AFRICA DEVELOPMENT AFRIQUE ET DEVELOPPEMENT

The Political Economy of Conflicts in Africa
Economie politique des conflits en Afrique

AFRICA DEVELOPMENT

AFRIQUE & DEVELOPPEMENT

AFRICA DEVELOPMENT
AFRIQUE & DEVELOPPEMENT

A Quarterly Journal of the Council for the Development
of Social Science Research in Africa

Revue trimestrielle du Conseil pour le développement de
la recherche en sciences sociales en Afrique

Governance Institute 1997
Institut sur la Gouvernance 1997

The Political Economy of Conflicts in Africa
Economie politique des conflits en Afrique

Guest Editor / Rédacteur en chef invité
Jean Marc Ela

Vol. XXIV, Nos. 1 & 2, 1999

Subscriptions/Abonnements

Contents / Sommaire

African Journal of International Affairs/
Revue africaine des affaires internationales

The African Journal of International Affairs (AJIA) is a bi-annual publication of CODESRIA, Dakar, Senegal. It offers a platform for analyses on contemporary issues in African International Affairs in relation to global developments as they affect Africa. AJIA welcomes contributions in English and in French from both African scholars and scholars working everywhere on Africa.

La Revue africaine des affaires internationales est une publication du CODESRIA. Elle offre une tribune pour l'analyse des questions contemporaines concernant les affaires internationales africaines, en relation avec les événements mondiaux qui ont des répercussions sur le continent. La Revue sollicite des contributions, en anglais et en français, aussi bien d'universitaires africains que d'universitaires d'autres continents travaillant sur l'Afrique.

Contents/sommaire vol. I no. 2 1998

Subscriptions/Abonnements

Africa/Afrique	US$10.00
Others/autres	US$15.00

NAME/NOM : --

ADDRESS/ADRESSE: --

COUNTRY/PAYS --

FAX NO: --

E-MAIL: --

DATE: --

SIGNATURE
(obligatoire/necessary)

You enclose payment by cheque to/Vous réglez par chèque à l'odre du
CODESRIA, Avenue Cheikh Anta Diop x Canal 4 BP 3304 Dakar SENEGAL .
Tel. : (221) 825 98 14/22/23 Fax : (221) 824 12 89
E-mail: codesria@sonatel.senet.net

Class and Ethnicity in the Struggle for Power—The Failure of Democratization in the Congo-Brazzaville[1]

Anne Sundberg*

Résumé: En Afrique, les grandes questions à l'ordre du jour sont celles des droits et des libertés, de la guerre, de la violence et de l'insécurité au sein de la société. A partir de mes recherches au Congo, j'aimerais dire que la société est de plus en plus fragmentée et désorganisée. Dans le document, j'ai essayé de montrer que l'ethnicité est utilisée tant par les hommes politiques que par les gens pour rivaliser et se disputer le pouvoir; les jeunes sont devenus plus individualistes, se sentant abandonnés et trahis par leurs dirigeants politiques; ainsi il se sont organisés en milices pour s'impliquer dans la lutte pour la distribution des ressources. En outre, ces milices et la prolifération du banditisme apparaissent comme étant un défi à l'endroit de ceux qui gouvernent. Dans une telle situation de frustration sans perspectives heureuses, les populations se retrouvent dans une insécurité totale. L'imaginaire, avec ses propres modes d'interprétation ou de mobilisation culturelle/ethnique, semble être le seul moyen de lecture de la réalité. La lecture de la réalité selon l'ordre symbolique s'appuie sur le pouvoir des hommes politiques et leur capacité de se servir de la dynamique de l'imaginaire à leurs fins propres.

* Department of Socio-Anthropology, University of Lund, Sweden.

The Congo[2] has been trying to instal democracy since 1991 (Diouf 1998)[3]. A conflict within the political class, after the end of the Cold War, led to a weakening of the state which, in turn, made it possible to promote demands for a national conference. The present situation, however, can, best be seen as a struggle for kingship among political leaders. The political hierarchy has been broken down by the democratization process, without being replaced by some other form of political integration, a problem that is desperately serious, and to which there are no effective solutions at the moment (Ekholm Friedman and Sundberg 1996:8).

