution
Izala	Jama'at Izalatil Bid'a Waiqamatus Sunnah[1]
JNI	Jama'at Nasr al-Islam[2]
KANET	Kano Network of NGOs
KAPEDI	Kano Peace and Development Initiative
MSO	Muslim Sisters Organisation
NEPU	Northern Elements Progressive Union
NLA	Non-indigene Leadership Association
NPC	Northern People's Congress
NPN	National Party of Nigeria
PDP	People's Democratic Party
PIN	Peace Initiative Network
PRP	People's Redemption Party
YEDA	Youth Education and Development Agency

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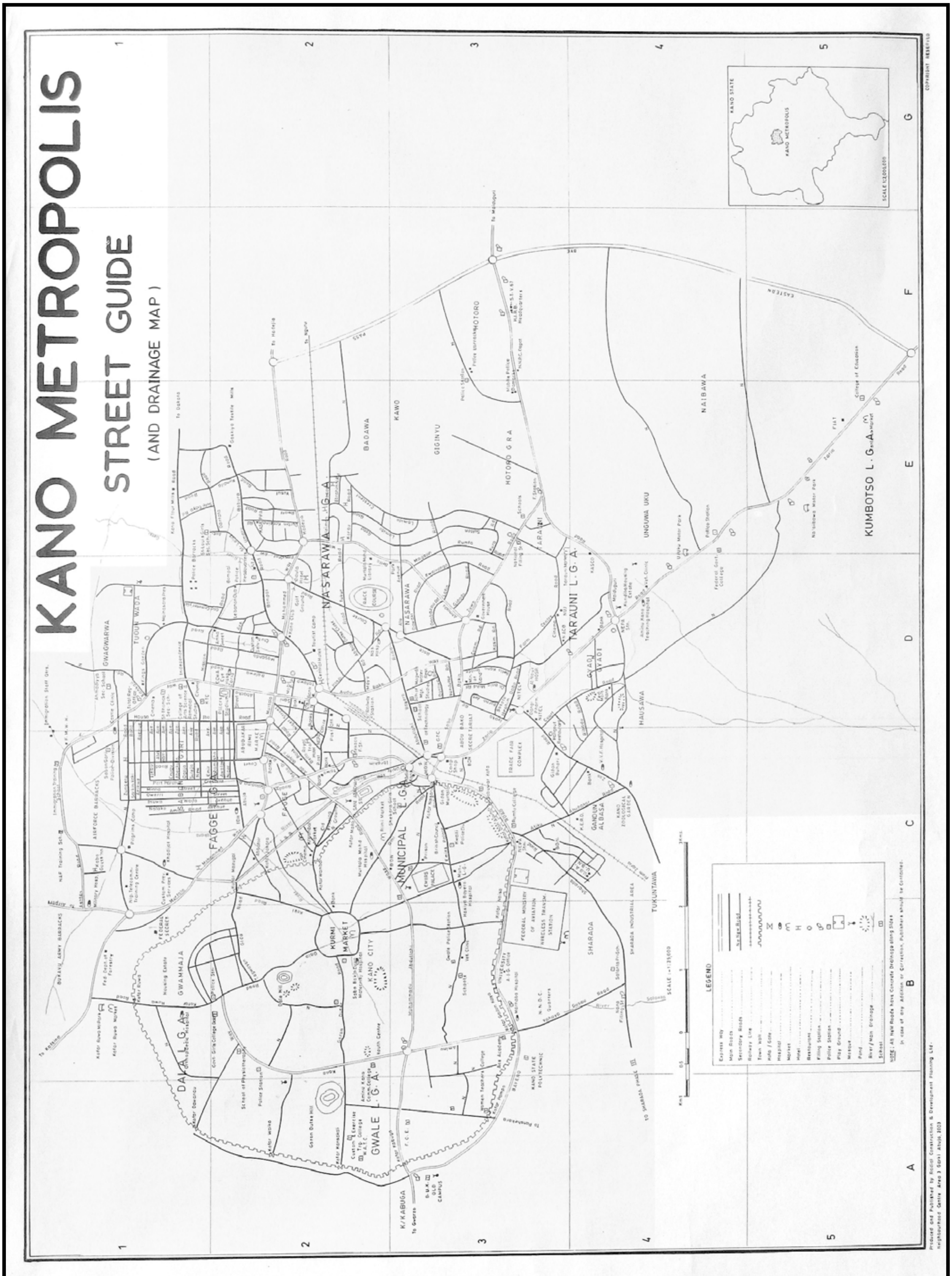
[1] The Movement Against Negative Innovations and for Orthodoxy.
[2] Association for the Support of Islam

Map 1: Kano Metropolis

Source: Radial Construction and Development Planning (2003)



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Problem: Informal Authorities and Conflict Resolution

Since the end of the Cold War and the terrorist attacks of 9/11, conflict and war have become central to policy discourses on development. The re-discovery of intra-state, 'ethnic', 'religious', and 'communal' conflicts has led policy makers to realise that sustainable development is impossible in the face of violent conflict (Boutros-Ghali 1995: 7). However, acknowledging interdependence between security and development does not imply that existing policy approaches in the two areas can simply be merged. Superimposing development approaches on conflict can lead to a 'de-politisation' of conflict and an over-reliance on 'technocratic' conflict solutions (Jönsson 2006: 4); designing development policy through the lens of national security risks ignoring the moral universality of individual rights to development. Therefore, an alternative theoretical frame is needed that acknowledges the links between development and violent conflict, as well as their particularities.

This thesis explores theories from the fields of conflict studies and conflict resolution as a way of addressing a particular aspect of the link between conflict and development: the mechanisms through which violent conflict can be prevented or transformed into a constructive process of social change. While conflict studies during the Cold War emphasised the importance of the state and military in inter-state wars, conflicts during the past two decades have indicated the importance of analysis at the sub-national and regional level. Many of the most violent struggles in the 1990s and early 21st century were social conflicts between sub-national groups, defined in terms of an ethnic or religious social identity. Informal authorities, such as traditional rulers, religious authorities, and ethnic leaders, are the representatives of these identity groups, and are crucial to both the construction and resolution

of conflicts. The research problem of this thesis is therefore to uncover the mechanisms and processes through which informal authorities affect and resolve social conflict.

1.2 The Case: Conflict in Kano, Nigeria

To this end, this thesis provides an exploratory case study of the role of informal authorities in conflict resolution in Kano[3], the commercial and industrial heart of northern Nigeria. Kano is the major urban centre in the Sudanic region of West-Africa, with a long-standing reputation as a commercial hub in the trans-Saharan and Sahelian trading routes, supporting a population of 5 million[4]. Kano is built around Kano City (*birni*), the walled part of city that is home to the Emir's palace, the central mosque, and the famous *kurmi* market. Kano City is inhabited almost exclusively by indigenous Hausa Muslims (*Kanawa*); neighbourhoods outside the walls (*waje*) also host northern and southern economic migrant communities. As well as for its bustling trade, Kano is renowned for its radicalism both in politics and in Islamic affairs. In 2000, Kano became one of the twelve states that implemented Sharia, or Islamic law, and the Governor has recently begun incorporating the *Hisbah* Guards[5] into the state structure.

Kano has a history of recurrent riotous violence. As Wakili (1997: 235; 2005: 45) shows, Kano experienced eleven large-scale riots between the crises of the Hausa-Igbo riots in 1953 and the Plateau riot in 2004; eight occurred in the second half of that period. There are many views on the causes of this historical tradition of violence: some regard the riots as 'hijackings' of an essentially peaceful Kano by 'hooligans' and 'foreign elements'; others point to socio-economic and political causes and ethnic or religious manifestations. Since the implementation of Sharia, the international media, as well as intelligence analysts, have linked

[3] See map 1 and appendix C.

[4] Based on the 2006 census estimate of 9.4 million for Kano state and a conservative estimate of 50% urbanisation.

[5] The function of *Hisbah* has been outlined as follows: "to uphold justice and equality, uphold brotherhood of faith, advocate against interest, usury, hoarding and speculations, to encourage deeds of charity, advocate on the importance of marriage institution and redeem the institution from western influence, preach kindness to animals and to advocate for quest for knowledge" (Gwarzo, 2003: 305).

the city's recurrent violence to 'global struggles' between Islam and the West, and more specifically to al-Qaeda terrorism (Pham 2007; Schwartz 2005). Although there are, occasionally, small groups of militant youths who refer to themselves as 'Taleban' or 'Mujahid', this thesis will show that social conflict in Kano and the violent riots of 2004 can be explained in terms of local oppositions between 'natives' and 'settlers' – and should be addressed accordingly.

1.3 The Argument: Root Causes, Discourse, and Exclusionary Identities

One's understanding of the process of conflict resolution depends on the nature of the model that is used for conflict analysis. Social conflict, as used in this thesis, is a socially constructed struggle between social groups that define themselves in terms of shared identities. In analysing the causes of such conflict, there is an inherent tension between 'objective' factors and social constructions. As Bourdieu (1985: 727) argues, both 'objective' and 'subjective' factors affect perceptions, processes of group formation, and group relations. In the framework of social conflict, this thesis proposes that social identities mediate between the two. Conflict is thus constructed through the process of social identity formation, which is affected by 'objective' root causes as well as by discursive structures. In the context of Kano, the dominant categories underlying the conflict are those of 'native' and 'settler', complex constructions that comprise meanings of ethnicity, religion, class and 'legal indigeneity. These categories are rooted in history, but have been hardened by contemporary 'root causes', such as the exacerbation of horizontal inequalities[6] between 'natives' and 'settlers' during the economic crises from the 1970s.

Violence is considered analytically distinct from conflict. Conflict *per se* is neither negative nor positive; it becomes destructive only through its extension to violence. This

[6] See section 2.2.

thesis will take the riot of May 2004, which occurred in reaction to the killings of Hausa Muslims in Plateau state[7], and the non-violent escalation in reaction to the Danish cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad in early 2006, and seek to explain the variance in the level of violence between these cases. It argues that the May 2004 protest was violent because patterns of justification and mobilisation developed within the 'native' and 'settler' categories, the framework of social conflict. Conversely, the public reaction to the cartoon crisis in 2006 was non-violent because the discourses during the escalation process allowed for inclusive justifications and mobilisation across the 'native'-'settler' divide. Collective violence in riots is thus dependent on the discourses that frame it.

Conflict resolution is the transformation of destructive and violent conflict processes into constructive social change. This can include dispute settlement mechanisms, such as mediation, arbitration, or reconciliation, and more structural peacebuilding measures. Although dispute settlement mechanisms have a rationalist bias, in the sense that they assume identifiable conflict parties with distinct interests and purposes, the concept of peacebuilding allows for a 'deeper' interpretation of conflict resolution and the integration of development into the process. Peacebuilding aims to eliminate the 'root causes' of conflict, to address 'objective' factors that have hardened social identity boundaries. Development and conflict resolution overlap where these 'root causes' correspond with development goals. In the context of these social processes, informal authorities are conflict actors whose roles and functions are structured by their 'objective' characteristics, existing conflict resolution discourses, and specific historically-contingent factors.

The influence of informal authorities is limited by many factors, most notably their lack of executive powers. However, because of their embeddedness within their communities and the moral and spiritual authority that their constituencies grant them, they have

[7] See appendix C for a map of Nigeria.

considerable influence over people's perceptions and the discourses that frame them. Within these boundaries of 'objective' factors and discursive structures, informal authorities are provided with a space for agency that allows for constructive conflict resolution, rather than violence.

1.4 The Structure of this Thesis

This argument will be presented as follows. Chapter 2 will outline the theoretical background of this thesis and position it within the wider literature on conflict resolution. Chapter 3 will present three types of informal authorities in Kano – traditional rulers, religious leaders, and ethnic and community leaders – and discuss how their organisational structure, societal functions, historical transformation, and basis of authority impact on their role in conflict processes. Subsequently, chapter 4 will discuss the social conflict in Kano and address the complexity of its central parameters, 'natives' and 'settlers', mainly using the data collected through the CRISE Perceptions Survey (PS). It will trace the historical process of the construction of these categories and outline the contemporary 'root causes' affecting this process. Chapter 5 will then present the two case studies of escalation, trace their development, and explain their different levels of violence. The conclusion will draw the different threads together and present a more succinct analysis of how informal authorities in Kano contribute to conflict resolution. Appendix A discusses the data used, the research design, and some of the methodological problems and considerations that presented themselves during this research.

2 THEORISING CONFLICT RESOLUTION

2.1 Introduction

The past few decades have witnessed an upsurge in academic writing on the causes and consequences of violent social or identity conflict, drawing on a great variety of disciplines and theoretical frameworks. Systematic studies on the causes and dynamics of 'ethnic peace', however, have been comparatively few and far between. Conflict resolution academics and practitioners have mainly focused on the specifics of practical third-party intervention strategies for dispute settlement; political scientists have produced detailed analyses of the effects of different kinds of political institutional frameworks on the intensity of ethnic conflict. In the latter category, some of the more recent works on ethnic conflicts have found negative correlations between levels of interethnic 'civil society' and the occurrence of violent ethnic conflict. Based on this evidence, they argue for the importance of 'civil society' associations in managing interethnic tensions and increasing social capital in a structural, institutional way (Tillie 2004; Varshney 2002).

The problems of this hypothesis are most clearly summarised by Brass (2003: 418): "[Varshney's] argument becomes tautological: where there is extensive civic engagement between Hindus and Muslims, there is peace, which amounts to saying that where there is peace, there is peace". This thesis will therefore problematise the relationship between 'civil society associations' and ethnic peace, seeking to uncover some of the specific mechanisms through which informal authorities, part of the sphere of 'civil society', can affect social conflict in Kano. To do this, the first section proposes a theoretical framework for social conflict pivoting around the construction and maintenance of social identities, which are posited to be the basis of group perceptions, attitudes, and behaviour. The subsequent section will critically discuss the existing literature on conflict resolution, suggesting a tentative approach to systematically link conflict resolution and social conflict theory. With this

approach in mind, section 2.4 will discuss in more detail the complex relationship between informal authorities and conflict resolution.

2.2 The Social Construction of Conflict

Although the disciplines of conflict and peace studies assume the myriad manifestations of conflict can usefully be analysed under the same category of 'conflict', this concept is essentially contested. In general terms, conflict is a process of human interaction characterised by competition rather than cooperation (Deutsch and Coleman 2000: 21-28). However, because of the lack of a theoretical framework that can match such a high level of conceptual aggregation, this thesis looks at a sub-type of conflict. Existing conflict resolution literature is largely based on two such sub-types: inter-personal disputes and wars. Using conflict resolution theory based on these types, this chapter will apply it to a third category, best described as 'social conflict'. This term was first used widely in Marxist analysis, which posited a class struggle intrinsic to capitalist, bourgeois society. Social conflict between classes was considered society's engine on the path towards socialism (Dahrendorf 1959: 45-57; 1988). Although the Marxist belief in the necessity of class conflict and its deterministic view of societal progress are problematic, with many scholars arguing that large social categories like class, religion, ethnicity and ideology are constructed rather than given, the concept of social conflict as struggles between social groups still has relevance.

It points to certain characteristics of social conflict that can be used as a working definition. First, social conflict is a struggle between groups of people within a particular societal system, which are defined in terms of a shared identity like ethnicity, religion, class, or ideology. Within a given society at any point in time, many different social conflicts exist, only some of which lead to violence. Second, social conflict is not merely a state, a static situation that locks certain actors in structural competition, but rather as a dynamic process of

competition comprising antagonistic relationships and episodes of escalation, with "stages of initiation, escalation, controlled maintenance, de-escalation and some kind of termination" (Cheldelin 2003: 40). Third, these escalation processes can either be constructive and lead to societal progress, or destructive and lead to violence. Although the dynamic nature of conflict processes defies strict classification of conflicts into either the constructive or destructive category, it is argued here that the defining characteristic of destructive conflict is the presence of violence[8].

Although there is no generally accepted definition, violence is often taken to denote behaviour that hurts, kills, or injures people, or damages or destroys their property. As Galtung argues, however, this is a narrow definition of violence: "if this were all violence is about, and peace is seen as its negation, then too little is held up as an ideal. Highly unacceptable social orders would still be compatible with peace" (Galtung 1969: 168). He therefore proposes that "violence is defined as the cause of the difference between [people's] potential and actual realisations" (Galtung 1969: 168). This leads him to distinguish between direct personal violence and structural violence, where the former denotes an agent-oriented definition of violence and the latter the systemic ways in which structures of exploitation and dependency can prevent people from reaching their potential. The analytical use of such a wide definition is doubtful, as it attempts to include all acts that are morally reprehensible, or "anything that Galtung does not like" (K. E. Boulding 1978: 346). Violence is therefore limited to its agent-oriented definition of 'direct violence'. But although structures cannot be

[8] This view of violence as destruction is philosophically contested. It is based on a Gandhian notion that moral 'truth' is not objectively knowable and that there can therefore never be a 'truly' just cause for inflicting harm upon others (Sharp 1999). Non-violence is thus the only morally justifiable form of action. 'Just war' political philosophers agree that violence is essentially destructive, but hold that it can be justified as a necessary evil to prevent worse evil from occurring (e.g. Walzer 1992). Writers like Fanon, however, do not view violence as necessarily destructive. Fanon argues that violence for the just cause of national liberation is not a necessary evil but a regenerative and creative force that deconstructs structures of oppression, and "cleanses" and unites the oppressed (Fanon 2001: 74). Religious 'holy war' theories (see also section 2.4) occupy an ambiguous intermediate position, in which the just cause for war, the defence of religion, can warrant either defence of the religious community against aggression or aggressive conversion to combat 'infidelity' or 'heathenism', depending on the specific interpretation.

inherently violent, episodes of collective violence can also not be explained away as individual abberations. Collective violence can only be explained as the continuity of social interactions by other means (Clausewitz et al. 1997). The crucial question then becomes: how to conceptualise the link between structures and violence?

The dominant answer to this question is provided by theories on structural ‘root causes’ of violent conflict. Root causes, which can be categorised into cultural, political, and economic hypotheses, are assumed to be the most fundamental causes of violent struggle in society. Cultural hypotheses, like Huntington’s clash of civilisations (2002), have largely been discarded because of their essentialist view of ‘cultural’ identities. Political and economic root causes of conflict have much more relevance in explaining social conflict. Political causes can include institutional discrimination, political competition on the basis of contested identities, and the strength and stability of a political regime (Collier 2004; Horowitz 2000; Tilly 2003). The main economic hypothesis poses that horizontal inequalities - political, social, or economic inequalities between identity groups - explain violent conflict. Inter-group inequality is hypothesised to forge relatively deprived constituencies, creating shared grievances that can be mobilised. Violence is most likely to occur where horizontal inequalities widen rapidly (Jönsson 2006: 33; Nafziger et al. 2000; Stewart 2002).

Although these theories are formally probabilistic, they do assume that ‘objective’ structural conditions are the cause of violent conflict. This view has been challenged as too deterministic, not least because of the uncritical positivist basis of most of the root cause research methodologies. As Brass (1997: 9-10; 2003: 16-18) argues in his analysis of communal riots in India, the problem of explaining instances of violence from structural causes is that, while the causes are relatively stable, occurrences of violence are variable. It is therefore difficult to argue that certain structural ‘root causes’ actually lead to violent conflict. Moreover, Brass argues that the pursuit of causal explanations “is in itself a political struggle

that occurs invariably after every riot, […] for the establishment of a hegemonic consensus, which in turn will determine power relations in society" (Brass 2003: 22). Conflict analysis based on positivist objectivity is therefore by definition flawed. Instead, we need to consider conflict and violence as socially constructed phenomena and conflict analysis should focus on the discursive structures and search for the "deeply embedded continuity" of conflict and violence, "reinforced through dominant discursive and institutional frameworks" (Jabri 1996: 105), rather than looking for 'objective' structural causes.

One way of addressing the problems of causality is to distinguish between the construction of social conflict and the production of violence in the name of this conflict. Social conflict thus becomes the competitive relationship between different social groups; violent escalation is an episode of collective action that is interpreted in terms of the social conflict. As social groups are defined, bounded, and given meaning through the perceived shared identity of their members, relationships between groups are also constructed through these social identities. Therefore, loosely following Jabri (1996) and Nordstrom (1995: 93-115), it is argued here that if social conflict escalates, the nature of the social identity structure affects the character of the escalation. Integrative, inclusionary identities, that recognise the multiplicity, nestedness, and flexibility of social identities allow for constructive processes of conflict[9]. In contrast, exclusionary identities, which create impregnable group boundaries and zero-sum competition, contain the discursive legitimacy for violence and destructive conflict processes.

As it is presented here, this model seems to assume the stable, given nature of social identities. It is therefore complicated by the fact that identities are socially constructed. Social conflict is not caused by exclusionary social identities, but formed in the interaction of these

[9] In a way, this argument falls back on Arthur Bentley's arguments about the necessity for cross-cutting cleavages and the danger of overlapping cleavages in managing social conflicts (see e.g. Bentley 1908). Because of the social-constructivist assumptions of this research, however, the question of importance is no longer which combination of cleavages causes violent conflict, but why and how such cleavages are constructed.

social constructions with 'objective' factors that shape the construction process. These factors are the 'root causes' of conflict, influencing both the content and the boundaries between social groups through the process of social identity construction. Their impact on the process of social conflict is mediated through identities and translated into meaningful perceptions, attitudes and behaviours. Chapter 4 will seek to illustrate this process in the context of Kano.

But how can exclusionary social identities explain violence, in other words, what is the link between social conflict and collective violence? This part of the theoretical frame relies on the subtle analysis of Indian riots by Brass (2003: 18-22), who argues that riots are produced in systematic, institutionalised ways. He does not look for causal explanations, but for the functional 'mechanism' of riot production as a short-lived social movement. Riots thus become a subject of political process studies explained from the viewpoint of collective action, mobilisation strategies, and opportunity. In this political process, as chapter 5 will show, violent actors draw on the structure of exclusionary identities to interpret and legitimise the violence displayed in riots.

Exclusionary identities, by definition, claim dominance in the explanation and interpretation of social reality. Any shocks to the stability of the system, such as a fight in the market, killings of Muslims in Plateau state, or the reprinting of insulting cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed in France, are therefore likely to be interpreted in their terms. This process needs to be directed and fuelled by elites and other powerful actors, but also finds support in the perceptions of 'ordinary' people, who *feel* that the causes of conflict are legitimate reasons for protest and, possibly, violence. Therefore, explanations of riots as mobilised by self-interested politicians and as spontaneous outbursts of collective anger are both correct. As Brass notes, "[riots] are best conceived as dramatic productions in which the directors are not in complete control, the cast of characters varies – some of them paid, others

acting voluntarily – and many parts have been rehearsed, but others have not" (Brass 2003: 32). Exclusionary identities provide the story of the play.

In sum, this conflict approach focuses on group dynamics rather than deterministic root causes or individualist psychological or political-economic hypotheses[10]. It views social conflict as constructed through exclusionary social identities. Episodes of violent escalation, such as riots, are seen as collective action problems that build on the way in which social identities are constructed. The strength of this approach lies in the researcher's ability to incorporate critical arguments on conflict theory without denying the role of root causes of conflict entirely. It can be used to explain both collective violence and non-violence, because this variance depends on the nature of the identity structures as well as the ways in which these identities are used during periods of escalation. Therefore, it is a useful theoretical basis to begin thinking about the ways in which violence can be stopped or prevented – in other words, about conflict resolution.