The Congo's natural resources have always been the object of a power struggle rather than the basis for development and improvement of living conditions for its people. The 'democratic system' has led to an intensified ethnic struggle within the political class. The majority-minority game does not fit the African system. The minority feels, and is indeed, excluded. So far, the only way of avoiding a destructive power-struggle has been to invite the so-called 'opposition' to share power, i.e. inclusion, which, in fact, represents a return to the one party system with its power-sharing among a number of ethnic groups, or rather political clans. The emerging picture shows an ongoing disintegration of polity and society. The disintegrative tendencies take the form of feudalization in the sense that various feudal lords use their own groups and militias to gain access to the throne. This kind of disintegration has recently accelerated. The state no longer constitutes a supreme authority with a monopoly over the use of

---

2.   In this text Congo refers to what is called Congo-Brazzaville today since the former Zaïre decided to change its name to Congo, or the Democratic Republic of Congo.

3.   For an extensive discussion on the African political liberalizations or transitions see the work of Mamadou Diouf (1998). He discusses whether we should see the transitions as a result of internal or external factors.

force. Instead a number of feudal lords/warlords[4] claim an equal right to supremacy and to their own territories. In the present conflict ex-President Sassou N'Guesso demanded that President Lissouba himself should sign the peace treaty, which the latter refused to do, arguing that Sassou was not his equal and that the Prime Minister, at a lower level in the hierarchy, would be the right person to do it. In today's Congo each feudal lord has his own militia to protect his territory. One of them even administers his own port and the collection of customs dues in Brazzaville.

The state is conceived as something that can be possessed. The political leader of the 'opposition', Bernard Kolelas[5] of the (MCCDI), is thought of by his group as the real heir to political power. He is the saviour, the Messiah or Moses. He is a Lari, as was the first president, Fulbert Youlou, who 'inherited' his power from the French. The elected president, Lissouba, was, according to many Laris, a usurper without any legitimate right to power.

Today the members of the political class all call themselves democrats[6], thus legitimizing their struggle for political power. The cleavage between the politicians and the people is, however, extreme. The political class 'liberated itself' (Ekholm) a long time ago from the people. The problematic political situation in Central Africa is hidden behind the soundbite 'free and fair elections', as if these by themselves would bring about democratization. Western parliamentary democracy

---

4. The use of the word *warlords* implies their power to or even will to destroy, which at least today (1997) seems to be one of the most important features of the present conflict.

5. Bernard Kolelas has his ethnic base in Pool — see map in the appendix. He is from Kinkala and has been one of the most fervent critics of the former socialist single party regime. He is now mayor of Brazzaville.

6. Meaning that they all say they want the democratization process to continue and that ex-President Sassou Nguesso's greatest critique of Lissouba was that he did not prepare the presidential elections well enough.

developed in a situation where ideology and not ethnicity constituted the basis of political parties.

It has recently been suggested (e.g. by Yusuf Hassan, UNHCR in Southern Africa) that there may be other models for democratization which could be developed and applied in Africa. A similar view is apparent in the writings of Partha Chatterjee. When talking about modernity, he says that '(t)he forms of modernity will have to vary between different countries depending upon specific circumstances and social practices' (Chatterjee 1997:8).

In an article in *The Economist* the problem of democracy and what models to use was posed as follows:

> Is there a way for Africans to bind their different peoples together within a government to avert the sort of grievances that drive secessionist demands? There can probably be no universal model, least of all one imposed by outsiders. But for the first time Africans are experimenting with home-grown ways of arranging multi-ethnic states... Some are trying federalism. Others, such as South Africa, are entrenching power-sharing as a way of tying minorities and giving them a stake in future stability. The western concept of loyal opposition has little resonance in much of Africa; for the vanquished, especially a minority tribe, the price of defeat can be high indeed. South Africa's version of power-sharing was the child of its troubled history. But the principle of inclusion, and the hazards of politics in which the winner takes all, are things that Africans ignore at their peril (*The Economist*, September 10th-16th, 1994).

Thus, inclusion seems like a new strategy for Africa. But this is, in fact, a traditional strategy, the African palaver and the traditional mode of consensus-seeking. This model may, however, appear more democratic than it really is. It is always power holders who make this model work. Orality plays an important role. Oral authority is an aspect of the chief's general authority, meaning that consensus never deviates significantly from his own view. The issue was taken up when interviewing André

Milongo[7]. My question was whether the traditional consensus model could be used today. 'What you mean', he says, 'is la palabre africaine',

> la façon par laquelle nos anciens avaient l'habitude de résoudre les contradictions, les conflits, bien, on n'a pas integré ça, parce que ce n'est pas moderne ça, qu'est-ce que ça veut dire le consensus, finalement pour revenir au monopartisme... au monopartisme qui n'a pas fonctionné.

Thus, Milongo identifies consensus with the one party system and power-sharing. 'The principle of inclusion' is nothing else than the old African system of power-sharing. What might make it look different is the change from 'monopartisme' to 'multipartisme'. The transition from power-sharing among politicians who belonged to a single party to power-sharing among the same old men who now belong to different parties is not much of a change.

It is the feeling of being caught in a zero-sum game, where the winner takes all, that is the most serious problem of Congolese 'democracy'. An atmosphere of total disappointment and despair prevails when one's own candidate has lost. This also provides an opening for negotiations and unions between previously bitter enemies, which seem astonishing to the outside observer. These unions are, however, readily broken in order to open negotiations with other parties that suddenly seem to offer more.

Ethnicity may be explosive when it is politicized. Ethnic war and ethnic cleansing took place in 1993, in a situation where different ethnic groups had intermarried and where their children consequently were 'mixed' (Ekholm Friedman and Sundberg 1995). This differed from the situation in the 1940s and 50s, when the boundaries between the various ethnic groups were both socially and territorially relatively clear, as a result of control by the elders (c.f. Ekholm Friedman 1994a). As their control has lost its grip, during the last 3-4 decades, the young have both

---

7.   President of the Parliament at the time and Prime Minister during the transition to democracy in 1991-1992.

intermarried and spread throughout province and country. All are present in Brazzaville. The blurred boundaries between the groups involved in the conflict did not, however, prevent them from killing each other. On both sides they used various methods for identifying the Other, although they sometimes made mistakes and killed their own. What seems to be an important factor both in 1993 and 1997 is, what Donald Horowitz has called the 'fear of extinction' (Horowitz 1985).

During the ethnic war in 1993-94, two ethno-political blocs emerged in Brazzaville, each of them with its own militia. One was La Mouvance présidentielle, under Pascal Lissouba, based ethnically in Niboulek, i.e. the three provinces to the west of the Pool, the Niari, the Bouenza and the Lékoumou. The other was l'Opposition, under Bernard Kolelas, based ethnically among the Lari in the Pool. Included in the latter bloc were also the Vili of the Kouilou Province. The former President Sassou-Nguesso and his PCT provided additional support[8]. The northerners were at that time marginalized because of the small proportion of the total population which they represented (see map in appendix I)).

Militias have been part of the political picture from a few years after independence, but the democratization process, or rather the multi party system, seems to open up 'the market' for militias. Every political leader of any importance needs his bodyguards (Quantin 1997). The

---

8.   In May 1994, the country was divided into different zones controlled by ethnic groups or blocs. Ethnic cleansing had occurred, creating zones with homogenous populations who feared entering each other's territory. Bacongo Makelekele and Kinsoundi, which the Lari themselves identified as Lari territory, have been cleansed of their Niboulek inhabitants. People had been killed or ousted and their homes plundered and sometimes completely destroyed. Many Niboulek who had bought land and built houses in that area, had been driven away, their homes destroyed and their belongings stolen and sold in the streets. What has happened in the latest conflict is that some of the Niboulek living in the northern areas of Brazzaville have fled Sassou territory and some of them have actually sought refuge in Bacongo and Makelekele.

militias are not only formed by the political leaders but are also an initiative coming from below, because the young are aware of how they can explore the situation. The following story is revealing on several accounts. This young man talks about the situation in 1992 just around the time of the first democratic elections since independence.