2.3 Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution theory is a diverse, nascent field that draws on many social science disciplines in order to explain and enhance ways to prevent, manage, end, and transform violent conflict. Generally, conflict resolution is the constructive, non-violent management of conflict. This, however, can denote two processes. It can mean the formal or informal *settlement* of (violent) disputes, in which the conflicting parties reach an agreement over their 'bone of contention' (Reimann 2004: 7)[11]. Although such settlements may end or prevent violence from occurring, they hardly address the social contradictions that give meaning to social conflicts. Taking conflict resolution to mean *conflict transformation* provides a more

[10]For examples of these individualist approaches, see e.g. Keen (1998) and Larsen (1993).
[11]Following Burton (1972: 15), disputes are about clearly defined (material) interests and can be resolved through negotiation and compromise; conflicts are larger struggles pertaining to issues that are not easily settled through compromise. Disputes can thus be manifestations of conflicts.

comprehensive term, addressing the social identity structure underlying the destructive escalation of conflicts (Miall et al. 1999: 63-64). Such a 'deep' conception of conflict resolution as transformation can include dispute settlements, which may initially be needed to end violence, but also requires structural peacebuilding measures. In the terms introduced above, conflict resolution should aim for the reconstruction of social identities as inclusive rather than exclusive and is thus a continuous, never-ending enterprise to recreate societal structures and institutions.

The academic discipline of conflict resolution addresses two main intellectual problems in an often intermingled way. First, it focuses on the suitability of different actors for conflict resolution, a problem that is conventionally addressed in terms of third-party interventions. There is a substantial literature on the necessary characteristics of third-parties in terms of neutrality, (im)partiality, power and authority (Bercovitch et al. 2002: 1-24; Berridge 2002: 1-84). More recently, conflict analysts have begun to distinguish between Track I, Track II, and Track III actors: Track I actors include national-level political and military leaders using short-term outcome-oriented strategies; Track II is constituted by private individuals, academics, and conflict resolution NGOs, which use process-oriented strategies; and Track III comprises grassroots leaders, development agencies and human rights organisations using both process- and structure-oriented strategies (Reimann 2004: 6).

However, as Richmond (2001) argues, the different Tracks operate within the same environment of power and politics, in which all social actors are mutually dependent on each other and thus more strongly linked than the Tracks approach hypothesises. Moreover, the Tracks approach is based on a realist view of politics that prioritises the role of the state and the international community over other social actors. In response to this, Lederach (1997) has emphasised the importance of 'bottom-up' conflict resolution:

> "The principle of indigenous empowerment […] involves a new set of lenses through which we do not primarily 'see' the setting and the people in it as the

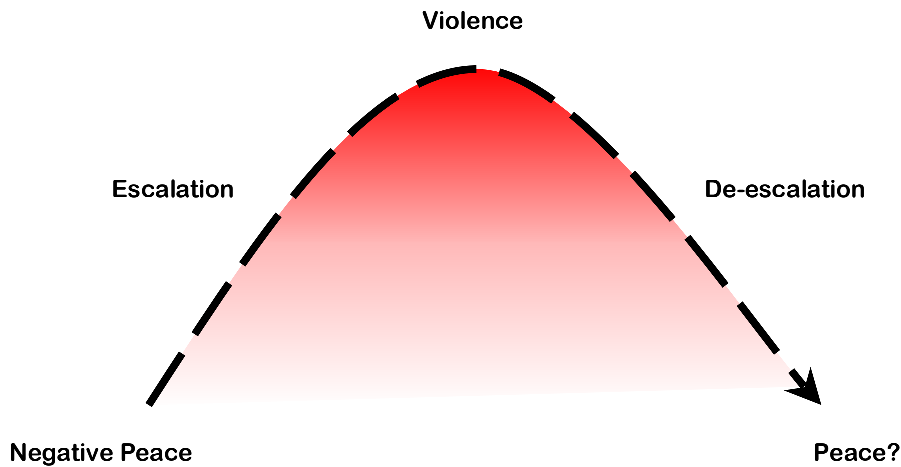
> 'problem' and the outsiders as the 'answer'. Rather we understand the long-term goal of transformation as validating and building on people and resources within the setting" (Lederach in Miall et al. 1999: 58)

'Conflict resolution actors' in Kano, such as informal authorities, are thus considered *part of* the conflict; their agency and interactions can affect its development both constructively and destructively. Their role in conflict resolution does not consist of external 'third-party' interventions, but of strategic and moral agency endogenous to the conflict.

The second problematique of conflict resolution considers the multitude of mechanisms through which conflict is resolved. A useful way of ordering these mechanisms is by matching them to particular phases in the conflict process – the 'contingency approach' (Fisher and Keashly 1991: 30). This approach hypothesises that " the greater the level of conflict escalation, the more coercive the intervention must be" (Reimann 2004: 6). There is considerable debate over the rigid chronological divisions made in earlier incarnations of this model, as well as over the particular mechanisms in these divisions (Webb et al. 1996); however, the central point about the complementary nature of different conflict resolution mechanisms over time is useful. As chapter 5 will illustrate, there are five broad phases in the dynamic of violent escalations: a structural negative peace, without violence but with the social identity structures underlying the violence present; a dynamic of escalation, in which mutual hostilities, further polarisation, and triggering events intensify the tensions between different social groups; the violent encounter; the phase of de-escalation and recovery after the violence; and the new structural situation, which may or may not have changed from the initial negative peace[12]. It is important to note that this is not a deterministic model for riots in Kano; in fact, at any point in the process the dynamic can be reversed or changed. The purpose of the model is to serve as a map for the ordering of the different roles of social actors, specifically informal authorities, in the conflict resolution process.

[12] See figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Contingency Model for Conflict Escalation



The model hypothesises that each phase requires a different emphasis in conflict resolution approaches. In a situation of negative peace, conflict resolution means transforming the structural relationships between social groups – that is transforming their exclusionary social identity structure. The mechanisms in this phase are mostly referred to as peacebuilding, which can comprise activities such as inter-group reconciliation and third-party consultation (Fisher and Keashly 1991: 30-32), but also the eradication of the root causes that are used to construct the situation of conflict (Lodge 1991: 147; Miall et al. 1999: 187-89). Peacebuilding thus overlaps with more general development strategies and targets (see e.g. Merrill 2002: 96-111). During the phase of escalation, usually triggered by exogenous shocks, different mechanisms are required to prevent the shock from being translated into violence, such as formal and informal dispute resolution, the provision of non-violent alternative strategies to violence, and law enforcement interventions. In the phase of open violence, priority lies with 'peacemaking' and caring for casualties. After violence has ceased, the early stages of de-escalation require renewed dialogue and inter-group reconciliation, post-conflict reconstruction and the administration of justice.

These contingent strategies, however, can only be effective if their combined effect is the reconstruction of social identities in such a way that there is room for cooperation and constructive conflict processes. One of the crucial insights gained from critical analyses of conflict resolution is that existing conflict resolution methods, based on bridging the gap between conflicting identity groups, may solidify the identity structure even though their motivation may be to achieve the opposite (Sen 2006: 41-42). Such solutions, created *within* the existing dominant discourse and institutions, may therefore only serve to recreate the kind of conflict they are trying to resolve (Rupesinghe 1995: 93-116). Instead, a 'counter-hegemonic' strategy is needed, emphasising the multiplicity and flexibility of social identities.

2.4 Informal Authorities in Conflict Resolution

In line with the research problem in chapter 1, this thesis seeks to locate conflict resolution efforts of informal authorities in Kano in the 'contingency map'. Although not much has been written on the relationship between informal authorities and conflict resolution, some work on peacebuilding and ethnic riots in India can provide useful insights[13]. Generally, informal authorities (or grass-roots leaders) are conceived as Track III intervention actors. Their strengths are close connections to the masses and embeddedness in the context of the conflict. Their role is therefore largely conceived as informal or 'quasi' mediators (Kriesberg 1996), building trust and credibility in formal negotiation processes. In peacebuilding literature, Lederach (1997) focuses on indigenous social actors. He poses a pyramidal idea of social authorities, with elite-leaders and policy makers at the top, leaders of social organisations mid-level, and grass-roots community leaders at the base. Although he argues for the integration of all authorities in the conflict resolution process, the interconnected nature of social authorities and their dynamic and diverse roles deserve more systematic attention.

[13] There is also an overlap with theories on 'traditional' conflict resolution in Africa (e.g. Zartman 2000), but their fixation on the particularities of the 'traditional' often ignores the hybrid nature of contemporary 'traditional' conflict resolution mechanisms.

In the work on ethnic riots in India, Varshney (1997; 2001; 2002) stands out because of his specific focus on 'civil society' in the maintenance of ethnic peace. He argues that strong interethnic civic associations are the best predictors of ethnic peace (Varshney 2001: 362-63; 2002: 9). The theoretical mechanism he quotes is an implicit variation on the much contested contact hypothesis, which holds that tensions and conflictual attitudes and behaviours are reduced by bringing the conflict parties in closer (and preferably institutionalised) contact with each other. However, for example Forbes (2004: 69-88) has shown that the causal links from increased contact to ethnic peace are ambiguous at best; Varshney's approach (2002: 262-78), distinguishing between long-term and short-term causality, does not succeed in eliminating the problem interethnic civic association becoming a symptom of an inclusive identity structure as well as its cause. Moreover, Varshney (2002: 31-35) fails to recognise that identities and social narratives can vary on sub-national levels, both between and within cities, and therefore ignores the effect of identity structures on the nature of local conflict and escalation processes.

Lastly, as chapter 3 will argue in more detail, Varshney's focus on civil society as independent from the state is problematic; although informal actors are not part of the state structure, their role in society is defined by their interactions with other informal authorities and with the state. The analysis below will therefore emphasise the interconnected nature of informal and formal authorities in the resolution of social conflict. Although this thesis does not endorse Brass' radical claim that causality is inherently unsuited as an object of scientific research, there is need for more detailed analysis of the specific roles and capabilities of informal authorities in the conflict resolution process. Chapter 3 will begin this analysis of informal authorities in Kano by examining their position and role in Kano society.

3 INFORMAL AUTHORITY AND CONFLICT IN KANO

3.1 Introduction: Informal Authority

The concept of authority is intimately intertwined with the notion of power, an essentially contested concept that is "ineradicably value-dependent" (Lukes 2005: 30). As a working definition, this thesis largely follows Lukes' view of the three-dimensional nature of power and the derived definition of authority, which is defined as the power bestowed in a given social actor on the basis of the legitimacy of his command (Lukes 2005: 21-36). Authority is thus a capacity, the legitimate power *over* a social group or community (Dahrendorf 1958: 176; Lukes 2005: 35). Authority, however, also brings the responsibility to care for the community and represent its interests in society; therefore, authority can be seen to have an internal dimension, which gives power over a certain social group, and an external dimension, which gives the right and responsibility to represent the interests of the social group. Legitimacy is based on the value system of the person or group granting authority and can be derived from experience, knowledge, age, legitimate (s)election procedures, physical strength, and many other valuable attributes.

In contemporary international politics, authority is centred in the state (Migdal et al. 1994; Migdal 2001). Its presence is in fact so ubiquitous that most political science and international relations literature analyses social reality within the framework of the state-system. States are taken as unitary building blocks of the international system, as well as uniquely powerful actors in the analysis of intra-societal processes. In contrast, Migdal's analysis of the fragility of developing state systems takes a radically different starting point: the view of the state *in society*. This theory sees society as a "mélange of social organisations" (Migdal 1988: 28), of clubs, societies, companies, and other social groupings, all of which are in competition for social control over (segments of) the population. The state is one of these

social groupings and as such also in constant competition with all other social organisations in society (Migdal 2001: 22-26).

The state-in-society view thus defies essentialist distinctions between the state and non-state sectors of society and renders the concept of 'civil society' problematic. Civil society is often defined as the institutions and practices connecting "families and individuals with others beyond their homes, […] without interference from the state" (Varshney 2002: 44); it is therefore viewed as democratic counterweight to the state. The state-in-society view, however, shows that state and civil society are part of the same political sphere and continuously interacting and competing (Whitfield 2002: 9-14). Moreover, social organisations are not mutually exclusive: members of parliament can belong to sports clubs, just like traditional rulers can be members of religious organisations. Therefore, it is more useful to define social organisations on the provenance of their authority: *formal authorities* derive their power from constitutional law, while *informal authorities* wield influence because of their connection to and embeddedness in the communities they represent. In Kano, formal authorities are part of the state, while informal authorities have flexible and ambiguous connections to it. This chapter looks specifically at three types of informal authority that play important roles in conflict processes in Kano: the 'traditional' Emirate, religious leaders, and leaders of ethnic associations and community elders.

Although these authorities are agents in their own right, there are certain structural factors that shape their attitudes and behaviour towards conflict resolution. The next three sections of this chapter will outline four of those factors for each authority: their organisational structure and societal functions; their historical transformation; the community they represent; and the basis of their legitimacy. The final section will discuss the dominant NGO-led and religious 'discourses of conflict resolution' in Kano that also shape the attitudes and behaviour of these informal authorities towards conflict resolution.

3.2 Traditional Rulers

Kano Emirate is the traditional structure of government in Kano state. Its organisational structure is highly hierarchical, with the Emir at the apex of the power structure, supported by an Emir's Council that consists of four kingmakers, high-ranking district heads, Islamic scholars (*mallamai*) and other influential advisors. The Emir also chairs the Emirate Council, an advisory council to the government that consists of Local Government chairmen and allows the Emirate institutional access to the state. The Emirate has different levels of government. The Emir has 44 district heads (*hakimai)*, who can be responsible for a territory or an administrative department. Each district head, especially in the rural districts, has several village heads (*dagatai)* who report to him. Each village consists of multiple wards, which are under authority of the ward head (*masu unguwa)*. Village and ward heads are local people with roots in the community they supervise.

In addition to these institutions, there are several practices that are part of the responsibility of Kano's traditional rules. In religious terms all imams in Kano need official recognition by the Emir to perform either daily or *Juma'at* prayers. Similarly, the Emir leads most of the annual religious festivals and calls the sighting of the moon at the start of the fasting[14]. In governance terms, traditional rulers use their community links to mediate disputes within their communities and between their community and the state. Although the executive responsibility for maintaining social stability lies with formal authorities[15], it is culturally and politically preferred that disputes and other social disturbances are resolved informally, without resorting to the formal channels of law enforcement and adjudication (Paden 2005: 92; Wilson-Fall 2000: 49-50). Before the governance reforms of the late and post-colonial period, the traditional authorities were responsible for administering justice through formal channels, while informal dispute settlement was usually the job of community

[14] Dr Salahudeen Yusuf, Islamic scholar, 10 September 2006 in Kano

[15] The federal government is responsible for Nigeria's law enforcement agencies and the army, while the Kano state government provides the judiciary.

elders (Paden 2005: 92-93). In the current democratic dispensation, the Emirate has not replaced but subsumed the roles of these elders, striving to become the institutional umbrella for informal dispute settlement processes[16].

To do this, the traditional authorities use their unique position between the Kano communities and the government. On the one hand, the organisational structure of the Emirate enables traditional rulers to retain a close connection to their people. The ward and village heads are part and parcel of the community they supervise[17]. They report all disturbances and problems to their superiors in the Emirate[18]. Policies and laws proposed by the government are reviewed by the Emirate Council to make sure "they will not cause conflict […] and will be helpful for the people, useful to the community"[19]. Although no formal power is attached to their advice, the Governor listens to the Emirate Council because of its broad base of popular support. Similarly, if state actors like the police misbehave or injure their communities, traditional rulers usually file a complaint defending the interests of their people against the police.

On the other hand, the Emir also has close links to the Kano state government. In addition to informal dispute settlement, one of the institutional linkages between the Emirate and the government are 'security committees' that exist on state and local government levels as platforms for inter-authority cooperation. At the state level, the security committee:

> "…involves the executive Governor, the commandant of the military, the police commissioner, the Emir, the director of the state security services (the state intelligence) and other key people within the state. The same structure trickles down to the local government and if you come down to the wards it is more or less similar: the councillor of the ward is considered to be the chief security, the village head is there to assist him, the Divisional Police Officer is there."[20]

[16] *Tafidan* Kura, district head Kura, 15 September 2006 in Kura
[17] Although outside Kano City, the connection between traditional rulers and their communities has suffered from the tremendous increase in the city's population.
[18] Abdullahi Sule, president of YEDA, 15 August 2006 in Kano
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid.

The Emirate thus holds an ambiguous position between state and society, on the border between formal and informal authorities. This ambiguity can be explained by tracing the historical transformation of traditional institutions from a theocratic, despotic executive government to the symbolic 'fathers' of all people in Kano. Historically, the traditional government structure is an Islamic theocratic system of government, with the Emir as the "kingly power as a sacred trust from God" (Paden 1973: 214) and sharp demarcations between the ruling class (*sarauta*) and commoners (*talakawa*). While the Hausa Emirates (1500-1804) were based on the Islamic doctrines of al-Maghili (Paden 1973: 214) and the governance traditions of the Borno Empire, the Fulani Jihad (1804-1808) united them into the Sokoto Caliphate, which strengthened the link between governance and Islam (Dudley 1968: 11). The Caliphate retained its executive powers under the British Chief Commissioner as Native Authority (NA) under colonial rule (1903-1960) (Dudley 1968: 13). However, the rationalisation and bureaucratisation of the Emirate administrative structure (Mustapha 1990) and the newly found British military and economic support ensured accountability from the Emir upwards, to the colonial government, but decreased the necessity for downward accountability. Indirect rule therefore made the NA more authoritarian, or "decentralised despotist" (Mamdani 1996: 53-65).

This increasing despotism led to a crisis of legitimacy of Emir Sanusi in the 1950s (Paden 1973: 270-71), which was compounded by greater tensions between the indigenous and settler communities[21] and the rise of a Western-educated counter-élite, a group of intellectuals who became increasingly critical of Emirate rule (Yahaya 1980: 26). From the 1950s, this counter-élite came to re-present the old conflict between the *sarauta* and *talakawa* classes in the struggle between the conservative NPC and Aminu Kano's radical NEPU (Yahaya 1980: 30). Their incremental reforms, from the 1954 Native Authority Law to the

[21] See chapter 4 for more detail.

Local Government Reform of 1976, effected a transformation of the traditional authority from executive to symbolic, or formal to informal, functions – not simply a rejection of 'traditionalism' (Yahaya 1980: 203, 22). As symbolic father to all people in Kano, the Emir's main function is to create and enhance cohesion, stability, and community consciousness in the state. Kano Emirate thus represents a territorial community of the people of Kano and a religious community of Kano Muslims[22].

After its transformation from formal to informal leadership, traditional authority over its communities has been based on five interlinked elements. First, traditional authority is based on the close link between the rulers and the community of the territory. Traditional rulers are said to be "part and parcel" of their community and are therefore accepted as legitimate authorities. Second, their legitimacy is based on long-term commitment, as opposed to the short-term (and often self-interested) positions held by elected politicians[23]. Third, their symbolic function and message of unity and peaceful integration grants traditional rulers legitimacy, especially in a context where politics is perceived as 'a dirty game', revolving around power, money, and patronage. Thus, it is the very distance of traditional rulers from power and politics that explains their legitimacy. Fourth, people's perceptions of the personal qualities of traditional rulers plays an important role in determining their legitimacy. The incumbent Emir and his representatives are widely seen as wise and knowledgeable, honest, and fair in their treatment of both 'natives' and 'settlers'. Last, the Emirate symbolically represents the unity of Kano and a long tradition of both African and Islamic state building. Much like Western European royal families, history and tradition give meaning to the Emirate institutions and grant them legitimacy in the eyes of their people.

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[22] It would seem that Muslims in Kano are therefore structurally favoured by the traditional rulers over non-Muslims, as non-Muslim groups in Kano are not explicitly represented in the Emirate system. However, the personal efforts of the incumbent Emir Bayero (1963-), who has focused on reconciling differences both within the 'native' Muslim community and between the 'natives' and 'settlers' in Kano (Paden 1973: 352-53), have balanced the structural favouritism within the Emirate system.

[23] *Tafidan* Kura, op. cit.

3.3 Religious Leaders

3.3.1 Islamic Leaders

Islamic authorities in Kano can be divided into the Sufi Brotherhoods (*tariqas*), radical reformist movements, and the JNI, the umbrella organisation for Islam in Nigeria. Historically, Islam in Kano has been represented by the Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya *tariqas*. Sufism, or Islamic mysticism, rests on the core belief that Muslims should foster their personal relationship with God. The Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya *tariqas* are structured around the authority of a single leader *(sheikh)*[24]. For example, the Qadiriyya *tariqa* is led by Sheikh Qaribullah, son of the late Sheikh Nasiru Kabara[25], who leads Kano members in prayer and *zikir*, the ritual remembrance of Allah (Kabara 2004: 66-80). In places outside of Kano, Sheikh Qaribullah can sanction representatives (*muqadam*) to represent him. In contrast, radical movements like Izala have a more formal organisational structure, with a president (*amir*), secretary, treasurer, and modern accountancy practices[26]. Similarly, the JNI is organised formally, with a chairman (the Sultan of Sokoto), supreme patron, secretary general, and a number of committees and state chapters (Loimeier 1997: 141).

In terms of practices and functions, the role of religious authorities comprises on the one hand strengthening the faith, providing social services, managing marital and social tensions, and promoting the spiritual welfare among their followers; and on the other, representing the interests of their followers. Individual *tariqas* and radical associations usually focus more on internal responsibilities, while the JNI emphasises its role in uniting Islam and 'evangelising'. It is characteristic of radical associations in Kano to attempt a wide provision of social services, such as hospitals, education, and crisis relief; whereas *tariqas* rely more on government provision (Gwarzo 2003: 302-08; Larkin and Meyer 2006: 306-08)[27].

[24] Sheikh Qaribullah, leader of African Qadiriyya, 9 September 2006 in Kano
[25] Ibid.
[26] Dr Tahir Gwarzo, op. cit.
[27] Reverend Jebis, reverend ECCN and member of CAN, 14 September 2006 in Kano

Attitudes of these religious authorities to the state vary from radical anti-state to representing the interests of the state in a similar fashion to the Emirate authorities. The latter camp is largely occupied by the Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya *tariqas*, which have close connections to the state government. They legitimise government policies, while profiting from this relationship through government subsidies and political influence (Gwarzo 2003: 301). The radical movements generally question the legitimacy of the secular state (Gwarzo 2003: 301), although some do accept government assistance. The fulcrum of radical criticism is the "non-implementation of Sharia and lack of Islamic zeal" (Gwarzo 2003: 302).

The links between the Emirate and the *tariqas* have been subject to complex political struggles between the *sarauta* and *talakawa* classes and between the Kano Emirate and Sokoto. These patterns can be traced back to the fact that the Qadiriyya was the 'established' *tariqa* of the Sokoto empire after the Fulani Jihad (Loimeier 1997: 19-20), while the Tijaniyya was introduced only in the 19th century. Although competition between them was initially fought in the circles of the ruling elite and scholars, Tijaniyya affiliation was a sign of political and religious protest against the establishment (Loimeier 1997: 21). In the early 1940s, the Tijaniyya transformed itself into a mass movement, with a support base among Kano's traders, farmers, and artisans (Loimeier 1997: 71). The Qadiriyya reacted with a transformation (*tajdid*) under Nasiru Kabara (Paden 1973: 69-70), but remained conservative politically, linked to the traditional rulers in Sokoto, the *sarauta* class and the NPC; the Tijaniyya retained its connections with traders, *talakawa* and NEPU. In Kano specifically, Emirs Abdullahi Bayero and Sanusi were members of the Tijaniyya, demonstrating their spiritual and political independence from the Sultan, despite the fact that their network within Tijaniyya was linked to the Fulani ruling class (Loimeier 1997: 72-75).