> I was boy chauffeur on a bus [he left because buses were fired at]. I am illiterate. I left Brazzaville and worked for a while in Ngoma Tse Tse with charcoal. When I heard about recruitment to the Ninjas I came back to Brazzaville. There were two different groups. I did not become a real Ninja but an *éclaireur*. My job was to point out where there were Niboulek houses and families. The real Ninjas stayed with the president of the Opposition and they constituted *une équipe d'intervention*. We, the 'informers' (*les indicateurs*) worked in the area and did our job before the real Ninjas intervened. Then we plundered and destroyed the houses together, and we beat them up [his category had to hand over the loot to the higher-ranking Ninjas]. I used to live in Kinsoundi with my uncle so I knew the area very well, who lived where and where they came from.

We were recruited, and after that we waited for some time. In the mornings we went footing (jogging). One day they told us to be prepared. That was after the elections, when they announced the results, they said:

> *on a triché* (that there had been fraud in connection with the elections). And they told us we had to be prepared for war against Niboulek. I did not want to fight at the beginning but then I heard that Lari had been driven out of Loubomo (Dolisie), Sibiti and Bouensa. Then I felt angry [la colère!] (Words in paranthèses, my remarks)

After the war in 1993-94 the young men were very frustrated, ashamed and felt they had been used by *les leaders politiques*. The frightening aspect of the situation is that modern arms were handed out to 'young bandits'. The guns provide these young men with power and food (Ekholm Friedman and Sundberg 1995).

By the beginning of 1997, banditry had increased although it was difficult to distinguish 'ordinary' banditry from the violence caused by the military and police. Many of the young men in the various militias

(Bazenguissa-Ganga 1996; Sundberg 1995; Ekholm Friedman and Sundberg 1995) had been recruited into the ordinary army, as part of the peace treaty of 1994. But not all of them. In February (1997) there were TV reports, and rumours, in what is commonly called 'Radio Trottoir', about trains being stopped at Loudima in the Niari by young people, all Nibolek[9], who had been recruited for the presidential militia. Whether they were trained at Aubeville[10] or not is not totally clear[11]. They claim to have been given promises that they would be recruited by the army. Since they were not so recruited, they decided to force their way in. They called themselves cocoyes which, according to my informants, means a group of very strong soldiers, some kind of special force[12]. They had three demands:

- to be recruited into regular army,
- to have the rank of sergeants, and
- to have their chief changed.

The reason why they wanted their chief changed was that he had 'eaten' their money. After the chef-d'état major had 'spoken', the chief was changed and the trains were subsequently allowed to proceed. The event was discussed on TV and was interpreted as part of the power struggle and the game of politics.

Two other examples of the different kinds of banditry, that was increasingly typical at the beginning of 1997, and which show how dangerous the situation had become, are the following.

---

9. See the map in the appendix.

10. Aubeville is a village in the region of Bouenza were Lissouba's militia was trained by Israeli mercenaries. Rémy Bazenguissa-Ganga call them *La réserve ministérielle,* but they are generally known as *Aubevillois.*

11. Or whether they had been recruited for something called the *Action de rénovation rurale,* which was a kind of military training where one had the possibility of getting recruited to the ordinary army after passing a test.

12. Cocoye seems to have an Israeli connotation; it may be based on a Hebrew word.

The first story is about a group of bandits, who, in January, tried to stage a hold-up in Poto-Poto (see map of Brazzaville). A girl happened to see them and cried out. She was shot. The police came, shot some of the bandits and when they captured the last one, tried to 'make him speak', i.e. to tell them were their arms came from and who was in command. Eventually he was killed.

The other incident concerns the thieves in Massina, a neighbourhood of Mfilou (see map of Brazzaville) who had been terrorizing the local population. Many families had been victims of their assaults. Finally they were caught. As they were Ninjas, the people of the neighbourhood called for other Ninjas to kill them.

In January-February 1997, the situation seems to be worsening. The politicians and the military had not been able to retrieve the weapons that had been handed out so freely before the conflict of 1993-94.

The Politicians and the Lack of Economic Development

The cleavage between the politicians and the people is enormous. The political class has, as mentioned above, separated itself completely from the people. After the National Conference (in 1991) the people were only mobilized in order to vote and then along ethnic lines. Later, young men were recruited into the militias. Class is still of crucial importance in the Congo even if it is hidden for the moment by ethnicity. The relationship between these two aspects of social reality should be studied more thoroughly by social scientists. The Congolese case shows that ethnicity, in spite of the country's pronounced class conflict, can be activated at any time. A condition for the control of ethnic conflict is an effective state with real powers (Hobsbawm 1997:55). It is interesting to note that ethnicity and the clan system do not quite correspond, although clan politics are used as a strategy in

order to compete for political power (Ekholm Friedman and Sundberg 1996).

The ethnic problem is closely connected to the lack of economic development. There are very few jobs outside the civil service, and even those with jobs have not been regularly paid during the last couple of years. In 1996 President Lissouba managed to pay civil servant's salaries for the whole year, which people attributed to the prospect of presidential elections in 1997. But the salaries had been cut by 30 per cent in 1995 and there had also been a devaluation by 50 per cent of the CFA franc, which meant that the people had suffered a great loss of earnings. As the situation has worsened during 1997, with the war and the chaos this has created, and as prices have tripled, people have become even more dependent on their ethnic networks and patron-client relationships than before 1990. There is no welfare state to turn to in times of need. People are left with their family as the only source of security.

Owing to pressure from the World Bank and the Internaional Monetary Fund (IMF), the Congo has opted for the separation of the economy from politics, in order to promote economic development. During the one-party regime, the economic performance of the state enterprises was extremely poor and they never functioned as a source of income for the state but, rather as a fountain of wealth for the upper echelons employed (Atipo 1985, Ekholm Friedman 1990, 1994). There was much talk about the privatization of electricity and water supply, which understandably enough never even got started. The former Minister of Energy tried to give a different picture in one of the issues of *Jeune Afrique*: everything functions as normal, though money goes through the banks in Pointe Noire instead (*Jeune Afrique* 1997).

Owing to increasing poverty during the last decade, the clan system has disintegrated, and those who today engage in ethnic conflict are more individualized than even before (Ekholm Friedman 1994).

Neither family nor clan have sufficient means to use for their strategies. The young have to look for other *bienfaiteurs*. They are used by the politicians while at the same time promoting their own interests. There is an intense struggle over resources and it seems to groups 'outside' the ruling group as if only members of that group get promoted and find jobs. Already in October 1992 it was claimed that 'la plupart des directeurs généraux et directeurs de service' appointed in mid-October belonged to UPADS (the President's party) and were from Niboulekin (*Jeune Afrique*, 19-25 October 1992, no.1663). This was also a obvious feature of the war in 1993-94. As pointed out by Hobsbawm, 'il s'agit de lutter contre les autres groupes qui sont en concurrence pour le partage des ressources de l'Etat commun à tous' (Hobsbawm 1997:53).

It is important to 'specify what the groups are fighting over... and why ethnic lines of conflict are important' (Horowitz 1985:15). It may be, as Patrick Quantin puts it, that the 'ethnic variable' does not exist except *a posteriori*, but 'comme discours de rationalisation des mythes, mais occulte bien plus qu'elle ne dévoile les pratiques politiques et leurs enjeux' (Quantin 1994:170).

Young Men

A common feature in conflicts all over the world seems to be that young men are the most easily recruited and enrolled in armies and militias. They are often very young, i.e. between 13 and 20 (Horowitz 1985). What happens in the Congo is definitely a youth problem which can be related to the economic failure. What happened in Loudima is an example of this problem. If President Lissouba had won the elections, they would have had no chance to be recruited.