The establishment of the JNI by Sardauna Ahmadu Bello in the 1960s indicated a shift in his attitude from inter-*tariqa* competition towards pan-Islamic evangelisation. The JNI

mainly became involved in providing education, building new mosques, and other missionary (*da'wa*) activities (Loimeier 1997: 21). From the 1970s onwards, however, the dominance of the *tariqas* in Kano and the unity of Islam propagated by the JNI were challenged by a younger, Western educated generation of radical Muslims who criticised the fragmentation of the Muslim *ummah*, objected to their *zikir* rituals, and strove for a revitalisation (*tajdid*) of Islam and its return to the literal message of the Qur'an and the Hadith. The 1970s and 1980s were therefore characterised by social conflicts within the Muslim community in Kano, mostly between the radical Izala, founded in 1978, and the *tariqas*[28]. In contemporary Kano, however, both the *tariqas* and Izala have lost some of their former influence; many Kano Muslims go to mosque without being affiliated to a specific association[29].

Religious leaders, however, still wield considerable authority in Kano, based on a measure of 'closeness to God' – or in Sufi terminology, *baraka*. This term denotes spiritual grace, but has also come to imply political and economic power (Cruise O'Brien 1975: 10). A religious leader, such as an imam or Sheikh, is respected because he is believed to represent divine authority. In some forms of Islam, such as the Sufi *tariqas*, closeness to God can be transferred within dynasties, but it is mostly dependent on knowledge. Knowledge is available through informal networks of Islamic teachers or formal colonial educational institutions, such as the Kano School of Arabic Studies. If Islamic scholars earn the respect of their people, they are said to be part of the Ulama, a group of prominent and respected Islamic scholars (*alim*) in Kano. The distinction between imam and *mallam* is functional: an imam leads his congregation in prayer, the scholar researches and teaches the Qur'an and the Hadith. An imam, however, is always a *mallam*, while a *mallam* is not always an imam. Although the salience of religious identities in Kano confers extensive authority to religious leaders, this authority cannot necessarily be used to mobilise people for ends other than

[28] See section 4.3 for more detail.
[29] Among the Kano City respondents in the PS, only 5% were member of Tijaniyya, with no Qadiriyya or Izala.

religious worship[30]. The real extent of a religious leader's authority depends on a complex mix of factors, such as the scope of his knowledge, his charisma and age, and the benefits of his preaching and leadership to the community. Imams, as well as Christian leaders, are dependent on the number of faithful attending their prayers and services[31].

3.3.2 Christian Leaders

Christianity was introduced in northern Nigeria through migration of southern Christians and the missionary activities of both Western and African missionaries. It is organised in churches that differ in doctrine, rituals, social position, and membership. Although the exact number is unknown, a quick survey of the Sabon Gari area showed that almost every street has at least 3 churches of various denominations; Egbe road, the westernmost street of Sabon Gari, is home to no less than 25. In organisational terms, a distinction can be made between 'orthodox'[32] and Pentecostal churches: the former have formal organisational structures and are led by an executive council on the basis of a church constitution[33], while the latter are structured around the charismatic authority of 'prophets' (Marshall 1995: 244).

Individual churches of both types are linked to Christian movements and organisations in Nigeria and abroad, through missions, sponsorship, and education of their leaders[34]. Churches in Kano are also represented in CAN, which represents the interests of Nigerian Christians in the political sphere and mirrors the Islamic claim for a universal *ummah*. As one member put it:

> "[CAN] originated in the north, in Kaduna, because of the opposition to Christianity [in this region]. I think most Christians suffered from the hands of the Muslims, and therefore the Christians saw that there was a need for them to come together so they will be one, as Christ teaches in John, 7, 21."[35]

[30] Dr Tahir Gwarzo, director Kano State Polytechnic, 10 August 2006 in Kano
[31] Dr Salahudeen Yusuf, op. cit.
[32] 'Orthodox' denotes denominational churches, e.g. Protestant or Catholic.
[33] Reverend Jebis, op. cit.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.

The roles of Christian authorities are similar to those of the Islamic authorities, combining both internal and external responsibilities. Individual churches focus more on their internal responsibilities, many of which include a wide range of social services, such as hospitals, education, and crisis relief. The external functions of Christian leaders are sensitive in Muslim-dominated Kano, but while many 'orthodox' churches refrain from open competition, Pentecostal churches and CAN are strongly evangelical (Marshall 1993: 233-36).

The link between Christian leaders and traditional rulers is ambiguous, because of close links between the Emirate and Islam. Although the appointment of Christian traditional rulers in Kaduna state shows that Christians could become part of the Emirate structure, Sabon Gari remains part of the larger Fagge district and represented by a Muslim district head[36]. Churches have a similarly ambiguous relationship with the Kano state government: they oppose the state because of its Islamic character, but also accept and depend on it in terms of law enforcement[37]. The basis of most Christian religious authority is similar to that of Islamic leaders, based on knowledge, followers and respectability. Pentecostal authority is exceptional because its leaders rely on *Ase*, a form of charismatic power that derives both from adherence to the frugal mores of the 'born-again' doctrine and from a measure of wealth and social success (Marshall 1993: 226).

3.4 Ethnic and Community Leaders

Ethnic leaders and community elders are community authorities who perform informal leadership functions at the local level. In Sabon Gari, there are two types of non-indigenous ethnic authorities: the traditional rulers and the leaders of the ethnic associations. The traditional rulers of non-indigenous ethnic groups, such as the *Eze* Igbo and the *Oba* Yoruba, wield positions that have been created, or 'invented', as 'traditional' specifically in the

[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.

context of Kano's centralised Emirate structure (Osaghae 1994: 59-60). Non-indigenous traditional rulers are "in charge of everything pertaining to tradition and culture"[38]; the administrative and limited executive authority in the communities is wielded by the ethnic associations. Every ethnic group in Sabon Gari has their own traditional rulers and ethnic association, but the Igbo and the Yoruba Associations are the most influential due to the size of their communities[39].

Ethnic associations are usually formally organised, with a constitution and an elected executive council. They also have several functional committees, such as the peace committee that deals with crises within the Igbo community[40]. Every ethnic association is divided into state or hometown unions, which compete among themselves for recognition in committees and functions of authority. Together, the executive councils of the ethnic associations have formed the non-indigene leadership association (NLA), whose main role is to mediate between members of different ethnic groups and represent the entire non-indigenous community in interactions with the state. Individually, most of these ethnic associations are part of larger regional or national ethnic associations[41].

Ethnic associations developed in the 1940s after the position of *Sarkin* Sabon Gari, an institution that "provided legislative, judiciary and executive roles in regulating inter-group relations" (Olaniyi 2002: 22), was abolished and its authority transferred to the Kano Emirate. The new ethnic associations united the state and town unions (Olaniyi 2002: 21-24), but where the unions had focused on maintaining nationwide links within ethnic groups, ethnic associations and the newly 'traditional' ethnic rulers integrated into the institutional framework of the Kano Emirate (Olaniyi 2002: 25). Ethnic leaders promote development, security, and access to education, politics, and economic resources for their ethnic community

[38] Chief Boniface Ibikwe, president-general Igbo Association Kano, 16 September 2006 in Kano; Chief Olayiwole Adeaga, vice-president Yoruba community Kano, 6 September 2006 in Kano
[39] See section 4.2.
[40] Chief Boniface Ibikwe, op. cit.
[41] Ibid.; Chief Olayiwole Adeaga, op. cit.

(or the entire non-indigene community, through the NLA) in interactions with the state and the traditional authorities. They function within the boundaries of the state and the Emirate, while challenging them for the emancipation of their community[42].

Ethnic associations are explicitly political in their outlook. They educate their members to be politically active and sometimes offer advice on who to vote for[43]. The recent appointment of an Igbo as advisor to Governor Shekarau was celebrated as progress for the Igbo community, and, by extension, a victory for the Igbo Association[44]. The internal functions of ethnic leaders resemble those of the Emirate, in leading rituals and ceremonies, managing tensions and informally settling disputes (Osaghae 1994: 62-63). Intra-ethnic disputes are settled by the corresponding ethnic association, whilst interethnic conflicts are addressed through either the NLA alone (if all parties are non-indigenes) or in cooperation with the district head of Fagge (if one of the parties is an indigene), the local government that comprises Sabon Gari.

'Native' communities in Kano have elders, who command respect and authority because of their age and life experience. Older men in northern society, especially those with distinguished careers or extensive religious knowledge, may therefore occupy positions of informal communal authority (Paden 2005: 93). Their age, wealth, knowledge and experience command respect, their houses are social hubs for prayer, community discussions, and people come to them with problems. In the case of Hotoro, a neighbourhood in eastern Kano metropolis where a community elder was interviewed, all elders meet regularly (about once a month) in order to discuss the developments in their communities[45].

Like the traditional rulers, elders represent territorially delineated communities. Like ethnic leaders, however, their function comprises both representing their people in case of

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[42] Chief Olayiwole Adeaga, op. cit.
[43] Chief Boniface Ibikwe, op. cit.
[44] Ibid.; Chief Olayiwole Adeaga, op. cit.
[45] Anonymous (ii), community elder, 30 August 2006 in Kano

external problems and managing tensions and problems within their community. External representation can either go through the ward head or the local government channels, depending on the nature of the issue. Internal dispute resolution takes place through informal hearings and discussions and can lead to arbitration or a mediated settlement. If this proves unsuccessful, the dispute is referred to the ward head[46].

Although their roles are similar, there is a significant difference between the basis of authority of ethnic leaders and community leaders. Ethnic rulers are appointed on the basis of their suitability as 'traditional ruler'. The *Eze* Igbo, for example, is selected on the basis of age, income, respectability, knowledge of traditions, and personal authority (Osaghae 1994: 61). Leaders of ethnic associations, however, are democratically elected. Their legitimacy depends on 'modern democratic' values such as free and fair elections, transparent government, honesty, management skills, and progress of the community[47]. The authority of elders is determined by age, social accomplishments, and knowledge. Elders are not democratic representatives, but wise men whom people respect and listen to. For them, good leadership is not dependent on 'modern' qualities of good governance, but on the social skills and personal qualities of the elder:

> "A boss is someone who uses his influence to force you to do something. A leader is going together with you, to find out your problem and sort it out. […] You have to be equal to them, you have to come to them, talk to them the same way – don't boss them. Then we will start and find an answer."[48]

3.5 Discourses on Conflict Resolution

Previous sections have discussed the structure of informal authorities and their position in society, which affect their role in and capacity for conflict resolution. However, as critical thinkers like Foucault (e.g. 1979; 2004) have argued, the actions of informal authorities are not only determined by their characteristics, but also by the dominant discourses about

[46] Ibid.
[47] Chief Boniface Ibikwe, op. cit.
[48] Anonymous (ii), op. cit.

conflict – in other words, by the way in which people in Kano think and talk about conflict and violence. This section will sketch two of the dominant discourses on conflict resolution that reflect and affect the ways in which informal authorities in Kano approach conflict resolution. The first one is the set of concepts and practices based on NGO analyses of conflict resolution; the second is the moral framework for violence and non-violence constructed in Islam and Christianity.

NGOs in Kano are thriving: KANET alone has 76 registered members, which is only part of the total number. Of the many conflict resolution NGOs, most are based on essentialised conflict models from the Western conflict resolution literature and on specific interpretations of the causes of the conflict in Kano. In terms of models, training manuals and other NGO documents often present an essentialised conflict model, in which conflict is analysed by listing the conflict parties, issues, physical context, and the stages of escalation (CRESNET 2005; Sodipo 2006). The emphasis of the training manuals, however, lies on the conflict prevention and resolution skills of mediation and negotiation.

Alternative (or Appropriate) Dispute Resolution (ADR), as opposed to Traditional Dispute Resolution (TDR), is used as a catch-all for these skills. TDR in Kano is mostly equated with the informal dispute settlement by traditional and religious authorities, while ADR is the "imported and innovative, modern way of resolving disputes"[49], thus reflecting the ambitions of the young generation of NGO leaders to improve on traditional ways of managing society. Similarly, the dominant NGO interpretation that conflict in Kano is caused by poverty and manipulative politics[50] may reflect a widely acknowledged social agenda rather than a systematic analysis of the causes of violent conflict – even though poverty and politics undoubtedly play a role in the construction of violent conflict.

[49] Muhammad Mustapha Yahaya, executive director DAG, 1 August 2006 in Kano
[50] See section 4.4 for more detail.

As with any discourse, the impact of this NGO discourse is difficult to assess. On the one hand, participants who were interviewed described a significant impact of the trainings on their daily lives, using conflict resolution vocabulary thoughtlessly. Ethnic associations, community leaders, and traditional authorities, especially among non-indigenous communities, are familiar with the language of conflict resolution and ADR and emphasise its centrality to their work[51]. The large number of peace committees and early warning units is another sign that both formal and informal leaders think in the terminology of the 'conflict resolution framework'. NGOs have thus helped to focus public and political attention on the problem of violent conflict in Kano. On the other hand, however, the conflict models propagated by these NGOs contain the risk of interpreting a complex social struggle as a dispute between clearly identifiable conflict parties. Such interpretations, of 'Christians-against-Muslims' or 'natives-against-settlers', are not mere simplifications, but potentially reify and reinforce the oppositions rather than deconstruct them. This thesis does not have enough data to demonstrate these effects of the NGO discourse on the situation in Kano, but emphasises the possibility.

The second set of dominant ideas on conflict and conflict resolution in Kano stems from religion. Boulding (1986: 501) argues that "every religion has a vision of the peaceable kingdom […] and the holy war". The peaceful kingdom is a metaphor for peace and non-violence in social relations, but these same religions also contain a vision of the 'holy war', of legitimate conflict and even violence against disbelief and disbelievers. In Islam, *jihad* is the term that refers to the legitimate struggle to protect *dar al-Islam*, both within the individual and in the social domain. Evangelism in Christianity has a similar function, especially when it is presented in the medieval terminology of the crusades, as is the case in many churches in Kano. The ambiguous attitude of religion to violence reflects its inherently contradictory

[51]Asma'u Ahmed, conflict resolution trainer, 26 August 2006 in Kano; Femi Sodipo, Coordinator PIN, 18 August 2006 in Kano; Anonymous (ii), op. cit.; Anonymous (iii), motorcyclist, 15 August 2006 in Kano.

nature, of promoting peace and social harmony while making absolutist claims about representing a singular truth.

In Kano, Islamic and Christian leaders propagate both the peaceful and the conflictual aspects of their religions. Peace as an abstract moral value is preached in almost every church service and prayer session and both Christians and Muslims emphasise the central position of peace in their religion[52]. In some situations, however, the legitimacy of (violent) struggle is also preached. These patterns are exemplified by the statements of the JNI and CAN at the Northern Governors' Forum in December 2004. Alhaji Makarfi, chairman of the Kaduna state chapter of the JNI, argues for the peaceful nature of Islam and the need for better mutual understanding of the religions: "misconceptions are the sources of the absence of reasonable peace among us… no religion can allow violence, injustice, destruction of public property" (Makarfi 2004: 3). However, Archbishop Jatau, chairman of CAN, argues that "the emergence of this crisis is a manifestation of the general crisis surrounding what people consider to be the lack of equal access [of various Christian communities] to opportunities." (Jatau 2004: 4).

The discrepancy between these two statements hints at a wider trend of religious discourse on conflict and violence, namely that religious authorities switch between the 'peaceful kingdom' and 'holy war' on the basis of political interests. The JNI, representing the dominant majority community in northern Nigeria, emphasises the peacefulness of its religion in order to delegitimise and marginalise the Muslim violence in the riots of May 2004. CAN, on the other hand, represents the minority community and therefore emphasises the legitimacy of its emancipatory struggle. Unfortunately, as Boulding argues, religions have not yet publicly claimed the 'middle ground' conflict discourse, but always resorted either to the legitimate struggle or the idyllic peace (E. Boulding 1986: 510). Although Boulding's

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[52] Dr Salahudeen Yusuf, op. cit.

conception of the ‘middle ground’ remains vague, the political use of the idyllic peace and holy war discourses does not contribute to a constructive role of religious authorities in the conflict resolution process.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed some of the structural factors that affect the roles of informal authorities in conflict resolution in Kano, showing that the authority wielded by the traditional rulers is dependent on their symbolic position between the government and the city’s various communities. However, this authority only extends to specific functions and roles in Kano society that are circumscribed as symbolic, informal, unifying, and community-oriented. These functions in Kano society allow traditional authorities to play a range of roles in the constructive resolution of conflict, from informal dispute settlement within communities and managing tensions between communities and the state to emphasising and reinforcing an inclusive pan-Kano identity for both ‘natives’ and ‘settlers’.

Religious leaders also wield considerable authority, but occupy a more ambiguous position than traditional rulers. On the one hand, they are the institutional embodiment of the religious dimension of the ‘native’-‘settler’ conflict in Kano because (i) they represent exclusive religious communities; (ii) their dichotomous moral worldviews, evangelisation agendas and connections to the heavily politicised JNI and CAN incentivise uncompromising, zero-sum competition; and (iii) their moral authority, which is partly based on charisma and divine legitimacy, does not necessitate downward accountability. On the other hand, their ‘internal’ function of promoting the spiritual and material welfare of their community, the explicitly moral nature of their doctrines and authority and the discourses of peace embedded within both Christianity and Islam also provide religious leaders with considerable opportunities to stimulate non-violent conflict resolution.

Ethnic leaders and associations have considerable influence on social life at the local level and can affect conflict both through dispute settlement and managing tensions between their communities and the state or the traditional rulers. Ethnic associations are politicised, but unlike the religious leaders, whose political aims refer to the national competition between Islam and Christianity, their goals of emancipation and political advancement are set within the context of the Muslim-dominated Emirate and the state government. To some extent, community elders are the unofficial local extensions of the traditional governance system, while ethnic associations are slowly crafting their own and their communities' place within the traditional and state institutions. Having outlined the nature and functions of informal authorities in Kano, chapter 4 will continue with an analysis of its social conflict.

4 DECONSTRUCTING SOCIAL CONFLICT

> "[For a long time,] Kano was the only state that would accommodate strangers. Everybody came from every part of the country, any part of the world, he could come to Kano. We, the people of Kano, have a tradition to receive him and settle him as his home. This made Kano a big city." [53]

4.1 Introduction: Social Identity

As a historical trading centre, many *Kanawa* feel that Kano is famous for its tolerance and successful integration of minorities; they therefore explain the city's history of violent riots as ruptures of an essentially peaceful society, instigated by 'hooligans' and manipulative politicians[54]. In contrast to this view, an alternative narrative portrays Kano as a volatile environment, with high-strung political tensions coinciding with intense religious and ethnic oppositions. Violence, in this second view, is explained as a continuity of the underlying conflict structure. This chapter will seek to explain violence on the basis of the exclusionary nature of salient social identities and thus emphasise the narrative of Kano as a conflict situation.

Identity, ubiquitous in contemporary discourse in both the political and academic circles, is analytically highly ambiguous (Brubaker 2004: 28-53). In its most general form, identity is a framework that comprises self-understanding and the way others perceive you, or "a sense of self that develops and is realised in interactions, making life predictable and meaningful" (Coy and Woehrle 2000: 91). It provides a sense of place in society, as well as a set of corresponding, meaningful social roles that allow people to act meaningfully. An individual's 'total' identity is constructed from many different parts, including factors as widely divergent as her cognitive and physical make-up and the political institutions that frame her connection to power and the state. This thesis focuses on social identity, the part

[53] *Tafidan* Kura, op. cit.
[54] e.g. Dr Haruna Wakili, director Mambayya House, 9 August 2006 in Kano; Dr Salahudeen Yusuf, op. cit.

"derived from knowledge about social group membership and the value and meanings attached to that membership" (Tajfel 1982: 4). Social identities give shared meanings to social interactions; in Onuf's terminology (1989), social identities contain the accepted rules that maintain existing social arrangements.

Social identities thus comprise internal and external dimensions: internally, people within a social group create a "contested standard of civic virtue against which personal esteem is measured" (Lonsdale 1994: 131-32); externally, social groups use social identities in political and economic competition, as Cohen (1969) shows for the Hausa in Ibadan. For ethnicity, Lonsdale refers to these dimensions as moral ethnicity and political tribalism: moral ethnicity is the sphere in which authority, social values and norms are contested and defined, while political tribalism denotes the sphere of "unprincipled competition" between ethnic groups (Lonsdale 1994: 140-41). Constructing social identities and social groups is thus partly a matter of creating internal cohesion, but also of creating and continuously marking boundaries and difference through discourse and practice (Tambs-Lyche 1994: 54).

It is a truism that people have multiple social identities, some of which are overlapping or nested within other identities. Individuals can thus identify with a variety of more or less institutionalised social groups. Like most truisms, however, this statement may conceal more than it explains because it leaves open important questions on the kinds of identities that result in conflict and the ways in which these are constructed. To understand the role of social identities in the construction of conflict and violence, section 4.2 will therefore discuss Kano's social identity structure, drawing on the results of the Perceptions Survey (PS)[55]. It will show how constructed categories of 'native' and 'settler' are the structural basis of social conflict in Kano because they are constructed as 'exclusionary' and 'securitised'. To explain

[55] The PS was explicitly designed to measure perceptions and attitudes, which limits the value of the survey because it cannot be used as evidence for the 'objective' social, economic, or political conditions in Kano, except for some basic demographics. It can, however, provide data on how people in Kano interpret their social reality and thus explicate the constructed basis of social conflict in Kano. See appendix A for more details.

how this social conflict has developed, section 4.3 will suggest important historical factors driving the development of ethnicity, religion, class and indigeneity in Kano, after which 4.4 will discuss the ways in which contemporary 'root causes' of conflict in Kano have come to be interpreted in terms of existing salient social identities.

4.2 Social Identities in Kano

There are several analytical distinctions between types of social identities that are useful to understand the links between social identities and conflict. One distinction is between 'ascriptive' and 'affiliative' identities, the former denoting identities that are beyond people's ability to choose (e.g. gender, race, ethnicity), and the latter denoting those within the realm of choice (Horowitz 2000: 21-36). In terms of conflict, tensions between ascriptive groups are then hypothesised to be more intractable than affiliative ones because ascriptive identity labels are less flexible. The differentiating variable of 'ability to choose', however, is problematic. Social or economic pressures may render identities that some perceive as affiliative ascribed; different contexts may also label different identities 'affiliative' or 'ascribed'. It is thus not a matter of whether or not people *are* free to choose certain affiliations, but if *they feel they are* free to do so. Instead of a dichotomy between 'ascriptive' or 'affiliative' the perceived hardness of identity boundaries is a continuum, denoting the ease with which people are perceived to be able to change membership of certain social groups.

A second distinction is between ranked and unranked social identities (Horowitz 2000: 22). In Horowitz' terminology, ethnic groups are ranked if they coincide with class differences (Horowitz 2000: 25). Stated in more general terms, the problem addressed here is the distinction between social identity and social positioning (Besteman 1999: 265). While Horowitz considers ranking a fixed characteristic of certain inter-group relations, class is viewed here as a social identity and ranking, therefore, as *part of* the process of identity

construction. The third distinction is based on 'groupness': the extent to which people who are perceived to share a social identity in fact form a "mutually recognising, effectively communicating and bounded collectivity with a corporate identity" (Brubaker 2004: 12). Groups, Brubaker (2004: 10-13) argues, are too often uncritically 'reified' both in political practice and conflict analysis. Analysts should avoid reinforcing the political practice through their analyses and consider 'groupness' as a contingent rather than a given variable.

Combining these three variables, social conflict is constructed through hard or 'exclusionary' social identities and their dynamic ranking (Jabri 1996: 121). Exclusionary and ranked identities tend to create high levels of 'groupness' (Brubaker 2004: 12) and thus to become, in the words of Roe (1999), 'securitised': interactions between the identity groups come to be framed in terms of zero-sum competition. Securitised identities are often seen as of paramount importance to the members of all groups; in the most extreme of circumstances, threats to these identities are framed in terms of the denial of 'basic human needs for identification' and the survival of the entire identity group. In this context, such social identities also tend to become more highly institutionalised than other identities in order to protect the interests of the group. Whatever the mandate or purpose of these institutions, their existence reaffirms the importance of their particular social identity to society and, as such, reinforces the basis of the social conflict.

Neatness, according to Simons (1995: 192), in social science is never to be trusted; complexity and ambiguity are to be embraced rather than explained away. It is with this dictum in mind that this section will discuss the nature of social identity in contemporary Kano. The argument made here is that (i) the social conflict, leading to the riots discussed in chapter 5, in Kano is best understood in terms of 'natives' and 'settlers'; (ii) this 'native'-'settler' cleavage is constructed through four different but interlinked social identities, ethnicity, religion, legal indigeneity, and class; (iii) these identities are salient in the self-

perceptions of both indigenes and non-indigenes; and (iv) these identities are constructed as 'exclusionary' and conflictual.

The categories of 'native' and 'settler' are complex composites of different social identities in Kano, most notably ethnicity, religion, class, and legal indigeneity. In legal terms, indigeneity is related to notions of state citizenship in Nigeria. As Alubo (2006: 68-74) argues, Nigerian citizenship is a two-tier structure, where a Nigerian is first an 'indigene' of a particular state and only secondly a Nigerian. In Kano, legal indigeneity is defined by a person's ancestry in Kano state and partly determines a person's access to economic and political resources. The broader concepts of 'native' and 'settler', however, include meanings related to religion, ethnicity, and to some extent class. 'Natives' live in Kano City, are predominantly Hausa Muslims and can trace their ancestry back to Kano state. 'Settlers' live in Sabon Gari and belong to predominantly Igbo, Yoruba and other non-indigenous ethnic groups, are predominantly Christian[56], originating from states other than Kano. The best proxy for this broad conception of indigeneity is neighbourhood: 'natives' predominantly live in Kano City, whilst 'settlers' live in Sabon Gari. Other neighbourhoods, like Brigade or Hausawa, are more mixed in demographic composition. The perceptions of inhabitants of Kano City and Sabon Gari, however, are taken to represent the indigenous and non-indigenous viewpoints.

[56] Although a substantial part of the Yoruba population is Muslim.

Figure 4.1: Key Characteristics of Kano City and Sabon Gari Respondents

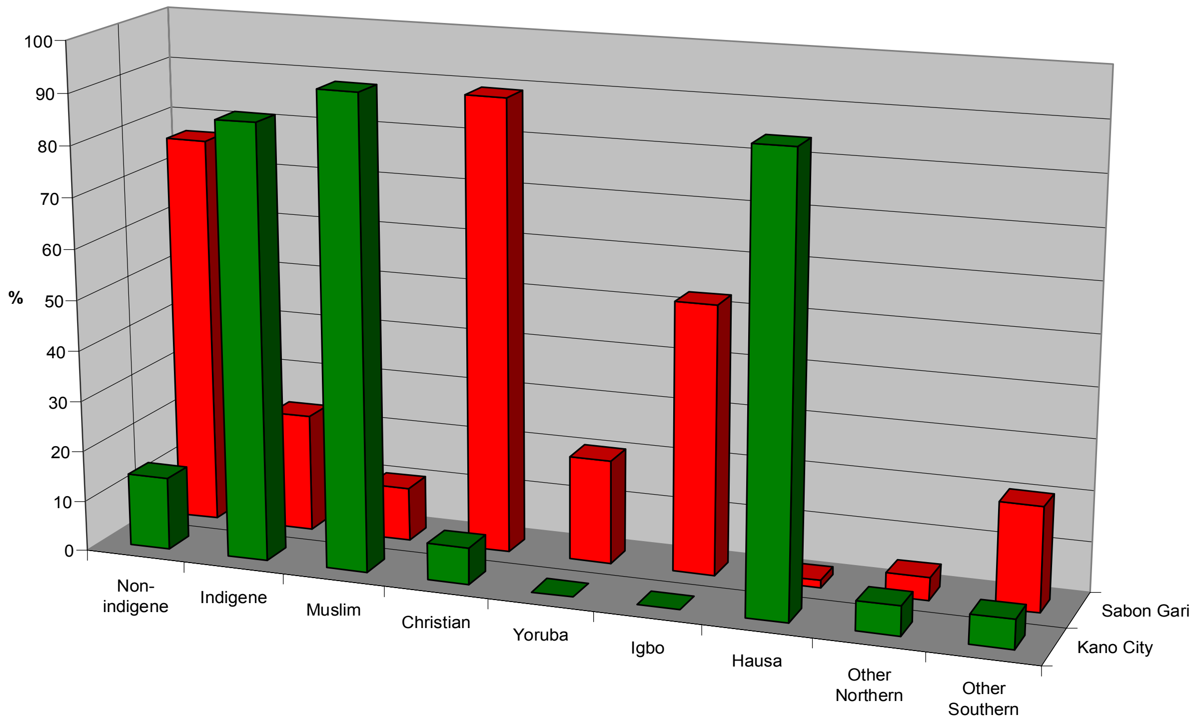

Figure 4.1[57] summarises these trends, but also shows that the broad indigeneity categories are not as crisp as they are portrayed here. Some legal indigenes of Kano may differ from the broad conception of indigene because they are *Maguzawa* or Christian, or simply because they prefer the liberal mores of Sabon Gari, and therefore live with the non-indigenes. Alternatively, some Hausa Muslims in Kano City, accepted as 'natives', may not be considered legal indigenes because they originate from Jigawa or Katsina states. Depending on the context and the individual background of the people involved, differences between 'natives' and 'settlers' can manifest themselves in religious, ethnic, legal indigeneity, or class terms. The 'native'-'settler' cleavage is not necessarily a dichotomy, although it is often imagined in that way. Historically, 'native' and 'settler' distinctions were a matter of degree, with different levels of assimilation based on ethnicity, religion, and class. Although historical and contemporary developments have hardened the boundaries between Sabon Gari

[57] For figures 4.1-4.7, the results of $\chi2$ and t-tests are presented in tables B.1-B.7 in appendix B.

migrants and *Kanawa* and strengthened the imagination of a dichotomy between them, there are still many distinctions and levels of integration between them.

Figure 4.2: Salience of Different Social Identities in Kano City and Sabon Gari

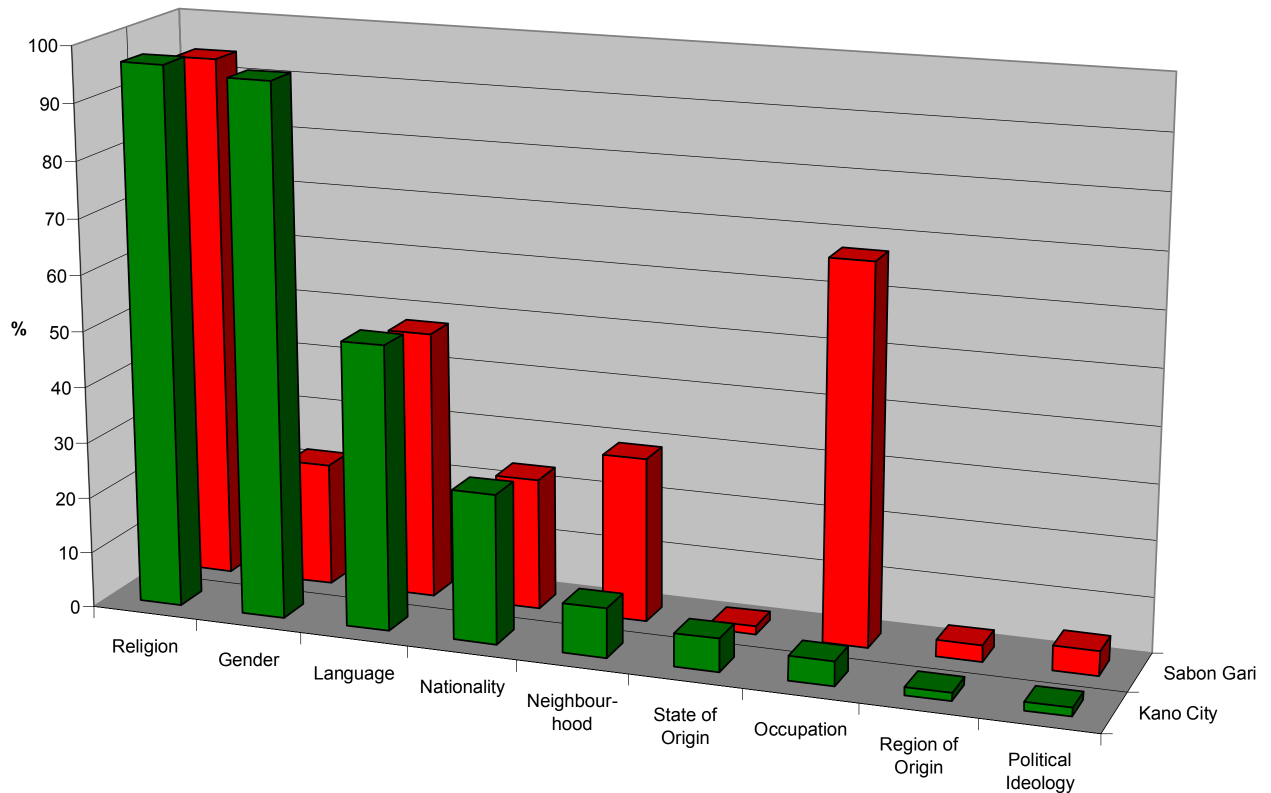

Figure 4.2 shows the salience of different social identities, as found in the PS, in Kano City and Sabon Gari. It depicts, for each identity, the percentage of people in these two neighbourhoods who label it as one of the three most important ways in which "they think about themselves". In total, the four most important identities are religion, gender, ethnicity, and occupation; between the two neighbourhoods, however, significantly different rankings emerge. In both Kano City and Sabon Gari religion is by far the most important social factor in the process of self-identification. While gender and ethnicity[58] are second and third in Kano City, occupation and ethnicity take those positions in Sabon Gari[59].

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[58] In the Nigerian context, language and ethnicity can be used as one analytical category.

[59] In the attitudes-survey by Lewis and Bratten (2000) ethnicity is most the salient self-identification in Nigeria at large, while religion is most salient for northern Muslims. The latter pattern is consistent with the PS data, as 'natives' identify mostly with religion, but in contrast to the national pattern religion is also most salient for

The relative importance of gender among 'natives' may be explained by the fact that Islam and northern Nigerian Hausa tradition have more pronounced gender roles than many of the immigrant communities. The prevalence of neighbourhood in Sabon Gari might be caused by the fact that it is the only locality where non-indigenes dominate. In many ways, Sabon Gari is a city within a city: beer parlours and small brothels indicate the lack of Sharia influence, whilst the Western clothing style and the multitude of languages spoken mark the lack of indigene-dominance. Respondents from Sabon Gari flagging their neighbourhood as important may therefore implicitly indicate the importance of their migrant, non-indigene status in Kano as well as their community. The importance of occupation, a proxy for class, in Sabon Gari could be explained by arguing that people in Sabon Gari are mostly economic migrants and therefore identify strongly with their occupation.

To demonstrate that the 'native'-'settler' cleavage is the basis of social conflict in Kano we must now show that these identities are not only salient, but also exclusionary, with 'hard boundaries' and high levels of 'groupness'. For each of these identity layers, several factors indicate their exclusionary nature. In 'legal indigeneity' terms, identity boundaries are hard because there is no procedure for becoming legally indigenous. As Mustapha (2007: 10) argues, it would be more in keeping with Nigerian culture and tradition if residency rights would be granted to 'settlers' who pay taxes and swear allegiance to their new home state. Ethnicity, even though imagined and by definition political, is experienced as ascribed, in terms of shared ancestry, history, and cultural distinctiveness[60]. In fact, many people in Kano claim the capacity to distinguish between ethnic groups on the basis of mere physical traits. When examined more closely, however, language, dress, residence, and cultural or religious

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'settlers' in Kano. This 'uncharacteristic' salience of religion in Sabon Gari can be explained as a 'mirror-effect': the immigrant community, faced with a strongly religious host, identifies itself in the host's terms. Interestingly, however, as figure 4.4 shows, people in Sabon Gari do identify 'native' and 'settler' *Others* in terms of ethnicity.

[60] Ethnicity in this thesis is defined as a social identity that defines groups by their belief in a myth of common heritage and geographical origins and by their shared language, rituals, and dress. Note the similarities between this use of ethnicity and European notions of 'nationality' – an indication of the influence of European modernity on African conceptions of social identity.

behaviour were necessary to establish people's ethnicity[61]. The most important marker of ethnicity is language: the Hausa language marks a Hausa-Fulani ethnicity, while every non-indigenous ethnic group has its own language. In Kano City every PS respondent spoke Hausa, against a mere 35% in Sabon Gari, none of whom as a first language; a majority in Sabon Gari only spoke their ethnic mother tongue and (pidgin) English[62]. Other markers of ethnic difference include dress, such as the northern long dress and cap, and physical characteristics.

Both religion and occupation are usually considered to be affiliative, and thus flexible or integrative, identities. However, this view places undue emphasis on individual freedom by overlooking social pressures and institutional inequalities that socialise or even force people into certain religious and occupational categories. In Kano, religion is highly politicised and therefore both Christians, Muslims and their respective authorities are highly averse to people changing faiths. However, there may be a difference between religious boundaries within 'settler' communities and those between 'natives' and 'settlers': the PS showed roughly 70% of the respondents in Kano City having friends (almost) exclusively from their own ethnicity, religion, and state, against roughly 8% in Sabon Gari. These findings are a measure of the level of segregation between 'natives' and 'settlers', but can also be interpreted as evidence for harder religious and ethnic boundaries between 'natives' and 'settlers' than within the 'settler' communities. As section 4.3 will show, there is considerable evidence for the hypothesis that from the early 1980s, inter-religious tensions came to dominate social identity construction, rather than intra-Muslim ones. Similarly, in terms of occupation, although everyone is nominally free to choose a certain occupation, structural inequalities on the basis of ethnic and religious access to education render this freedom more rhetorical than real.

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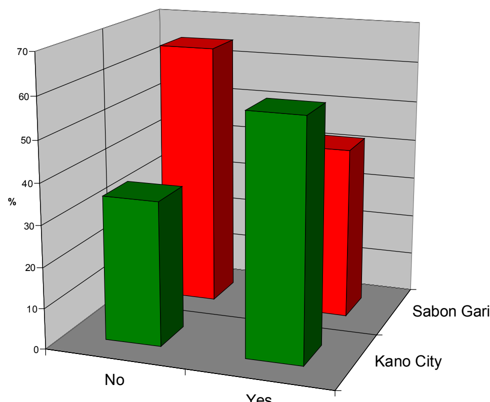
[61] The difficulty of recognising ethnic or religious groups is painfully exemplified by 'selection procedures' of reciting Quranic verses, speaking Hausa, or wearing northern dress, during the violent riot in 2004.

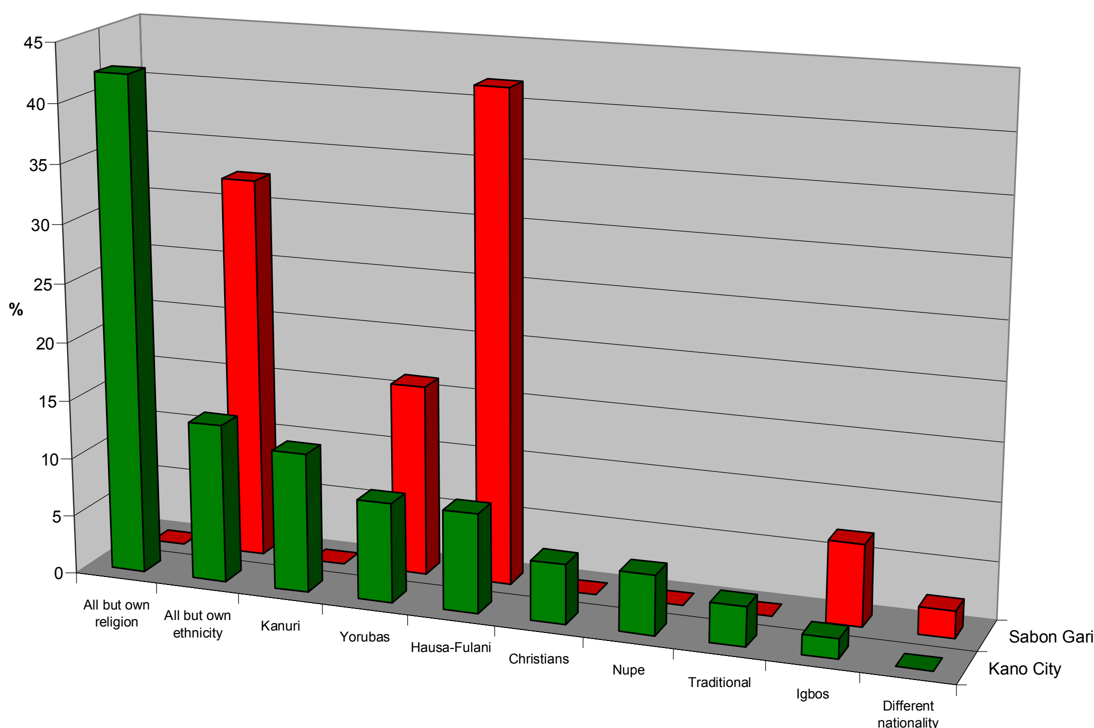
[62] For the purposes of trading, a mix of Hausa, pidgin, Yoruba and Igbo is spoken in the Sabon Gari market (Ogunnika 1994)

Figure 4.3: Objections to Marriage Daughter to Certain Social Groups



All four identities that constitute the 'native'-'settler' divide are thus hard-bounded and the sum of these identities is larger than its constituent parts: ethnic and religious oppositions are stronger between 'natives' and 'settlers' than within the 'settler' communities. Both findings are illustrated further by the PS data on marriage preferences presented in figure 4.3 and 4.4. Marriage is an effective social mechanism to create alliances between different identity groups and thus weaken their boundaries and animosities. Marriage preferences are a proxy for the willingness of different identity groups to integrate (Wilson-Fall 2000: 62). Figure 4.3 shows that in Kano roughly 50% of the population has objections against certain marriage partners for their daughters. It also shows that there are significantly fewer objections in Sabon Gari. The groups that respondents object to are shown in figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4: Groups Objected to as Marriage Partners for Daughters



Several patterns in this graph are of importance to this thesis. First, the categories of which Kano City respondents were most averse were, in order of importance: non-Muslims, non-Hausa, Fulani[63], Yoruba and Christians. Apart from the Fulani, all of those categories fit the cleavage between 'natives' and 'settlers', indicating the hardness of the boundaries between these groups. Secondly, respondents in Sabon Gari objected most to Hausa, people from different ethnic groups in general, and Igbo specifically. From these, only their objection to Hausa fits the cleavage between 'natives' and 'settlers'; the other two reflect ethnic tensions within the 'settler' community. It can therefore be tentatively concluded that although religion and ethnicity are equally important in the self-perceptions of 'natives' and 'settlers', 'natives' tend to view 'settlers' in terms of religion, while 'settlers' see 'natives' more in ethnic terms.

4.3 Historical Construction of Social Identity in Kano

From the wide range of disciplines concerned with identity, the work on ethnicity and nationalism provides the best analytical starting point to discuss the historical construction of social identity in Kano. With regard to ethnicity, Lonsdale rightly argues that most theories can be divided into two camps. On the one hand, there are those perspectives which Lonsdale calls "defensive scholarly imaginations of the tribe" (1994: 131), and on the other, the more recent scholarship that emphasises the constructed or 'imagined' nature of ethnicity and its similarities to nationalism. The latter, social-constructivist perspective has profited greatly from the works of Anderson (2006), Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983; 1992), and Vail (1989), all of whom argue that the social categories of nationalism and ethnicity have been created, invented, or imagined in a historical process of identity construction. Specifically on Nigeria, Post and Vickers (1973), Cohen (1969), and Melson and Wolpe (1970; 1971) show that ethnic

[63] Because this question was open-ended, Hausa-Fulani in the graph comprises the answers Hausa, Fulani, and Hausa-Fulani. Respondents in Kano City objected to specifically rural Fulani, whilst people in Sabon Gari objected more generally to their daughter marrying any Hausa.

loyalties were essentially political and “that modernisation, far from destroying communalism, both reinforces communal conflict and creates the conditions for the formation of entirely new groups” (Melson and Wolpe 1970: 1113). Individual emphases differ, and many of the limitations of their work have been discussed and partly redressed by later analysts (e.g. Ranger 1994: 9-50), but the idea of the constructed and political nature of identity has become widely accepted. Contemporary Nigerian social identities were neither completely imposed by the colonial rulers, nor a reproduction of atavistic African tradition; in Ranger’s words,

> “European classifications of race, or tribe, or language […] created a series of empty boxes, with bounded walls but without contents. […] Whites could [only] suggest some very basic meanings derived from simplifications of African history or from industrial and urban occupational stereotypes” (Ranger 1994: 27).

The external dimensions of social identities in Africa were thus largely enforced by the colonial rulers; internal meanings, however, remained a matter of internal African struggle. In many ways, these internal meanings were the product of a process of ‘bricolage’, the construction of new ideas and adapted constructs from existing ‘building blocks’ (Derrida and Bass 2001: 278-94; Lévi-Strauss 1996: 19). Sketching the historical development of the ‘native’-‘settler’ cleavage in Kano this section demonstrates that, while pre-colonial Kano was characterised by inclusive territorial identities and conflict resolution, the two categories became exclusionary during the colonial and early post-colonial period.

4.3.1 Social Identity in Pre-colonial Kano

Through the migration of Fulani and other northern ethnic groups into Kano City during the *Maguzawa* period, Kano developed as a plural society (1000-1500 AD) (Paden 1970: 251). Since then, definitions of ‘native’ and ‘stranger’ have been in constant change. Initially, the non-Muslim *Maguzawa* were the native inhabitants of Kano, but Muslim Hausas took over

this role with the spread of Islam and the increase of trade. With the Fulani Jihad, the victorious Fulani ruling class was incorporated into the category of ‘natives’. The Jihad spread and intensified a pan-ethnic Islam both in urban and rural areas of the Caliphate and its central practice of slave raiding assimilated large numbers of ‘strangers’ into Kano society (Lubeck 1986: 17) – conversion was thus a means of integration (King 2001: 357).

There is also evidence that the pre-colonial categories of ‘settlers’ and ‘natives’ were more open and flexible than their modern incarnations. This argument is generally made for most of pre-colonial Africa: ethnic identities in pre-colonial Africa were not like modern conceptions of the ‘billiard ball’ nation-states, but could be “formed and reformed by fission and fusion, like slivers of glass in a kaleidoscope” (Lonsdale 1994: 137) and co-exist in non-zero sum competition. Mustapha’s analysis of Rogo (1998: 30-31), a rural town in the south-west of Kano state, shows that in pre-Jihad Kano identities of ethnicity, linguistic background (Hausa), and territorial loyalty (*Kanawa*) could interact and create an inclusive society for most northern Muslim ethnic groups. Ethnic and religious distinctions were therefore often blurred (2001: 357).

Based on Mustapha (1998: 33-36) and Olaniyi (2004: 90-93), it is argued here that these inclusive identities were partly due to constructive conflict resolution by the Kano Emirate: traditional rulers were liberal towards immigrants and accorded them the exalted status of guests, because of the vital role of immigrants in Kano’s economy. Osaghae (1994), however, takes a wholly different view in seeking to demonstrate a historical continuity in Kano’s discriminatory policy towards non-Muslim non-indigenes (Osaghae 1994: 26-27). Although it may be true that Muslim ethnic groups integrated more easily into pre-colonial Kano than non-Muslims, the division between the walled city (*birni*) and the immigrant neighbourhoods outside the walls (*waje*) was not as strict as Osaghae opines. Paden (1970: 257) provides demographic data of Kano City in 1931, which shows that there were

minorities of migrant Yoruba living inside the City during the colonial period. Thus, strangers in Kano were seen in terms of ethnicity, religion, and language, but there were ways in which these strangers could integrate and become *Kanawa*. A combination of economic growth, hospitable state policy, and a pan-ethnic Islam constructed social identities of 'natives' and 'settlers' as integrative rather than exclusionary.

4.3.2 Social Identity in Kano under Colonial and Early Post-Colonial Rule (1904-1982)

Although British rule did not mark the end of Africa's tradition of identity formation, as Vansina argues, it did add new factors to the process (Ranger 1994: 19-20). Although it is impossible to do justice to the myriad ways in which social identities reacted to these factors, this section seeks to illustrate how colonial and early post-colonial rule in Kano hardened the boundaries of the inclusive pre-colonial identities and laid the foundations for contemporary social conflict. Two separate dynamics of identity construction will be discussed here, one within the northern Muslim community in Kano, and the other between the Muslim and non-Muslim communities. Within the Muslim community in Kano, the British pledge not to become involved in religious matters led to a rise of Islam (Kane 2003: 34-35) and to a process of de-emphasising differences between northern Muslim ethnic groups (Lubeck 1986: 303). This trend was compounded by national politics around independence, which developed the idea of the north as a community: "one north, one people, under one God" (Mustapha 1998: 40). Southerners viewed all Muslims from the north as northerners, or 'Hausas', which affected the northerners' self-perceptions. Hausa came to mark 'northern-ness', fusing the Hausa and Fulani ethnic groups into a single ethnic category (Mustapha 1998: 40; Paden 1973: 355).

These integrative trends were cross-cut, however, by the intensification of class conflict. Indirect rule aimed for the maintenance of the political status-quo-ante colonialism,

which meant British support for the Native Authority to remain in power. The lack of downward accountability of the Native Authority hardened both class and ethnic divisions between Fulani rulers and the *talakawa* (commoners) (Lubeck 1986: 29; Wakili 1997: 38). Class identities also became more important due to growth of the urban *talakawa* class (Lubeck 1986: 36). Urbanisation "into the land of plenty" (Wakili 1997: 52), both from northern and southern Nigeria, increased due to Kano's central role in the colonial groundnut industry and the large-scale development plans in the post-colonial oil boom. Together with high birth rates, this accounts for the immense growth rate of Kano in the second half of the 20th century: from 260,000 in 1964 to about 5 million in 2006, an average increase of over 6% per year (Paden 1973: 18).

From the 1950s, class identities were translated into politics through NEPU and the NPC (Lubeck 1986: 39). NEPU was the source of the 'radical' populist tradition in Kano propagating Islamic egalitarianism. Although it was defeated in the 1964 elections, NEPU "garnered many supporters of the heart" (Lubeck 1986: 39); until today, people in Kano speak proudly of the city's radical Islamic-populist orientation: "In Kano politics, the dominant ideology is Aminu Kano's radicalism, politics that sees itself as the protector of the weak and the poor"[64]. Politics, however, is not the only sphere in which Kano developed tensions between conservatives and radicals. Infrastructural development under the British not only increased contact between north and south Nigeria, but also between northern Muslims and the Middle East – not least through increasing numbers of Muslims going on *hajj* to Mecca. The Wahhabi influences from Saudi Arabia found fertile soil in a young cohort of *mallamai*, protesting against the dominance and the 'non-Islamic' ritual of the *tariqas* (Kane 2003: 70). Izala, inspired by "one of the most charismatic anti-Sufi reformists in twentieth-century West-

[64] Dr Haruna Wakili, op. cit.

Africa" (Kane 2003: 82), Sheikh Abubakar Gumi, became the strongest of these radical reformist opponents of the traditional *tariqas* in Kano.

Turning now to relations between Muslims and non-Muslims in Kano; during the colonial period, the increased migration of mostly Christian Igbo and Christian and Muslim Yoruba challenged the Emirate system of social assimilation, a challenge that was compounded by the British policies of indirect rule and strict segregation of 'natives' and 'non-natives'. Because of British ultra-conservative indirect rule policies, they feared southern immigrants would increase tensions in Kano. The Kano *sarauta* class, in turn, sought to maintain its authority and protect Islam from the increasing influence of Christian missionaries (Osaghae 1994: 31-35). For these reasons, the British expanded the *waje* area outside the walled city of Kano, constructing Sabon Gari for southern and Tudun Wada for northern immigrants. This residential segregation was enforced by the political system, for Sabon Gari was under direct rule of the colonial government, while Kano City was governed by the Emirate (Albert 1999: 279), and by law, which prevented natives from living in Sabon Gari and non-Muslim men from marrying Muslim women (Paden 1970: 264). This forced southern immigrants to bring wives from their 'home' region and reinforced divisions on the basis of 'native-ness'.

In the early post-colonial period, segregation between northern 'natives' and southern 'settlers' was continued through the NPC's 'northernisation policy', which, after the ethnic riots of 1953, replaced southern Nigerians in public office with northerners (Albert 1994: 118). To some extent, the north-south division was also reinforced by the new dynamics of national politics, where the northern, eastern, and western politicians competed to define the terms of an independent Nigeria. Religion became a factor of national importance as Islam became associated with the northern region (and to a much lesser extent with the western Yoruba) and Christianity with the south and east (Kane 2003: 34-38). Especially from the

1970s, when political competition between the religions, through the JNI and CAN, developed in response to the Nigerian membership of the OIC (Kane 2003: 183), inter-denominational competition widened the gap between Kano's 'natives' and 'settlers'. Class differentials compounded the cleavage between the 'native' and 'settler' communities. Most inhabitants of Sabon Gari have always been employed in the Sabon Gari market, as small entrepreneurs; however, because they are generally more highly educated than northerners[65], many southerners also came to be employed in Kano's growing industrial sector: "newcomers [and especially the Igbos] began to dominate the economy" (Wakili 1997: 47). This is exemplified by the fact that by 1965, Sabon Gari market surpassed Kano City market in number of traders, value of turnover, and the average profit per trader (Paden 1973: 317).

In sum, the colonial and early post-colonial periods segmented the Muslim communities along class and ideological lines, while uniting them under the 'Northern' identity. Tensions between Muslim 'natives' and Christian 'settlers, however, increased during this period. The development of riots in Kano can indicate the interaction between these two dynamics. In the 1950s and 1960s, riots occurred in Kano in 1953 and 1966, both of which saw mostly Igbo migrants targeted. It seems therefore that the most salient and exclusionary identities in the 1960s were reflections of the national dynamics between northern Hausa and south-eastern Igbos, infused with local economic inequalities. Social identities during the 1970s oil boom and economic expansion, however, were dominated by intra-Muslim cleavages of sectarianism, class, and politics. These tensions culminated in the 1980 Maitatsine riot and the 1981 riot between NPN traditionalists and PRP radicals, both of which played out within the 'native' Kano community. From 1982, riots have resulted from tensions between the 'native' and 'settler' communities, indicating the growing salience of this cleavage.

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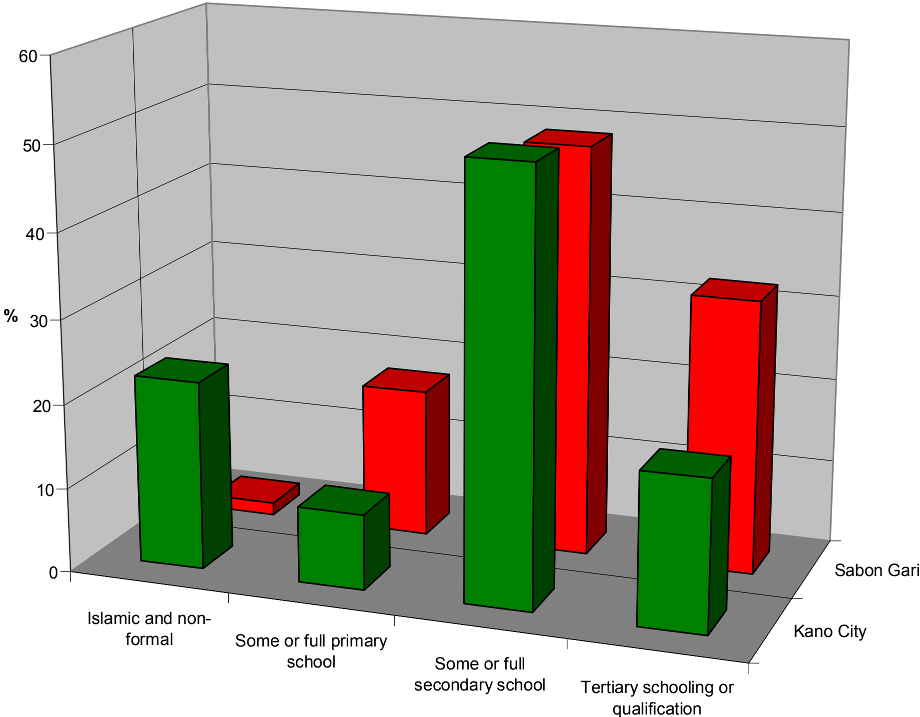
[65] Due to the influence of Christian missions in southern Nigeria.

4.4 Causes of the 'Native'-'Settler' Conflict in Kano

This section outlines the factors, or 'root causes of conflict', leading the process of social identity formation in Kano to result in the salient exclusionary identities of 'native' and 'settler' since the early 1980s. The most important factors in this period have been: (i) the end of the oil boom and the Structural Adjustment Programme-led (SAP) economic crisis; (ii) the resulting population pressures, high rates of youth unemployment, and youth 'street culture'; (iii) the ruthless and corrupt zero-sum politics during military rule in the 1980s and 1990s and its continuation in the current democratic dispensation; (iv) the introduction in the constitution of 'legal indigeneity', granting rights to sub-national autochtony; and (v) the introduction of Sharia. These factors exacerbated existing tensions between 'natives' and 'settlers' and are therefore the basis of contemporary social conflict in Kano.

Figure 4.5: Highest Level of Education in Kano City and Sabon Gari



In Kano, Nigeria's economic crisis that began in the late 1970s (Olukoshi 1991: 28-33, 73) had a profound effect on the existing tensions between 'natives' and 'settlers'. Horizontal inequalities, in terms of occupation, income, and education, became more poignant – the relative wealth of Sabon Gari's 'immigrants' posing a serious grievance to Kano's 'native' population. Figures 4.5 to 4.7 present the most important indicators of the economic horizontal inequalities between Kano City and Sabon Gari. Figure 4.5 depicts the highest level of education attained by each respondent and shows that although Kano City has significantly more Islamic-educated people and equals Sabon Gari in the secondary education, Sabon Gari has almost twice as many people with a tertiary qualification or degree.

Figure 4.6: Occupation of Respondents in Kano City and Sabon Gari

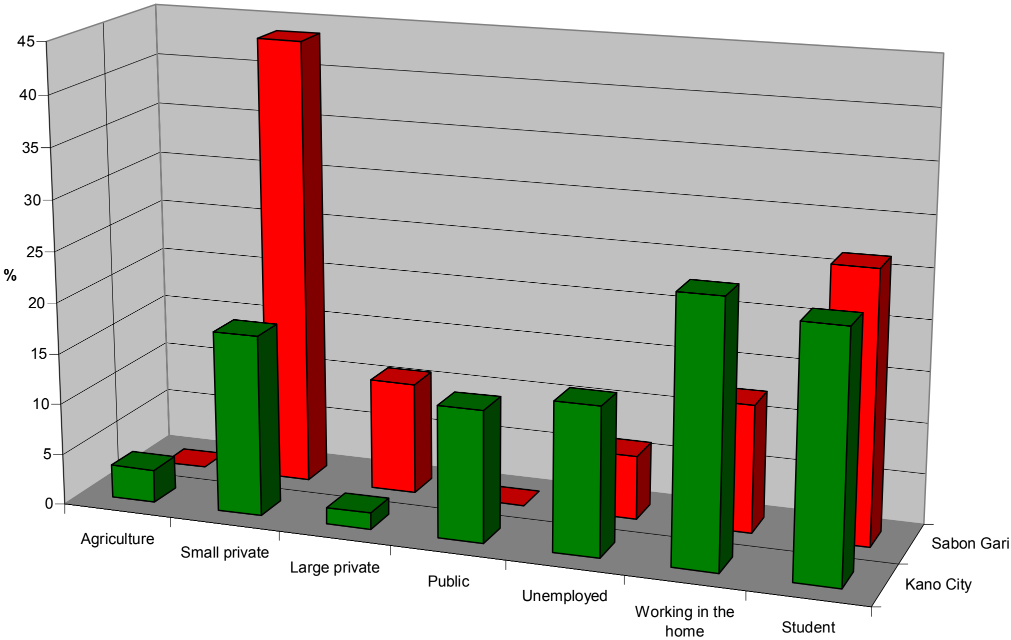


Figure 4.6 points towards two grievances: on the one hand, 'natives' feel that 'settlers' are taking 'their money' through successful entrepreneurship and lower unemployment, while on the other 'settlers' feel discriminated against because the public sector, and hence political power, is solely in the hands of the 'natives'. Moreover, many settlers feel that the

discrimination in the public sector has led to the degeneration of their neighbourhood[66]. Paden mentions the Kano Twenty-Year-Plan of 1965, which describes Sabon Gari as "overcrowded and uniformly dirty and untidy" (1971: 131); from my limited experience in both areas it seems that Sabon Gari is overcrowded and that especially its infrastructure is worse than that of Kano City.

Figure 4.7: Number of Commodities in Households in Kano City and Sabon Gari

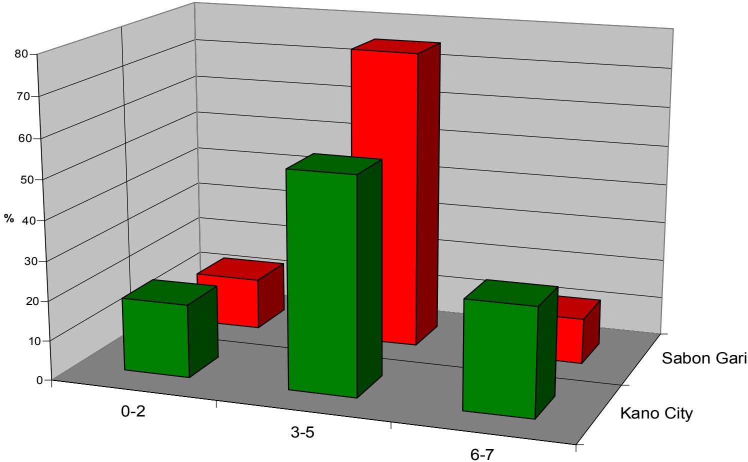


Figure 4.7 presents a more or less objective indicator of wealth: the number of certain types of commodities in the household[67]. The pattern depicted shows that Kano City has a more unequal division of wealth than Sabon Gari: more relative poverty, less 'middle class' households, and over twice as many relatively rich households. This pattern correlates significantly with people's self-perceptions of relative wealth[68] and shows that although there are more relatively wealthy indigenes, most people in Kano City are (and feel that they are) worse off than most people in Sabon Gari. This horizontal inequality originated in the colonial and early post-colonial period, but became starker during the period of economic crisis. As a result, there is a large 'underclass' of uneducated, underemployed young 'native' males, who

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[66] Prince Memayetan, journalist, 18 August 2006 in Kano
[67] The following commodities were included: radio, TV, refrigerator, motorbike, flush toilet, car, and video.
[68] Correlation of 0.5 at significance level of $P<0.01$.

'hang out' on the street all day viewed by many as "soldiers"[69] ready to use violence for whoever pays them. They are poor: the successful ones earn around $3 a day through 'fuel hawking', driving an *achaba* (motorbike taxi), or petty trading; the unfortunate have to beg to feed themselves.

It is here that politics as a 'root cause' of conflict enters the hypothetical story. Most interviewees point to politics as the main cause of conflict in Kano. There are three main ways in which politics exacerbates social conflict and its violent escalation. First, political parties in Kano are segmented into 'houses', systems of personal loyalty towards individual politicians. Nominally, these 'houses' have distinct ideologies, but in practice they are based on favours, payment and personal loyalties[70]:

> "These houses are not families, they are followers of political mentors, more or less like a school of thought, but not really because there is no written-down philosophy. However, the trend of their political behaviours and beliefs tend to be like a school of thought. […]. They go all the way from the state level down to the grass roots. And each house is struggling for either the party or the executive control of the state. Sometimes there are killings or injuries…" [71]

Secondly, some of the youths are organised as *Yandaba* or *Yantauri*, youth gangs that originated in the 1950s as body guards for NEPU (Dan-Asabe 1991: 89). Competing *Yandaba* groups often clash violently[72]. They have also been an integral part of Kano politics in the Second Republic and the current democratic dispensation[73]. As one fuel hawker, who belongs to the youth group of the PDP, said:

> "When we go to the campaign, we paint ourselves and bring a lot of weapons. […] Knives, big sticks… During the campaigns, we use them when we meet the opposition parties. We will fight against them."[74]

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[69] Prince Memayetan, op. cit.
[70] Abdullahi Sule, op. cit.
[71] Ibid.
[72] E.g during my fieldwork in September 2006 and around the 2007 elections (Abdullahi 2006; Madu-West and Nmeribeh 2007).
[73] For examples of this dynamic in the 2007 national elections, see e.g. Dowden (2007).
[74] Anonymous (iv), fuel hawker, 15 August 2006 in Kano

Thirdly, unemployed youths can be paid by opposition politicians to initiate violence during peaceful demonstrations (IPCR 2003: 312). Although it is difficult to find conclusive evidence for this dynamic, every interviewee I asked stated that this was common practice in Kano[75]. Section 5.2 will address this issue in more detail for the riot of 2004.

Local politics, however, are a reflection of national political culture, which became increasingly corrupt, repressive, and based on group and personal loyalties rather than ideological competition during the military dictatorships leading up to the Abacha years (1993-1998) (Olukoshi 1991: 34). As both Falola (2004: 149) and Mustapha (2004: 257) show, the return of democracy did not 'de-ethnicise' or stabilise the process of political competition. The debate preceding the 2007 presidential elections is a case in point: newspaper editorials argued over the origins of the next President, rather than his suitability for office. Such competition is translated to the local level and reinforces ethnic and religious oppositions between 'natives' and 'settlers' in Kano.

Another important factor constructing the 'native'-'settler' cleavage is the introduction of indigeneity into the Nigerian constitution. Because this constitutional distinction between 'indigenes' and 'non-indigenes' is based on whether or not someone's "parents or any [of their] grandparents were members of a community indigenous to that state", a migrant family cannot become fully recognised members their host state. Non-indigenes are discriminated against in educational opportunities, public sector occupation and pensions (Mustapha 1998: 48-49), practices reminiscent of the colonial segregation of 'natives' and 'non-natives'.

From the 1980s onwards, two trends were discernible in the development of religious identities in Kano. On the one hand, different cleavages within the Islamic

[75] Abdullahi Sule, op. cit.; Anonymous (ii), op. cit.

community softened, to the extent that today "Kano Muslims are one"[76]. On the other, cleavages between Muslims and Christians intensified and hardened. Explaining these processes, Kane (2003: 204-06, 26) argues that within the Kano Muslim community, the increased "regulation of the spiritual economy" and internal power struggles of Izala enhanced integrative Muslim identities after 1980. In the Christian communities, Kane shows that younger, Western educated elites acquired a strong political awareness and were determined to break the political hegemony of the Nigerian Muslims (2003: 204). In Kano, this is clearly exemplified by the militant evangelical character of many Sabon Gari churches, such as the 'Aggressive Evangelical Church – Gospel Warriors', and the language of 'crusades' that is used in their advertisements. It was striking that while most Muslims I interviewed acknowledged that Allah and God were in essence the same and that Christians and Muslims were brothers, many Christians denied this[77]. Within both CAN and the JNI, the highly politicised leadership of Archbishop Akogie and Sheikh Gumi also increased the political competition between the two communities on national and local levels (Kane 2003: 205).

Two final factors can be added to this analysis: the introduction of Sharia in the northern states in 2000 and the intensification of the discourse of a global struggle between the (Christian) West and the Islamic world. To discuss the full impact of Sharia on northern Nigeria is beyond the purpose of this thesis, but one of its effects has certainly been increasing intra-denominational cohesion and an intensified cleavage between Muslims and Christians. The fact that, like under colonial rule, two separate

[76] Dr Salahudeen Yusuf, op. cit.
[77] e.g. Sheikh Qaribullah, op. cit.; Reverend Jebis, op. cit. See also a 2004 BBC poll on religious perceptions in 10 different countries (ICM 2004), which shows not only that Nigeria is the most religious country in the sample (which also includes Indonesia, Israel and the US), but also that 94% of the respondents felt that "my God is the only true God".

legal systems exist[78] reinforces residential, socio-economic, and political segregation in Kano. In the eyes of many non-indigenes, the introduction of Sharia has made Kano formally into a Muslim state, reinforcing their perceptions of being 'guests'. Similarly, most *Kanawa* are very aware of the global politics and the US attitude towards Iraq, Afghanistan, and other 'Muslim countries'. Whether or not there is in fact a 'war between the West and Islam', many *Kanawa* feel that their religious brethren are systematically targeted by contemporary Western imperialism. This has not only affected their view of Westerners in a negative way but also intensified the tensions between Muslim and Christian Nigerians.

4.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has argued that social conflict in Kano is caused by the construction of salient, exclusionary identities that distinguish between 'natives' and 'settlers'. This distinction is complex and flexible, a composite of ethnicity, religion, legal 'indigeneity' and class. In pre-colonial Kano there were distinctions between native and 'settler' and they were also defined in terms of ethnicity, religion, and class. However, several factors made them integrative rather than exclusionary. This changed in the colonial and early post-colonial period, when increased contact, modernisation and a population boom coincided with strictly conservative and divisive policies, which continued after independence. Early independence saw the emergence of ethno-regional national politics and the civil war, while post-war identities were based on intra-Muslim cleavages of sect, class and politics. After the collapse of the Second Republic and the end of the oil boom, however, divisions between natives and 'settlers' became re-emphasised, due to economic crisis coinciding with horizontal inequalities, high numbers

[78] Christians can choose on a case-by-case basis which legal system they prefer; interestingly, many of them choose Sharia because of its efficient and fair courts (Dr Mustapha Ismail, director CHRI, 17 August 2006).

of unemployed 'native' youths, ethnic and religious politics, and the introduction of legal indigeneity and Sharia. These factors together provide some explanation why, in the early 21st century, the social cleavage of 'native' versus 'settler' has been both salient and exclusionary. Building on this analysis, chapter 5 will now compare the riots in May 2004 and the non-violent protests in February 2006, explaining the variance in their levels of violence.

5 INTERPRETING VIOLENCE

5.1 Introduction: Conflict Escalation as Collective Action

This chapter seeks to explain why the Plateau crisis in May 2004 led to collective violence in Kano, while the global crisis over the Danish cartoons of Prophet Muhammad two years later resulted only in peaceful protests and collective non-violent action. Analytically, collective violence and non-violence are two sides of the same coin: both are forms of strategic escalations of antagonistic inter-group relations. They are also, however, expressive acts, through which certain messages are communicated in a symbolic, culturally constructed language (Blok 2001: 103-15). Violence and non-violence therefore have instrumental and symbolic characteristics and can be analysed in reference to inter-group grievances and shared systems of cultural meaning. In the case of Kano, the social conflict between ‘natives’ and ‘settlers’ has been proposed as a framework for such explanations. However, this framework cannot explain how, at a specific time and place, a large number of people decide to take action. Following Brass (2003: 12) and Schock (2005: 24-33), this chapter will address this issue and use theories of political process and collective action, developed most notably by Tilly (2003), Tarrow and McAdam (1982; 2000), to explain the variance between violence and non-violence in the two cases of escalation in Kano.

In social movement theory, “instances of popular struggle typically emerge as products of dynamic interactions between various parties to the conflict whose mutual orientation to each other defines a fluid, and socially constructed, field of contention” (McAdam and Tarrow 2000: 149). The link between this field of contention, or social conflict, and collective action requires the presence of three factors: justification, mobilisation, and a (perceived) opportunity (Horowitz 2002: 552; Schock 2005: 25-33). A justification consists of the collective perception that the actions taken are somehow

warranted. It usually consists of a mix of local or individual grievances, opportunistic interests and grander structural injustices, such as those outlined in section 4.4. Justifications are often strengthened by ‘triggering events’, which can activate identity boundaries (Tilly 2003: 21) if they are translated into categories of the social conflict. Violence is then framed in terms of ‘necessary self-defence’ or ‘just retaliation’ for the triggering events. Justifications are best understood from the viewpoint of the participants: rather than an analytical view of a bounded episode of collective action, their ‘ontology’ is one of continuity. Their action is justified in relation to past or future actions and therefore part of a continuing struggle against injustice or danger (Horowitz 2002: 555).

Collective action also requires successful mobilisation. Analytically, a distinction is made between network-based and setting-based mobilisation. Firstly, network-based mobilisation occurs through networks and organisations that connect individuals to aggregate and coordinate political and social action. As Schock argues, “partly autonomous and contextually rooted organisations that are linked by connective structures and coordinated by formal organisations” (Schock 2005: 29) create the best balance between organisational robustness and flexibility that is needed for effective mobilisation. ‘Connective structures’ in this usage refers to the potential for *brokerage*, that is the mechanism of connecting two formerly unconnected individuals, groups, or organisations (Tilly 2003: 21). Brokerage is intimately linked to the activation and de-activation of identity boundaries, depending on how it interacts with existing salient identity cleavages. Secondly, setting-based mobilisation occurs if particular events in themselves initiate or enhance the mechanisms of brokerage, boundary activation, and mobilisation. Although analytically separate, network-based and setting-based interaction often function in concert, as will be shown in the two cases below.

People need not only a justification to mobilise for collective action, but also an assessment that the action has a good chance of achieving its goals and that the risks of the

collective action are substantially reduced (Horowitz 2002: 524). These perceptions are captured in the term opportunity, which denotes a certain point in time or a structural set-up that people perceive as an 'opening' for agency. Temporal opportunities provide such an opening in a particular setting within a limited timeframe and are therefore determinants of setting-based mobilisation; structural opportunities exist because of structural tensions, weaknesses, and contradictions within authoritative structures, most notably the state (O'Brien and Li 2006: 27-31). Opportunity affects collective action only if it is perceived as such; theoretically, it is possible that people mobilise on a perceived opportunity that does not exist. In assessing opportunities, it is also important to disaggregate the perceived opportunities arising from a particular situation: peaceful protesters, for example, perceive the opportunity of a demonstration and the actions it allows for differently from 'specialists of violence' (Tilly 2003: 34-41).

Together, these three processes provide a model to compare the escalations of May 2004 and February 2006 in Kano. The two sections below discuss the different stages of the escalation process, for each case, and show how justifications, mobilisation, and opportunities can help understand their particular outcomes.

5.2 May 2004: Rioting in Kano

Kano has a long history of violent riots, which can be traced back to the dynastic crisis of the Emirate in 1893 (Wakili 1997: 1). In contrast to the city's historical record, popular perception holds that these episodes were caused by factors external to Kano society. The case of May 2004 seems to provide evidence to support this relation: the peaceful demonstration and subsequent riots of May 11 were certainly a reaction to the violence in Plateau state earlier that month: "on May 2 and 3 [2004], large numbers of well-armed Christians surrounded the town of Yelwa [in Plateau state] and killed around seven hundred Muslims"

(HRW 2005: 1). These killings, compounded by the absence of state security forces, sparked an angry reaction in Kano that resulted in a violent riot on May 11. It therefore seems this violence was triggered by external factors; however, the mechanisms through which this occurred betray the importance of local grievances between Muslim 'natives' and Christian 'settlers'. The Plateau crisis triggered violence because it was translated into the local social conflict between 'natives' and 'settlers', as discussed in chapter 4[79]. This interpretation framed mobilisation and justifications for protest as part of the struggle between 'native' Muslims and 'settler' Christians, activated religious identity boundaries, and triggered deeply felt grievances[80] between the two communities.

The patterns of network-based mobilisation indicate this 'local' interpretation of the Plateau crisis. At the lowest level of aggregation, mobilisation and justification occurred around mosques, where local imams preached against the injustices of Yelwa. In an interview with HRW (2005: 58), Governor Shekarau estimated that 90% of the sermons during the escalation process were on the topic of the Plateau crisis. Networks of Islamic religious ritual thus became vehicles of mass mobilisation and justification; Islamic leaders initiated and fostered the religious discourse through angry sermons (HRW 2005: 59) and simply because *they* responded, rather than other authorities. A young fuel hawker, who wanted to partake in the fighting but was kept at home by his family, explains the justification of his friends and his imam: "if a person kills three people, he who kills that person has avenged those three. In Islam, […] this is good."[81] Reactions of local and national media, which often uncritically

[79] It is assumed here that the data from the PS collected in the summer of 2006 reflect the social conflict situation before the riots in 2004, based on the fact that the majority of the respondents in the PS felt that their views of other ethnic and religious groups had remained the same or improved over the past 5 years. In Kano City, 90% of the respondents felt that their ethnicity and religion were equally or more important to them as in 2000, whilst only 13% thought their views on other ethnic and religious groups had worsened. In Sabon Gari, these percentages were 69% and 2%, respectively. This indicates that the data collected in 2006 is likely to under- rather than overestimate the tensions between the different identity groups in 2004. It is however acknowledged that the assumption is far from perfect and ignores the essentially dynamic nature of social identities.

[80] See sections 4.3 and 4.4.

[81] Anonymous (iv), op. cit.

framed the Plateau crisis in religious terms, also contributed to a 'Muslims-versus-Christians' discourse in Kano.

Through the brokerage of the Ulama, Kano's most respected *mallamai*, these local mobilisations were connected and integrated into a larger movement. The success of the Ulama in this process was dependent, as Tarrow (2005: 29) hypothesised, on its organisational flexibility and moral authority in the eyes of Kano Muslims. The Ulama as a group does not take part in the competition for followership between the Sufi Brotherhoods and the reformers and is respected solely because of the knowledge of its members. Their appeal for protest can therefore broker links between Muslims of all denominations. This mobilisation within the 'native' Muslim community activated identity boundaries between Muslim 'natives' and Christian 'settlers'. The victims of Yelwa came to be seen as fellow-Muslims, rather than for example fellow-Nigerians, and their suffering was blamed on the Christians. The intensity of this reaction was exacerbated because at least 500 refugees from Plateau state were housed in Sharada and Ja'en quarters, where many 'native' inhabitants have historical ethnic origins in Plateau state (HRW 2005: 57-58). Inhabitants of Sharada and Ja'en therefore felt personally connected to the suffering of the refugees[82].

Mobilisation, however, did not occur exclusively in Islamic networks. Both the government (Kazaure 2004: 2) and some of the interviewees[83] have argued that in preparation for the demonstration on May 11, politicians mobilised young supporters and paid them to destabilise the situation. Two structural opportunities can explain the incentive for such political action: first, the political consequences for the incumbent Governor if the peaceful demonstration would escalate into violence; and second, the well-known tensions between Governor Shekarau (ANPP) and President Obasanjo (PDP). Competition between these two levels of the state, based on competing claims for jurisdiction and inter-party tensions, was

[82] Abdullahi Sule, op. cit.
[83] Ibid.

expressed in the Governor's refusal to heed the advice of the President and the police against the demonstration. In their public correspondence after the riots, the Governor and the President underlined their differences in a mutual attempt to shift the blame onto each other (Obasanjo 2004; Shekarau 2004).

The next stage of escalation began with the start of the demonstration from the Aliyu Ibn Talib mosque on Zaria Road and ended two days later after the heavy-handed intervention of federal security forces. The demonstration was organised by the Ulama, who had officially requested permission from the Governor. It started with a prayer session at the mosque, after which several thousand people were led to the Government House with a letter to the Governor outlining an ultimatum to the President: if the Plateau crisis was not resolved in seven days, the consequences would be his (HRW 2005: 58-59). Violence began towards the end of the demonstration, around noon, most notably in Sharada, Panshekara, Dorayi, Ja'en and other areas south of BUK Road. To what extent this violence was planned or spontaneous is a difficult, but important question. The role of political opponents of the incumbent Governor has already been discussed, but the role and responsibility of the Islamic leaders in the violence is a more complex issue. On the one hand, it is argued that violence would not have occurred if Islamic leaders had not mobilised the people strengthening their justification: "If the leaders are not behind them, those under them will not have the boldness of doing that."[84] Most sources, however, vehemently oppose this claim and argue that if anything, it was an honest miscalculation on the part of the Ulama[85].

The evidence does not support either of these extreme claims. Firstly, it is important to acknowledge differences between Islamic leaders: although all Islamic leaders answered to the call for protest, some may have incited anger through 'fiery preachings', while others emphasised the importance of prayer and support for the survivors rather than retaliation.

[84] Reverend Jebis, op. cit.
[85] Dr Salahudeen Yusuf, op. cit.

Secondly, the fact that violence began in a different part of the city from where the demonstration was held indicates that there may not have been a direct link between the two events. However, it is also true that Islamic leaders denounced the killings in Yelwa because Muslims were killed and therefore presented the issue as part of the continuing struggle between Muslims and Christians. As Gwarzo argued,

> "…it is a revenge thing, it is a reaction. And if the reaction was not meant to be violent, they would not have called [the demonstration]. There are other ways in which you can take it calmly, and appease them. Why now call for a demonstration? Why now call for a prayer? […] They knew they could not control it, nobody could".[86]

Muslims and their leaders were angry because they felt 'brothers' had been hurt. A collective prayer session, in which tens of thousands of Muslims ritually reaffirm their collective religious identity is a powerful 'bonding' event even without a justification for collective anger; if this ritual is dedicated to and especially called for the suffering of fellow Muslims, it has a huge mobilising and escalatory potential[87]. The tone of the ultimatum to the President supports this view, because its implicit threat is that of violence. Violence, although perhaps not planned by Islamic leaders, was thus constructed as a legitimate option in the repertoire of reactions against the injustices of the Plateau crisis.

Both the morning prayer and the demonstration to the Government House are examples of setting-based mobilisation, mobilising people formerly unconnected. Such events, as Gwarzo said, are difficult to control, because they provide a diverse range of temporary opportunities to different actors. Apart from opposition politicians and religious leaders, a mass demonstration feared to become violent provides an opportunity to loot for the many unemployed youths and *almajirai*[88]. This mechanism, which many authorities refer to

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[86] Dr Tahir Gwarzo, op. cit.

[87] Traditionally, special prayers were only called if the community was in grave danger, for example if the rains did not come, and therefore have very serious connotations.

[88] Pupils of Quranic teachers, who live off *zakat* (alms) and therefore spend much of their time on the street, begging.

as "hijacking of a peaceful protest"[89], is due to a temporary opportunity for 'specialists in violence': unemployed angry youth and criminals (Tilly 2003: 15-19). But where many attach the prime responsibility for the violence to these hooligans, I follow Wakili in arguing that they are peripheral to the larger process of conflict escalation (Wakili 1997: 233), because the demography and nature of the violence of the 2004 riot, although reaffirming the multiplicity of actors and incentives, indicates the centrality of the existing social conflict.

The demography of the violence on May 11 and 12 is shows links between existing causes of social conflict and the dynamics of escalation. In past riots, much of the violence was concentrated on the streets around Sabon Gari and its market. Indigenous youths no longer enter Sabon Gari since the Igbos took to arming themselves in anticipation of riots since the 1980s; violence is therefore confined to the borders between the conflicting communities. Other hotspots are usually areas where 'native' and 'settler' communities interact[90]. Sharada, Ja'en, and the other industrial neighbourhoods had never before experienced riot violence. During the 2004 riot looting occurred, but eye witnesses held that this was incidental to the killing (HRW 2005: 60). The dominance of killing is difficult to explain from the 'vagabonds thesis', even though the industrial neighbourhoods harbour many unemployed youths. Grievances created by the economic horizontal inequalities between the Hausa Muslims and southern immigrants in the area provide a better explanation. Although the former group is the majority both in the entire city and the neighbourhood, most of the employment in the factories is taken up by southern immigrants, because of their higher education[91]. This grievance caused many unemployed young men of Sharada and surrounding neighbourhoods to take the opportunity for revenge against their migrant neighbours[92].

[89] *Tafidan* Kura, op. cit.
[90] Abdullahi Sule, op. cit.
[91] See section 4.4
[92] Abdullahi Sule, op. cit.

Although the economic grievance was particularly strong in the areas around Sharada, violence in other neighbourhoods shows remarkable similarities, occurring mainly in areas with a heterogeneous population or on the borders between homogeneous communities. The majority of culprits were young men, aged generally between 15 and 30, with many of them unemployed. Weapons used included machetes, knives, an occasional home-made gun, and fuel (HRW 2005: 60). Both killing and looting occurred, supporting the view of multiple actors and motives, but the way in which victims were selected betrays the impact of the 'native'-'settler' conflict on the violence. Victims were chosen on the basis of their clothing, language or accent, or were asked to recite phrases from the Quran to prove their faith[93] (HRW 2005: 62-73) . Based on these patterns, it is feasible to argue that although looting and 'opportunistic violence' was a motivation for some of the violent youth, the demography, nature of the violence, and victim selection methods point towards a trend of 'coordinated destruction' of 'settlers' and their property[94].

Because part of the problem in Yelwa had been the absence of security forces, the government reacted forcefully to the crisis in Kano by means of a 'shoot-on-sight' order to the police (Civil Society 2004: 4). Although many newspapers credited the government for this "swift and decisive" action, HRW criticised the "brutal response of the police and the army" and its unprovoked, extrajudicial killings (HRW 2005: 73-79). Other actions controlling the violence included the Emir and Governor appealing to people on the radio for calm. By May 14, the violence had effectively ended and by May 20 the city-wide curfew was lifted. In total, HRW (2005: 62-63) estimates that at least 250 people were killed and many more wounded and displaced. If we apply the contingency model to the escalations of 2004 and 2006, it is clear that the de-escalation stage of the Plateau riot has affected the 'negative peace' at the

[93] Abdullahi Sule, op. cit.; Femi Sodipo, op. cit. ; Dr Tahir Gwarzo, op. cit.

[94] As HRW rightly points out, there were many instances of heroism, in which Hausa Muslims warned their neighbours about the danger, smuggled them through 'checkpoints' wearing a headscarf, or protected groups of 'settlers' in their own homes. This part of the story, although not directly relevant to the argument here, should not be ignored or forgotten.

start of the cartoon crisis. Therefore, tracing the process of non-violent escalation following the publication of the cartoons of the prophet Muhammad in January and February 2006, the next section begins by considering the ways de-escalation in 2004 affected 'peace' in 2006. Subsequently, the discussion will focus on the patterns of justification, mobilisation, and opportunity to explain how later stages remained peaceful.

5.3 February 2006: Peaceful Protest, Boycotts and Prayer

Although riotous violence had been a characteristic of Kano society throughout the 20th century, the 2004 crisis made a significant impact on public awareness of the risks of violent outbreaks. Three possible reasons for this impact may have been widespread media attention for the crisis, not only within Nigeria but also in other parts of the world; the strong negative effect on the Kano economy, as investors withdrew capital from Kano industries in fear of further destruction; and the reaction of the federal government, which not only denounced the violence, but decreed that new eruptions of violence would be addressed with a state of emergency. The Kano Peace and Development Initiative (KAPEDI) Peace Forum held in September 2004 was one of the most rigorous and widely attended of a wide array of peace meetings and conferences that followed upon the Plateau crisis and will therefore be used as representative. KAPEDI analyses that produced the most practical recommendations were those pertaining to economic and educational problems propelling youths into violence and ethnic and religious tensions perceived as the heart of the conflict[95] (KAPEDI 2006: 70-76).

Three main strategies were applied to resolve these problems: the creation of early-warning mechanisms, conflict resolution NGOs, and peace committees; capacity building and

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[95] These two discourses can be traced to specific interests within Kano society. The discourse of youth violence supported the interests of the formal authorities and the traditional rulers, who emphasised that the crisis was not inherent to 'their' Kano and potentially displace the blame for the riots onto the federal government, which is thought to be primarily responsible for the economic problems that cause youth unemployment. The discourse of ethnic and religious intolerance was propagated by Sabon Gari ethnic associations and CAN, both of whom claimed victimhood for 'their' communities.

employment generation schemes for youths; and increased cooperation between non-indigenous ethnic leaders, traditional rulers, and the state government. The impact of early-warning mechanisms and peace committees is difficult to assess, but it is likely they contributed to an awareness of the risks of violence. Capacity building and employment generation for youths, both through NGOs like YEDA and Gidauniyar Alheri and through government schemes, have only been partially successful[96]. The schemes seem to have an effect, but the number of youths involved is small compared to the size of the problem. Economic crisis can only be tackled through state and national economic reform that, among others, addresses the problem of corruption.

Increased cooperation between the state government, traditional authorities, and Sabon Gari ethnic associations, has certainly enhanced communications between 'native' and 'settler' communities in Kano. Partly because of the Emir's compassionate reaction to and (financial) support for non-indigenes during the 2004 riot, he has become widely respected both in Kano City and Sabon Gari, while the recent appointment of an Igbo as special advisor to Governor Shekarau has improved inter-group communication[97]. Cooperation between Christian and Muslim leaders has, however, despite several local and national inter-faith workshops, hardly increased after the 2004 riots[98]. Unlike the ethnic, traditional and formal authorities, there are no institutional links between Christian and Islamic authorities[99]. Explaining this trend would require further research, but two contributing factors have been the strength of intra-religious, vertical institutional linkages and the politicised nature of religious authorities at the national and state levels.

In spite of these developments, which are likely to have enhanced institutional and social relationships between 'natives' and 'settlers', the PS data and interviews show that

[96] Inusa Musa, researcher dRPC, 29 August 2006 in Kano.; Abdullahi Hassan, assistant-director Gidauniyar Alheri, 7 September 2006 in Kano
[97] Chief Boniface Ibikwe, op. cit.; Anonymous (ii), op. cit.
[98] Asma'u Yahaya, national secretary MSO, 12 August 2006 in Kano; Reverend Jebis, op. cit.
[99] Reverend Jebis, op. cit.

Kano's identity structure was exclusionary in 2006. The first stage of the escalation process of the cartoon crisis is therefore similar to 2004 in terms of the social conflict, but different in terms of institutional cooperation[100]. Like the riots in 2004, the second stage of the escalation process in February 2006 was triggered by external events: the reprints of the cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad in January 2006 in European newspapers. Published in September 2005 in Denmark, it was only after reprints in other European countries that popular protest erupted around the world (BBC 2006). In Nigeria, 15 people were killed and churches burnt in Maiduguri, the capitol of north-eastern Borno state, but Kano, despite public fears, remained peaceful (Musa 2006). In Kano, both CAN and Islamic authorities of all denominations denounced the Danish cartoons as an insult by the secular Danish state, rather than interpreting it as an inter-religious matter (BBC 2006; Musa 2006). Following this interpretation, Kano members of parliament collectively burnt Danish and Norwegian flags in a protest against what they perceived as the transgressions of these countries (BBC 2006).

On the basis of this interpretation, Islamic leaders and the state government promoted a response that was targeted at the Danish economy, rather than at local Christians. Through sermons, radio appearances on Freedom Radio[101], newspaper articles, text messages and emails, Islamic and traditional leaders rallied *Kanawa* to boycott Danish products (Kazaure 2006). The Kano state government, as well as private enterprises, cancelled contracts with Danish partners and banned the sale of Danish dairy products (Gwantu 2006). Unlike in 2004, existing grievances resulting from the 'native'-'settler' conflict were therefore not invoked as justifications for violence, nor were 'native'-'settler' identity boundaries activated; if anything, Muslims and Christians jointly protested against this insult of religion as a whole[102].

[100] This would indicate support for Varshney's hypothesis (see section 2.4); however, a closer look at the process of escalation will show that religious leaders, without institutional links, were more important in preventing violence than ethnic or traditional authorities.

[101] Dr Haruna Wakili, op. cit.

[102] It could be argued that cartoons are a less serious insult or threat than killings. This view, however, is falsified by the violent escalation in Maiduguri and difficult to defend theoretically as the only higher crime in Islam than

Because the cartoons were not interpreted in terms of 'native' and 'settler' identities, the people of Kano were jointly mobilised against Denmark through formal and informal networks. Because the insult had been directed at Islam, it is true that Islamic networks mobilised their members most strongly; however, because 'settler' authorities like CAN also denounced the cartoons, mobilisation included Christians. Brokerage occurred across the 'native'-'settler' divide rather than within both categories, de-emphasising inter-group difference. Partly because of this, the demonstration against the insulting cartoons failed to create an opportunity for violence. A second reason for this lack of opportunity is the fact that the demonstration was organised by the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN), a 'Shia' group in Sunni-dominated Kano. The IMN is more strictly organised than other Islamic organisations and therefore not open to 'hijacking':

> "they put on their black dress, particularly the women put on their hijab. The men have a way of showing their different identity, so if you are not a member you don't join the group. So nobody can hijack the demonstration."[103]

Figure 5.1: The IMN During Their Annual Ashura Procession in Kano

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insulting the Prophet is insulting God. It is therefore more convincing that violence depends on the dominant interpretation that frames it, rather than the 'objective' nature of the trigger. If a triggering event is not interpreted in terms of a dominant social conflict, non-violent collective action become possible.

The third, and perhaps more crucial, factor that explains the lack of opportunity for violence was the preventive action by the federal security forces. Apart from public appeals promoting the boycott and denouncing violence, the police and army were mobilised in advance of the demonstration in order to prevent violent 'hijacking' to occur. This pro-active approach was possible because the competition between Governor Shekarau and President Obasanjo had ended in the threat of the President to declare a state of emergency, thus effectively ending the rule of the incumbent Governor, in any state where renewed violence would erupt[104] - the structural opportunity of state fragmentation had thus been removed.

5.4 Conclusion: Interpreting Violence

In conclusion, violent riots and non-violent protests are forms of collective action, dependent on justifications, mobilisation, and opportunities. The difference between 2004 crisis and the non-violent protests of 2006 lies mainly in the discourse used to interpret the triggering events, construct justifications, and initiate network-based mobilisation. The Yelwa killings – framed in terms of the dominant social conflict between Christian 'settlers' and Muslim 'natives' – activated exclusionary identity boundaries, brought up historical grievances as justifications, and stimulated intra-group mobilisation. The Danish cartoons on the other hand, were interpreted in a framework of secular Denmark against the global Muslim community, leading to inclusive justifications and mobilisation for non-violent retaliatory boycotts. Contrary to Varshney's argument, this was not only due to the increased 'interethnic' institutional integration of traditional and ethnic leaders, but mostly to Christian and Muslim leaders, in conjunction with formal authorities and private entrepreneurs. Formal authorities, absent from Varshney's analysis, had an additional important role in creating the opportunity for violence in 2004, through internal fragmentation and the in-action of its security services,

[103] Dr Salahudeen Yusuf, op. cit.
[104] Dr Haruna Wakili, op. cit

and, further, preventing it in 2006 through the presence of security services during the demonstrations.

In the violent riot, religious authorities were thus crucial in forming the interpretation of the Yelwa killings, or constructing the legitimating discursive structure for the violent riot. Through preaching and other public appearances, Islamic leaders related the crisis in Plateau to social conflict in Kano, creating a justification for retaliation in terms of the 'native'-'settler' divide. Partly as a result, mobilisation occurred through networks around mosques, while the Ulama brokered across Islamic sects. Although religious and traditional authorities had a symbolic function of 'calming the public' during the violence, the physical intervention of security forces was necessary to enforce this calm. In the cartoon crisis, informal authorities affected the non-violent escalation through structural improvements in 'native'-'settler' constructions and through the development of an inclusive non-violent discourse on the cartoons. Religious leaders and traditional rulers constructed Denmark as the common enemy and mobilised people across the 'native'-'settler' divide. Lastly, traditional and ethnic leaders had a crucial impact on the escalation process through their constructive reaction to the 2004 violence and their engagement in peace and early-warning committees.

6 CONCLUSION: INFORMAL AUTHORITIES AND THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE

Addressing the problem of social conflict and violence in Kano, this thesis has helped identify and explain the roles of informal authorities in the process of conflict resolution. This conclusion draws the general arguments together and analyses the role of informal authorities in the (de)construction of social conflict and the management of escalation processes. The final section will spell out some of the limitations of this analysis and suggest implications and avenues for further research.

6.1 'Natives' and 'Settlers': the Social Construction of Conflict and Violence in Kano

Theoretically, conflict and violence are socially constructed. Root cause theories of conflict suggest there are 'objective' factors, such as horizontal inequalities, resource scarcity, or a zero-sum political culture, that cause conflict in society. Although the effect of such factors is not denied here, they can only influence action if they are translated into meaningful social constructions that shape people's perceptions and attitudes. Chapter 2 has proposed social identities as the vehicle of this construction process. Social conflict thus exists through specific forms of social identities, referred to as 'exclusionary identities', which are constructed in a dynamic historical process affected by 'root causes' of conflict. Societies contain multiple social conflicts, but, due to specific historical circumstances, some of these conflicts can dominate or even monopolise popular discourse and imagination at specific points in time. Collective violence, as a particular form of conflict escalation, can occur if there are structural or temporal opportunities, and if its justifying discourse and mobilisation patterns overlap with the grievances and cleavages of a dominant social conflict.

This theoretical framework was applied to the case of Kano, shown to harbour a dominant social conflict between 'natives' and 'settlers'. These categories are composed of ethnicity, religion, class, and legal indigeneity, and, although the difference between them is often imagined as a dichotomy, there are many distinctions and levels of integration within them. In pre-colonial times, this diversity was recognised and the category of 'native' was more inclusive, allowing the integration of 'settlers' into its community. Conservative power politics and strict social segregation enforced by indirect rule, combined with the increasing economic migration from the south, hardened these boundaries in the colonial period. This trend was continued after independence, when ethno-regional politics and intensified religious competition increased tensions within the Muslim community and subsequently between the 'native' and 'settler' communities. The latter tensions were exacerbated from the early 1980s, through economic crisis, population pressures, corrupt and zero-sum politics, and the introduction of Sharia and 'legal indigeneity'.

The escalation processes of the Yelwa crisis in 2004 and the Danish cartoons of 2006 were used in a comparative case-study to identify the factors that explain the variability in violence between these two cases. Both were escalatory reactions to external events, but the main difference was how killings in Yelwa in May 2004 were interpreted in terms of the conflict between Muslims and Christians in Kano, while the insulting cartoons in 2006 were framed in terms of Islam against 'ungodly' Denmark. Due to this difference in interpretation of the trigger, the discourses that justified escalatory action and mobilised people were also different. In 2004, the discourse of 'Christians-versus-Muslims' led to justification and mobilisation on either side of the 'native'-'settler' cleavage, thus activating deeply felt grievances that allowed for violence. In contrast, the 'Islam-against-Denmark' discourse, rather than activating the exclusionary identities and underlying grievances of the 'native'-'settler' conflict, brought 'natives' and 'settlers' together in a common, non-violent cause.

Violence thus depends on the dominant discourse that frames a triggering event. In addition to the impact of the discourse employed, the opportunities for violence were different in the two cases: while tensions between the President and Governor Shekarau in 2004 led to a minimal police presence in a volatile situation, preventive measures and a significant police presence during the 2006 demonstrations are likely to have worked as a deterrent for *Yandaba* and other specialists in violence.

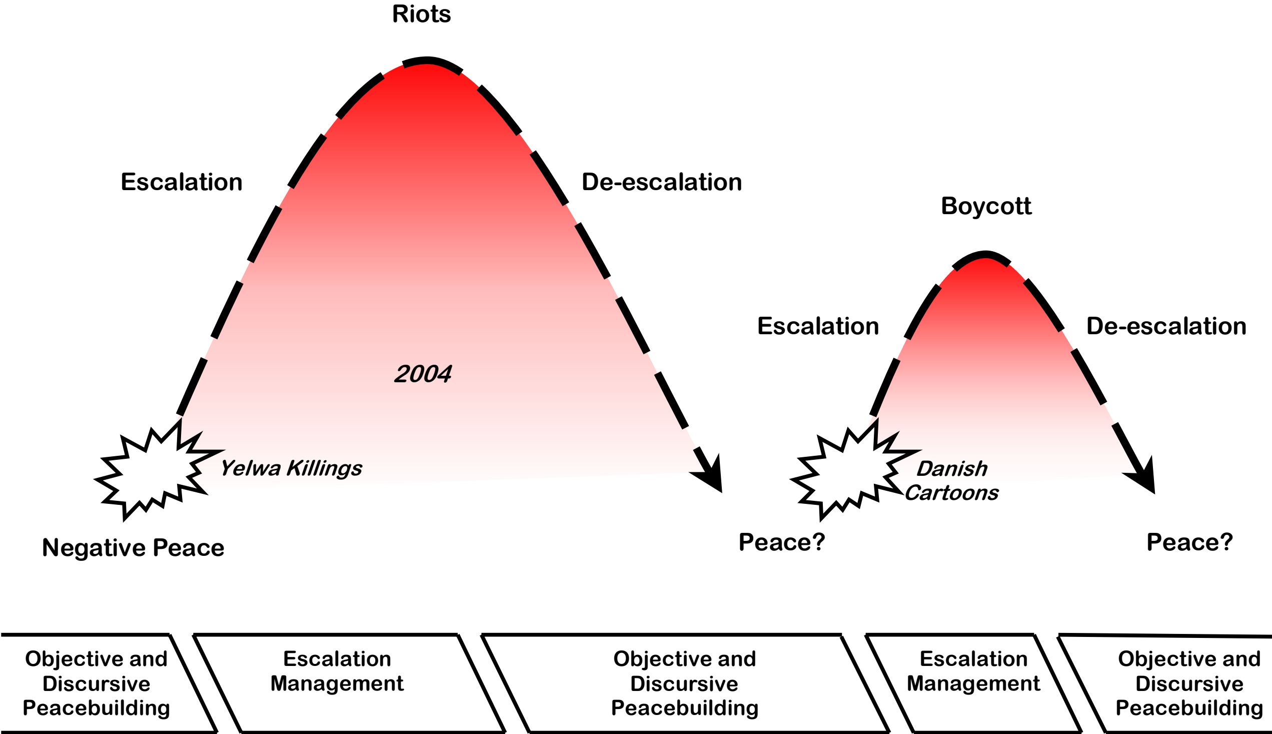
6.2 'Authoritative Voices': Informal Authorities and Conflict Resolution in Kano

Conflict resolution was defined as the transformation of violent conflict processes into non-violent, constructive ones. The purpose of social conflict resolution is therefore the reconstruction of exclusionary identities into inclusive ones and 'de-constructing' the social conflict and causes of violence. It was argued in chapter 2 that this conception of conflict resolution includes two different types of action, conflict settlement and conflict transformation. Based on this analysis of Kano, however, conflict resolution can be argued to comprise actions on three different levels: 'objective' peacebuilding, 'discursive' peace-building, and the constructive management of conflict escalation.

Firstly, 'objective' peacebuilding denotes structural peacebuilding measures that aim to eliminate the 'root causes', inequalities, and social injustices that are the basis for exclusionary identities. Secondly, 'discursive' peacebuilding comprises actions that re-frame and re-interpret social reality in order to reconstruct exclusionary identity structures without necessarily affecting 'objective' causes of conflict. 'Discursive' peacebuilding alters perceptions and attitudes by enacting and emphasising similarities rather than difference. Thirdly, conflict resolution is the constructive management of escalation processes, or the settlement of disputes, for example through mediation and arbitration, inclusive

interpretations of triggering events, non-sectarian mobilisation patterns, preventing opportunities for violence, and promoting non-violent alternatives to violent action.

Figure 6.1: Contingency Model for the 2004 and 2006 Escalations in Kano



Although these levels are presented here as sequential and mutually exclusive, in reality conflict resolution actions have effects on multiple levels. For example, the non-violent resolution of the cartoon crisis was a case of successful escalation management, but its success also worked as a peacebuilding measure to reinforce an inclusive identity structure. The categories are useful, however, to differentiate the roles of informal authorities from those of other social actors. Informal authorities, as discussed in chapter 3, have functions defined by their moral and spiritual authority, community and institutional links, and ambiguous relations to formal authorities. Their roles in peacebuilding are therefore also delineated by these factors. In general, changing the 'objective' root causes of conflict requires formal authority, legislative power over the economy and formal institutions.

Traditional authorities and ethnic leaders can affect some of these factors by enhancing their mutual integration and through emancipatory advocacy with formal authorities, but the authority and capacity to change these factors lies mostly with the state. As the politicised nature of religious competition is one cause of the zero-sum nature of Nigerian and Kano politics, its depoliticisation would likely reduce conflict. This effect, however, is similarly indirect in the sense that religious leaders can only affect politics through other actors, namely politicians or voters.

While 'objective' peacebuilding is dominated by formal authorities, informal authorities have a great impact on conflict through their influence on public discourse and imagination. In 'discursive' peacebuilding, therefore, informal authorities can impact on a social conflict by creating or reinforcing discourses and (symbolic) practices affecting identity constructions. In Kano, traditional authorities emphasise their representation of the territorial community of Kano, including 'native' and 'settler' categories, by improving links with ethnic and community leaders and positioning themselves as 'fathers' to all of Kano. Symbolic gestures like the Emir's visit to the Igbo president-general after the 2004 riot, although without any 'direct 'objective effect, are significant because they are part of the construction of a 'counter-hegemonic discourse', in this case recognising the Igbo as bona fide members of the Kano community.

Religious leaders have more ambiguous roles because they are an institutional expression of the 'native'-'settler' cleavage. National zero-sum competition between Islam and Christianity is reflected in attitudes of religious leaders in Kano, which have a detrimental effect on identity structures in the city and lead to violent escalations like the 2004 Plateau crisis. A re-emphasis on peaceful discourses embedded in both religions, as well as their extensive overlap in moral and historical terms, could help to deconstruct the exclusionary religious identities. The recent joint statement of the Sultan of Sokoto and the president of

CAN, calling for interdenominational prayers for the peaceful progress of the 2007 national elections, is a significant step in this direction (Ulayi 2007), as is the success of the Interfaith Mediation Centre in Kaduna (Channer 2006). Although ethnic leaders also represent one 'side' of the conflict, their efforts for the emancipation of non-indigenes in both traditional and formal institutions position their communities explicitly as part of the territorial Kano community, rather than different from Kano 'natives'. In sum, informal authorities in Kano can affect exclusionary social identities mostly through 'discursive' peacebuilding, while 'objective' peacebuilding is dominated by formal institutions.

These two types of conflict resolution, however, only relate to the first stage in the contingency model. Figure 6.1 shows the contingency model from chapter 2 adapted to the escalation cases discussed in chapter 5. Apart from the stage of 'negative peace', or structural social conflict, three other stages need to be discussed: escalation, violence, and de-escalation. As the escalation processes used in this thesis were both reactions to external events, the first role of informal authorities in the escalation stage is interpreting the triggering event and providing a legitimate response on the basis of this interpretation. Because religion is the most salient identity in Kano and the Yelwa and cartoon crises were seen as religious issues, their interpretation fell largely within the moral jurisdiction of Islamic leaders. The discourses employed by these religious leaders therefore formed the basis of subsequent patterns of justification and mobilisation. Interpretations in the language of local grievances provided legitimate room for violence, while inclusive interpretations allowed for non-violent alternatives. Mobilisation, however, also depended on the level of brokerage and the networks utilised. Traditional rulers, in cooperation with religious and ethnic leaders, can broker between 'native' and 'settler' communities to mobilise across, rather than within the two categories. In order to prevent small-scale disputes from escalating into violence, traditional,

ethnic and community leaders can also use their capacity for informal dispute settlement; a process enhanced by the creation of inter-authority peace and security committees.

During collective violence, such as the riot in 2004, the role of informal authorities in Kano is largely limited to calling for peace through radio, television and other public appearances. As chapter 5 has shown, violent escalation requires coercive intervention in order to quell the killing and looting and provide an opportunity for reconciliation and de-escalation. In the violent stage, therefore, formal authorities dominate conflict resolution activities through the security services. During de-escalation, however, informal authorities regain their roles in building peace and reconciliation between communities through inclusive and non-violent discourses and practices, providing care to hurt communities, identifying problems causing the violence, and implementing or lobbying for their solutions.

It is important to realise that during this last stage of the escalation process, the escalation episode *in itself* has become a historical factor in the construction of identities. The way in which communities interpret and learn from it therefore affects their mutual relationships. Although it is too early to tell, the non-violent escalation of the cartoon crisis seems to suggest that Kano authorities and communities have dealt constructively with the aftermath of the Plateau crisis. Similarly, the success of the inclusive and non-violent protest in reaction to the Danish cartoons has contributed to the integration of Kano across the 'native'-'settler' divide. Seeking to demonstrate how informal authorities can contribute to the continuation of this trend, this thesis has highlighted the power of their authoritative voices in the formation of popular discourse and social identities.

6.3 Limits and Implications of the Research

These arguments are not incompatible with Varshney's hypothesis that interethnic associations prevent violence from occurring; rather, they highlight the formation of inclusive

identity structures and non-violent conflict discourses as some of the mechanisms explaining this effect. However, these mechanisms are not dependent on interethnic associations; the cartoon crisis showed that religious authorities without institutional, or even everyday, connections were a crucial factor in creating the space for non-violent collective protest. Moreover, the integration of ethnic leaders into the Emirate and the state government are not only examples of inter*ethnic* integration, but also of integration of 'settlers' into trans-ethnic traditional and formal government systems. So, while Varshney highlights informal institutional integration as a significant independent variable in the maintenance of ethnic peace, I have suggested conflict resolution as an incremental process that aims for the 'objective' and 'discursive' integration of 'settlers' and 'natives' into inclusive identities and social institutions; interethnic and inter-religious integration are the aim of conflict resolution, rather than its conditions.

Obviously, there are many limits and pitfalls to the approach taken in this thesis, some of which are important to mention here. First, there are of course strict limitations to the generality of the arguments made in this thesis: the arguments and evidence presented are valid only for the case of contemporary Kano and can, at best, be used as hypotheses for other cases of violent conflict. Second, the research is limited by its specific focus on urban riot violence, social conflict, and the role of informal authorities. Further research is necessary into the conflict resolution mechanisms for other types of conflict and violence, and the roles of actors like the media, formal authorities and NGOs. Third, the concept of identity, ubiquitously used in this thesis, is analytically ambiguous and politically laden, so much so that some scholars have recently argued for abandoning it altogether (Brubaker 2004: 28-63). It has nevertheless been used here because, if used as a well-defined analytical term 'to think with', it carries more explanatory power than any of its suggested replacements. Fourth, the broad concept of conflict resolution used in this thesis is potentially open to the criticism of

being too inclusive, comprising any type of societal progress. I have tried, however, to limit the term to 'objective' and 'discursive' processes that are in fact aimed at resolving or preventing collective violence in society.

In conclusion, this thesis has sought to highlight the importance of including informal authorities in analyses of conflict and conflict resolution. In Kano, traditional rulers, religious authorities, and ethnic and community leaders are influential social actors. They are embedded in the social processes of conflict and escalation, and each have 'space' for conflict resolution agency. Conflict resolution, like development, is not a matter of technocratically 'building the necessary institutions', such as interethnic civil society associations; it is an incremental process of social change, transforming social identities and relationships, and depends at least partly on the choices and decisions of informal authorities along the way.

APPENDIX A: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Methodological Assumptions and Approach

This appendix discusses the methodological orientation of this research and some of the issues in relation to the research design, data collection and analysis, and research ethics. The epistemological assumptions of this research have been strongly influenced by interpretivist methodologies. Traditionally, the positivist scientific method assumes an objective reality that can be observed independent from and unaffected by the researcher (Bernard 2006: 6). Although this may hold for the natural sciences[105], human perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours cannot be explained in reference to objective 'facts', but only through interpretive understanding – Weber's 'Verstehen' (Bryman 1992: 57). Even if the 'natural world' were governed by immutable laws, the social world is constructed on normative expectations, constructed meanings, and shared understandings (Ritchie and Lewis 2003: 12-13). Researchers, therefore, need to be critical of their own frame of reference, which influences their analysis as well as the research context. They should attempt to do research 'on the terms of the research subjects', constantly 'calibrating' their research tool – the mind – through open reflexivity about their assumptions and position (Ritchie and Lewis 2003: 14; Scheper-Hughes 1995: 426).

As discussed in chapter 1, the main purpose of this research is explorative, refining theory and forming new hypotheses about the resolution of violent conflict. Qualitative data collection methods were particularly useful because they allowed identifying important concepts and relationships in cooperation with the respondents, situating the conflict processes in their wider social and historical context, and 'tracing' them through detailed

[105] Interestingly however, recent developments in quantum physics show that even in those disciplines, research results are affected by the presence and actions of the researcher.

chronological description. In addition, quantitative data collection methods[106] were used to capture popular perceptions of the salience, nature, and impact of social identities in Kano in 2006. Although surveys are not suited to analyse social processes interpretively, there are two methodological reasons why quantitative methods have been useful. Firstly, in addition to the advantages of data triangulation (Bryman 1992: 131-34), the incorporation of quantitative data on the identity structure of Kano provides the results with a level of 'generality' for the city that is difficult to achieve through qualitative data alone. Moreover, the quantification of variables allowed for formal significance tests for inter-group differences, corroborating the results from the qualitative evidence. Following Bryman (1992) and Ritchie and Lewis (2003), qualitative and quantitative data collection methods have thus been used to complement and reinforce each other.

2. Case Studies

This research is designed as a case study of conflict resolution in Kano Metropolis. Defined as the "detailed examination of an aspect of a historical episode to develop or test historical explanations that may be generalised to other events" (George and Bennett 2005: 3), case studies look at a well-defined aspect of a historical episode that is of scientific interest. Case studies have an historical and sociological component: the research problem can be studied as a unique and irreproducible product of historical factors, or as a sociological concept (1992: 159-62). I have examined social conflict resolution in Kano as both a historical phenomenon and analytical category, by situating the exclusionary identity and informal authority structures in contemporary Kano in their larger historical contexts.

Case studies allow researchers to identify relevant variables, focus on deviant cases, and explore causal mechanisms (Bradshaw and Wallace 1991: 154; George and Bennett 2005:

[106] The CRISE Perceptions Survey (PS) was used as a standardised instrument to measure the range of perspectives on social identity among 'indigenes' and 'non-indigenes'.

19-23). Although in territorial terms this thesis is based on a single city, both in historical and sociological terms this unit contains several observations with considerable variance. 'Process-tracing', a technique of mapping detailed accounts of sequences of events, allows for sketching out many observations (i.e. 'cases') along a hypothesised causal path. In this research, these cases were escalation processes – the 2004 and the economic boycotts of 2006.

The comparison of violence and non-violence over time is useful from a perspective of developing conflict resolution policy. Cross-context comparisons often result in historical or contextual explanations of variance, which are difficult to change through conflict resolution policy (Varshney 2002: 289-90). In contrast, my analysis shows that, in addition to structural measures to transform exclusive identity structures, informal and formal authorities have a great potential for non-violent conflict resolution agency, even without strong interethnic institutional cooperation. As much of the recent research on riots in the developing world has focused on cross-context comparisons (e.g. Horowitz 2002; Tilly 2003; Varshney 2002; Wiseman 1986), I hope the comparison over time is a useful contribution to the field.

There are, of course, weaknesses to the case study approach. It is well-recognised that case studies do not allow for high-level generalisations. More importantly, however, there is an inherent problem of endogeneity in assessing variability across sequential cases: they are not independent, as part of the explanation of the non-violence in 2006 lies in the effects of the violence in 2004. However, the effect of past escalatory processes is not pre-determined: violence can spawn violence, or peace. It is therefore more useful to include the interpretation of past escalations as the first stage of the next escalation process. Lastly, Brass (2003: 418) argues that research on riots and political violence should not focus on the level of cities, but distinguish between violent and non-violent sub-city communities. I have sought to recognise this problem, disaggregating between different neighbourhoods where I felt it necessary to the analysis.

3. Ethics

In her controversial article on the primacy of the ethical, Scheper-Hughes (1995) passionately argues for an integration of ethics into anthropological enquiry. Anthropologists, in her view, have the moral duty to become part of the struggle they are documenting and defend the oppressed against what the researchers 'know' is evil (Scheper-Hughes 1995: 416). Although her general argument, that morality is an integral part of social research, and the passion of the article deserve credit, the solution of political engagement is problematic and in many circumstances dangerous (Scheper-Hughes 1995: 422). Objectivism does not necessarily lead to moral relativism. Even Karl Popper argues that "scientific objectivity is not a matter for the individual scientist, but rather the social result of mutual criticism" (Popper 1992: 72). Objectivity thus lies in the product of continuous criticism and self-reflection and requires reflexivity, rather than Scheper-Hughes' political engagement.

Reflexivity is also a more ethical solution to the dilemmas of social research than 'taking sides'. Scheper-Hughes' militant anthropology assumes that the ethical solution to the problem studied is unambiguously clear to its (Western) social researchers. The complicated dangers of this view are illustrated by Hart, who shows that unchallenged Western normative distinctions between childhood and adulthood "can be […] obstructive to programmes of demobilisation" of child-soldiers (Hart 2006: 8). An example from my field work in Kano is the issue of polygamy. In my normative framework, polygamy is a manifestation of discrimination against women and should be banned from society. In an orthodox Muslim society in economic crisis, however, polygamy can also be considered a morally acceptable variation on divorce: women who would be ostracised as divorcees, are looked after and retain their social position through the system of polygamy. Participating in the struggle to end polygamy would lead to more suffering of women, not less.

Both examples illustrate that social research needs to strive for objectivity through constant reflexivity and criticism, contrasting ambiguities and contradictions within the research population. The 'outsider status' of the social scientist, in Scheper-Hughes' words the "chameleon-like ambidexterity of the non-committal anthropologist" (Scheper-Hughes 1995: 411) does not imply a 'suspension of morality', but rather a careful consideration, based on systematic research and an open and empathic attitude to all respondents, of what is ethical in which situation. Ethical and methodological reflexivity should be part of every step of the research process and the sections on data collection, analysis, and future prospects below will therefore each address the ethical issues of concern.

4. Data Collection

The data for this research was collected through 2 months of field work in Kano during the summer of 2006. I was affiliated to a local development NGO, the Development Research and Project Centre (dRPC), which provided office space and an invaluable wealth of contacts. This section will discuss my data collection strategies.

4.1 Qualitative Data Collection

The qualitative data consists of three main types: 28 unstructured and semi-structured interviews, a group discussion of my initial research results and many informal conversations; newspaper archives from May-July 2004 and February and March 2006; and ethnographic maps of the violent 'hotspots' in the metropolitan area (Sharada, Ja'en and Dorayi; the borders of Sabon Gari; and Dakata, Ranguza, and other parts of Brigade). The mapping exercises were done with a guide from the area, either from a car or on foot. Although Nigeria has a wide range of daily newspapers and the most productive press community in the African continent (Olutokun 2001: 1), the quality and objectivity of much of its reporting is dubitable.

To address this problem, where possible I have used newspapers from different parts of the country reporting on the same event. The interviews form the main qualitative source of primary data and their sampling frame, designed to capture the variability between indigene and non-indigene views, is depicted in table A.1.

Table A.1: Sampling Frame Interviews

	Traditional Rulers	**Religious Leaders**	**Ethnic Leaders**	**Youths**	**NGOs**	**Key informants**
Indigenes	1	2	1	2	5	4
Non-Indigenes		2	2	1	5	4

Although the table shows a good numerical distribution, several potential biases need to be detailed here. First, there is a bias towards NGOs, which is due to the fact that these NGOs offered a wealth of knowledge and that access to them was easy through the dRPC. However, conflict resolution NGOs in Kano have a particular view of conflict and conflict resolution, which coloured much of their responses in the interviews[107]. A second, perhaps more damaging bias is the lack of female interviewees: out of the 28, only 3 interviewees were female[108]. This is largely due to difficulties of interviewing Hausa Muslim women as a male researcher, but also to the male dominance in spheres of authority and youth groups in Kano. This is part of the reason why the gender dimension, in hindsight of great importance in a male-dominated Hausa Muslim society, is largely ignored in my analysis of social conflict.

A third bias is the lack of formal authorities in the sample. Although the topic of the research is the role of informal authorities, one of its results is that formal and informal authorities are linked. This bias was due to time-constraints and the fact that I was advised that it was risky, as a white, young foreigner, to interview the police and politicians critically about such a political topic. All three biases indicate a general weakness in the research

[107] See section 3.5.
[108] One religious leader and two NGO workers.

design, namely the inherent contradiction of an exploratory research question and methodology in such a limited timeframe. Exploratory research requires time to look around, find the important research concepts and respondents, and adjust sampling frameworks and methodology. Two months is ultimately a bit short for such a task.

In planning the interviews, my aim was to begin with unstructured interviews to discover the concepts and themes of importance to my analysis and then use them to develop more structured interview schedules in the later weeks of the research. My initial respondents were therefore key informers, including academic specialists and NGO experts, and the topic lists used for these interviews included questions on the 'cultural domains' of conflict and violence, their causes, actors, dynamics, and the cases of 2004 and 2006. More structured interviews were held with the informal authorities, because this made their answers more comparable. The interviews, as well as other social interactions, were strongly influenced by my position. My status as 'outsider' in religious, skin colour, language, age, educational, and socio-economic terms affected access to respondents, my relations to respondents and our mutual interpretations of each other's words and purposes. My religious self-classification as 'inspired by Christian values' placed me firmly in the Nigerian category of Christians; I thus became part of the exclusive framework of religious identities.

During interviews, however, religion did not seem to be the most influential aspect of my position; I felt that age, skin colour, and education were more important. Age matters because in Nigeria authority increases with age. My youth – according to many 24 years is still a boy – was sometimes difficult to combine with my role as interviewer, as this requires certain authority as an 'expert'. I sometimes tried to reposition myself by making the interview setting more formal or referring to Oxford University; more often, however, my youth was an advantage because it allowed me to ask obvious questions and made people at ease, regardless of my background. Similarly, many of my respondents assumed cultural

naivety, which led them to have different expectations from me than from Nigerian researchers. For example, I was not expected to wear formal northern dress, even to the most formal meetings, and when interviewing Islamic and traditional leaders, they readily shook my hand even though I tried to behave in the 'Nigerian way'. Language also affected my access to respondents. As I did not speak any Nigerian language, it was difficult to communicate with people in the street or the markets.

In many ways, it is ethically problematic for a privileged student at Oxford to travel to a poor region and ask local people to help him with his research. Conflict and violence are sensitive topics and the issues of informed consent, anonymity, and compensation were therefore crucial. Interestingly, only once did an interview stagnate because the respondent was unwilling to talk about his experiences during the violence of 2004. More often, however, did people request anonymity in exchange for their information; their names have been coded and quoted as anonymous throughout the thesis. With regard to compensation, I have tried to assess on a case-by-case basis what compensation would be appropriate, paying only the youths and research assistants. I also organised a small seminar on the last day of my stay in Kano, which was attended by 14 respondents and otherwise interested parties and where I presented my initial findings and ideas. This seminar served both as a validity check for my ideas and as a way of feeding the most important information back to the people who helped me to get it.

4.2 Quantitative Data Collection

The quantitative data was collected through an adapted version of the CRISE PS, which was designed as an instrument to test hypotheses pertaining to the link between horizontal inequalities and violent conflict (e.g. Langer et al. 2007; Stewart 2001). It is built on the theory that perceptions determine and explain human behaviour, therefore measuring

respondents' perceptions about their social identities, other groups in society, their relative positions of status, and the legitimacy of different forms of political action. The PS also provides baseline statistics about the sample population, such as religion, ethnicity, age, gender, and occupation. The PS was purposefully designed to allow some measure of flexibility in the identity categories that it refers to, both through open-ended questions and adaptation of questions to local circumstances.

Three aspects need to be discussed with regard to quantitative data collection: the research population and sampling strategies; working with research assistants; and practical issues pertaining to the efficiency of the process and the quality of the data. This research used multi-stage sampling, meaning that a certain number of Primary Sampling Units (PSUs) were selected with a probability proportional to size (PPS), from which a fixed number of households was chosen randomly to participate in the survey. Even though such a method increases the sampling error, which is referred to as the *cluster effect*, it was necessary because of financial and time constraints (Grosh 1996: 55-59). The research population was the population of Kano; to ensure sufficient sample sizes of both 'native' and 'settler' perceptions, the sampling frame was stratified for these "analytical domains" (Grosh 1996: 58-59). Three neighbourhoods in Kano were selected to represent the variability on the 'native'-'settler' scale: Kano City, homogeneous indigenous; Sabon Gari, homogenous non-indigenous; and Brigade, with a heterogeneous population[109]. Within this stratified sampling frame, the following conditions were set for the composition of the sample: (i) a 50/50 gender balance in each PSU; (ii) 10 randomly selected households in each PSU; and (iii) an equal number of randomly selected PSUs in each stratum. The total sample size was set on 210 households, as a compromise between financial and time constraints and a maximum precision; the results of Kano City and Sabon Gari comprise 140 households.

[109] Due to technical problems with the Brigade data, this thesis only uses data from Kano City and Sabon Gari.

Having set these conditions, the division of neighbourhoods into PSUs required some improvisation. Historically, Kano is divided into wards, but while a list of such wards existed for Kano City, neither Sabon Gari nor Brigade had sufficiently small or clearly bounded wards to be used as PSUs. Instead, therefore, satellite maps from Google Earth were used to demarcate areas that functioned as PSUs[110]. A second problem arose from the random selection of PSUs, because PPS selection requires accurate population statistics for each PSU (Grosh 1996: 216). Since the last population survey was over 15 years old and contested, these were hard to find. Only Kano City had a village listing from 1994, with population statistics for its wards (Department of Planning 1994). PSUs in Kano City were therefore selected with PPS; PSUs in the other two strata were selected at random. Within the PSUs, households were selected through a random walking pattern. From each household, a male or female interviewee was randomly selected; there were stringent rules for household substitution. The specific sampling procedures, derived from earlier CRISE PS exercises, were explained to the research assistants in a training session, which also gave them the opportunity to standardise their translations of the English questionnaire into Nigerian languages and practice. Remuneration was made conditional on fulfilling the walking patterns and selection procedures.

The problems in the data collection stage of the quantitative methods were mainly related to the logistics of managing a research team. Because of the short time frame, I employed eight research assistants to help me with the collection of the PS data. Six of them, all students and young professionals, were hired to do the survey, whilst the other two agreed to help me manage the process. The survey assistants were divided in teams of two and each team was assigned the stratum where they lived. The greatest problem during this stage was the fact that I could neither work with them nor watch them while they were working, in order

[110] See appendix C.

to ensure my safety and the willingness of respondents to cooperate. To ensure reliability of the data, I used four different methods: (i) checking the coding of each questionnaire after the research assistants handed them in at the end of each working day; (ii) collecting sketches of their walking patterns; (iii) checking back 2 randomly selected interviews for each assistant; and (iv) having the 'managing' research assistants work alongside them for a couple of interviews. On the whole, the reliability checks were effective because one of the two 'managing' research assistants was an older and well-respected researcher.

The most important ethical considerations at this stage were protecting the anonymity of the respondents and compensating the research assistants fairly. Although names and house addresses were recorded for sampling purposes, this data was not entered into the dataset. The compensation for the research assistants consisted of a financial remuneration per questionnaire or per day, and a letter of recommendation stating their activities and the purpose of the research.

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Although fieldwork and data collection in Kano were challenging, data analysis and write up was the most difficult stage of this thesis project. The combination of interpreting texts and numbers 'extracted' from a distant and still relatively strange context, the drive to do justice to all the complexities and contradictions in the data, and the inherent ethical tension between what is a useful final product for them and for me complicated the analysis (Wilson 1992: 193-94). This section discusses the approaches I took and some of the problems they created.

5.1 Qualitative Data

Because the research purpose of the thesis was explorative, my qualitative analysis borrowed techniques and concepts from the grounded theory approach. The analysis started by 'in vivo'

coding of the interviews and the construction of sensitising concepts on the basis of these codes (Ritchie and Lewis 2003: 203), using the NVIVO computer programme. However, in formal terms there was not sufficiently 'thick' data for a full grounded theory analysis; the stage of 'saturation' could not really be reached. Therefore, as the analysis progressed I increasingly compared and contrasted these codes and sensitising concepts with some of the theoretical concepts in conflict resolution and social identity theory. In a way, theoretical insights were used to strengthen the results found in the data.

This approach, however, is problematic because it reduces the importance of the voices of the respondents. In other words, the 'voice' of theory came to affect and shape my interpretations of the voices of my respondents and may to some extent have prevented me from analysing adequately 'on the terms' of my respondents. This raised the crucial question of whether or not my respondents would agree with my interpretations. Although this is a matter of judgment, there may always be respondents who do not feel their opinion and contributions are adequately recognised in an academic analysis. My mental benchmark of assessing if an argument was analytically grounded was whether or not I would feel confident justifying my position to any of the respondents. If not, I felt I had to adjust my view.

These problems are also closely related to the ethical challenges of analysing fieldwork data from developing countries, most importantly to the tension between the necessity to develop academically relevant ideas and the drive to provide a socially relevant analysis. Although I do not think these tensions can be resolved, being aware of them has helped me to keep the analysis grounded in the data, for example by using verbatim quotes from the interviews where possible. Conscientious and evidence-based analysis is one part of the solution to the ethical research dilemmas; dissemination of the results is another. I will therefore also rewrite the basic results of my research into a short paper that will be available online to interested parties in Kano.

5.2 Quantitative Data

The first challenge in the analysis of the quantitative data was the process of cleaning up the data by coding open questions and recoding questions into useful variables. Fortunately, I could build on the work and advice of CRISE researchers, who kindly helped me through this process. Subsequent analysis of the quantitative data consisted of simple formal significance tests, most notably χ^2 and t-tests. χ^2 was used to test for independence between the variables and 'neighbourhood', while the t-test was used to test for differences between the means of the two groups within individual categories (Agresti and Finlay 1997: 184, 254-56). The results of these tests have been reported in appendix B.

An important problem with the analysis of my quantitative data was the lack of precision due to the small sample size. Precision, a measure of the reproducibility of the data from the sample, depends on sample size in the formula $N = DEFF \cdot \frac{1.96^2 \cdot P(1-P)}{d^2}$, where N is the sample size; DEFF the design effect, a measure of the loss of variability due to using clustered sampling; P the estimated prevalence; 1.96 the Z-value for 95% confidence limits; and d the precision of the sample (Woodruff 2002). A sample size of 140, with P = 0.25 and DEFF = 1.45 leads to a precision of 9%; in terms of analysis, this means that only inter-group differences larger than 9% are likely to be meaningful; anything below 9% can be caused by the sampling error[111].

Another problem with the interpretation of the quantitative data is to what extent the data is thought to represent the entire spectrum of perceptions in Kano. Although the sampling included equal numbers of indigenes and non-indigenes, they were only selected from two neighbourhoods. At best, therefore, the data is statistically representative of Kano City and Sabon Gari. Based on the qualitative evidence, I can argue that these neighbourhoods are in fact the poles of 'native' and 'settler' identities and the variance of perceptions between the

[111] These estimates of P and DEFF are based on previous results from other PS data.

two communities captures much of the variance between Kano 'natives' and southern 'settlers' in general. The data does not, however, represent the more ambiguous and complex groups such as the northern non-indigenes.

6. Where Do We Go From Here?

This appendix has sought to justify the research design and methodological approach taken in this research, but has also indicated many substantial problems along the way. In further research on this topic, I would focus more on ethnographic data and follow-up interviews with survey respondents in order to contextualise the quantitative data more effectively. Ideally, a research like this should be split up in two phases: an initial phase of exploratory, qualitative methods through which the basic theoretical framework can be established; after which a quantitative test can be developed and used to test some of the initial hypotheses in a second phase of fieldwork.

Future research based on this thesis can continue in two main ways. It can use some of the results and conclusions from this research, such as the link between the discourse of informal authorities and violent escalation, and test these results quantitatively in other contexts. Alternatively, it could use a similar explorative methodological and theoretical framework to study other cases of violent and non-violent conflict escalation and compare those results to the ones presented in this thesis. In ethical terms, the discussion above has mostly highlighted the risks and problems connected to fieldwork in Kano. Perhaps it is therefore useful to emphasise that research into conflict resolution also provides constructive opportunities. The dissemination of the research results and feed-back of the main conclusions to the research population is therefore the final phase of the research, which hopefully leads to renewed attention for and discussion on the potential for non-violent conflict resolution.

APPENDIX B: TABLES OF SIGNIFICANCE TESTS FIGURES 4.1-4.7

All χ^2 – tests were significant at the 0.05 level; the H_0 of independence between variables can therefore be rejected for figures 4.1 to 4.7.

Table B.1: t-Test Results for Figure 4.1

Dummy Variables	*Mean Kano City*	*Mean Sabon Gari*	*Mean Difference*
Indigenous (Indigenous/non-indigenous)	.86	.23	.63***
Religion (Muslim/Christian)	.07	.89	-.82***
Yoruba	.00	.21	.21***
Igbo	.00	.53	.53***
Hausa Fulani	.89	.01	-.88***
Northern	.06	.04	-.02
Southern	.06	.21	.15**

***: Significant at .001 level
**: Significant at .05 level
*: Significant at .10 level

Table B.2: t-Test Results for Figure 4.2

Dummy Variables	*Mean Kano City*	*Mean Sabon Gari*	*Mean Difference*
Religion	.33	.31	-.02
Gender	.32	.07	-.25***
Ethnicity	.18	.18	.00
Nationality	.09	.08	-.01
Neighbourhood	.03	.10	.07***
State	.02	.00	-.02
Occupation	.02	.23	.21***
Region	.01	.01	.00
Ideology	.01	.01	.00

***: Significant at .001 level
**: Significant at .05 level
*: Significant at .10 level

Table B.3: t-Test Results for Figure 4.3

Dummy Variable	*Mean Kano City*	*Mean Sabon Gari*	*Mean Difference*
Objection (no/yes)	.58	.35	-.23***

***: Significant at .001 level
**: Significant at .05 level
*: Significant at .10 level

Table B.4: t-Test Results for Figure 4.4

Dummy Variables	*Mean Kano City*	*Mean Sabon Gari*	*Mean Difference*
All but own religion	.42	.00	-.42***
All but own ethnicity	.14	.33	.19**
Aversion Kanuri	.12	.00	-.12**
Aversion Yoruba	.08	.16	.08
Aversion Hausa	.08	.42	.34***
Aversion Christians	.05	.00	-.05
Aversion Nupe	.05	.00	-.05
Aversion Traditional	.03	.00	-.03
Aversion Igbo	.02	.07	.05
Aversion nationality	.00	.02	.02

***: Significant at .001 level
**: Significant at .05 level
*: Significant at .10 level

Table B.5: t-Test Results for Figure 4.5

Dummy Variables	*Mean Kano City*	*Mean Sabon Gari*	*Mean Difference*
Islam or non-formal	.22	.01	-.21***
Primary school	.09	.18	.09
Secondary school	.51	.49	-.02
Tertiary qualification	.18	.32	.14*

***: Significant at .001 level
**: Significant at .05 level
*: Significant at .10 level

Table B.6: t-Test Results for Figure 4.6

Dummy Variables	*Mean Kano City*	*Mean Sabon Gari*	*Mean Difference*
Agricultural	.03	.00	-.03
Small private	.18	.44	.26***
Large private	.02	.11	.09**
Public	.13	.00	-.13***
Unemployed	.15	.06	-.09
Working in the home	.26	.13	-.13*
Student	.24	.27	.03

***: Significant at .001 level
**: Significant at .05 level
*: Significant at .10 level

Table B.7: t-Test Results for Figure 4.7

Dummy Variables	*Mean Kano City*	*Mean Sabon Gari*	*Mean Difference*
0-2	.19	.13	-.06
3-5	.54	.75	.21***
6-7	.27	.12	-.15**

***: Significant at .001 level
**: Significant at .05 level
*: Significant at .10 level

APPENDIX C: MAPS OF NIGERIA, KANO AND SABON GARI

Map 2: Nigeria

Source: US Central Intelligence Agency (1993)

Map 3: Satellite Image of Kano Metropolis

Source: Google Earth (2007)

Map 4: Satellite Image of Sabon Gari

Source: Google Earth (2007)

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Name	Function	Date	Place	City
Muhammad Mustapha Yahaya	Executive director Democratic Action Group (DAG)	01/08/2006	dRPC office	Kano
Anonymous (v)	Chairman Conflict, Prevention and Reconciliation Committee (CPRC)	02/08/2006	Government House	Kano
Dr Haruna Wakili	Director Mambayya House	09/08/2006	Mambayya House	Kano
Dr Tahir Gwarzo	Director Kano State Polytechnic	10/08/2006	Kano State Polytechnic	Kano
Asma'u U. Yahaya	National secretary Muslim Sisters Organisation (MSO)	12/08/2006	Excel College	Kano
Samuel Toba	Sabon Gari conflict expert	13/08/2006	Beer parlour in Sabon Gari	Kano
Abdullahi Sule	President YEDA	15/08/2006	YEDA office	Kano
Anonymous (i)	Conflict resolution trainer	15/08/2006	YEDA office	Kano
Anonymous (iii)	Motorcyclist	15/08/2006	YEDA office	Kano
Anonymous (iv)	Fuel hawker	15/08/2006	YEDA office	Kano
Musa D. Abdullahi	Executive secretary Red Cross Kano	16/08/2006	Red Cross office	Kano
Prince Ajayi Memayetan	Journalist Civil Society and community leader	16/08/2006	Civil Society office	Kano
Dr Mustapha Hussain Ismail	Director Centre for Human Rights in Islam (CHRI)	17/08/2006	BUK	Kano
Femi Sodipo	Coordinator Peace Initiative Network (PIN)	18/08/2006	British Council	Kano
Dr Marie Pace	Peace and Development Advisor UNDP	22/08/2006	Hilton hotel	Abuja
Dr Ochinya O. Ojiji	Assistant director Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution	22/08/2006	IPCR office	Abuja
Anonymous (vi)	Participant in PIN Peace Club	26/08/2006	British Council	Kano
Asma'u Ahmed	Conflict resolution trainer	26/08/2006	Tourist Camp	Kano
Inusa Musa	Researcher dRPC	29/08/2006	dRPC office	Kano
Anonymous (ii)	Community elder Hotoro	30/08/2006	27/28 Hotoro	Kano
Chief Olayiwole Adio Adeaga	Vice-president Yoruba Community Kano	06/09/2006	Miky-Joky Guest Inn	Kano
Abdullahi Musa Hassan	Assistant Director Gidauniyar Alheri	07/09/2006	Gidauniyar Alheri Complex	Kano
Sheikh Qaribullah	Leader Qadiriyya for southern Africa	09/09/2006	Qadiriyya House	Kano
Dr Salahudeen Yusuf	Professor Federal College of Education and imam in Sabon Gari mosque	10/09/2006	La Locanda	Kano
Dr Ibrahim Mauazzam	Director Centre for Research and Development (CRD)	13/09/2006	CRD office	Kano
Reverend Jebis	Reverend Evangelical Church of Christ in Nigeria (ECCN) and CAN representative	14/09/2006	At his house in Sabon Gari	Kano
Tafidan Kura	District head Kura	15/09/2006	At his house in Kura	Kura
Chief Boniface Ibikwe	President-General Igbo Association Kano	16/09/2006	Igbo Association office	Kano
Group discussion of initial results (12 attended)		17/09/2006	dRPC office	Kano

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