Why have the politicians been so reluctant to retrieve arms? One answer is that they need their militias. Each politician seems to have his

guard or militia[13]. The politicians use young, poor men for their needs in their struggle for power, and they have handed out the arms themselves. The politicians' own sons have been sent abroad, mostly to Europe. The young men have absolutely no possibility of earning their living. It is hardly strange that the young men turn to banditry with guns in their hands. It seems as if they are sometimes pushed into action in order to destabilize the situation. In an interview one of my informants says:

> They can only recruit young men living under miserable conditions and who don't think. They usually get 300 Fr a day. The boys are told that they will get military training in Israel or in the US, and that they will return as officers. This is very tempting as we admire and envy the military. Even their parents are told so in order to get their consent. Sometimes the parents are fanatics who conceive of their political chief as God, and they want their sons to join the Ninjas. But the boys are not sent to Israel, they just get a gun and a short instruction in its use. After that, they have to obey orders. When the chief of the band (they operate in smaller units) wants an attack to be carried through, he gives his orders. And you must obey because he is the one who feeds you. You cannot refuse. You are fed by him and housed by him, for a boy like him that is enough.

They are easily seduced by a little money, and a roof over their heads. Another militia man says:

> But in the end the politicians are ungrateful, those men who supported us, they pay us ape money, I would even say that we can be compared to saucepans. Saucepans good for cooking, but when it is time to serve one says: The saucepans are dirty, they will make the table dirty so then you throw them away some place. That's how we have been thanked, we, the young Congolese...

The young men recruited are mostly without prospects. They are school drop-outs and have no job. If you do not have a job, it means that you do

---

13.   There are not only the Ninjas, Cobras, Zulus and Aubevillois, there are also *les réquins, les vautours, les lampioles.* Rémy Bazenguissa-Ganga (1996) shows that it is not the politicians who start recruiting their guards, but rather the young men who start organizing their defence. This works both ways. Today the politicians do not dare not to have their militias in order to protect themselves from the others.

not have the possibility of becoming independent of your family. You are, of course, never totally independent in Congolese society. But it is very important for young men to prove their manhood, as the following story shows:

> A young man living in his father's house with his wife (they had been married traditionally but not in church or according to the civil law) finally got a job as a computer-specialist. Before he told his father that he had actually got a job, he waited until he got his first salary. He then bought his father a costume and when giving it to his father he showed that he was now an adult and had got a job to support his family.

Without money young men cannot marry or even have a girl-friend. They are nothing. They spend their days in the company of their peers, smoking marihuana,[14] drinking beer and using 'Roche' (a very strong sedative). At night they walk around the neighbourhood, *le quartier*, look for some place to go, often une veillée or wake, where they start to harass people. They dance and they urinate and defecate in front of everybody, a provocatively obscene act. They want to fight somebody, and as they have been or are Ninjas, people are afraid to defy them, because at any moment they may bring out a gun and shoot[15]

But not all of them are dropouts without education or future possibilities. Among them are also young men studying at the university[16]. One of my informants is preparing his DEA (MPhil) in economics, who joined the Zulus to 'defend his rights'. Another joined

---

14. According to the 'Internal Affairs Ministry' in Congo, 33 per cent of the Congolese uses drugs (*L'Autre Afrique*, no. 3, 4-10 juin 1997.

15. Joao Honwana giving a lecture at the CODESRIA Governance Institute 1997 described the Mozambican case where presented the idea of being a man with a gun in your hands and the power that a young man feels. The lecture was entitled: 'Resolution of Conflicts: Situation and Research Trends'.

16. The university as well as the schools have not been working properly the last five years owing to political instability and war. The teachers and professors have been on strike as well as the students. As there was a cut in salaries, people are not motivated to go and work, nor salaries have been paid regularly.

the Ninjas because he believed he would be better off and that the politicians would keep their promises. He felt very disappointed and disillusioned in 1995.

Perhaps we shall see new political structures emerge as a result of this process of disintegration. These young men were earlier completely excluded socially and politically. Now they have become a political force and a very dangerous one, difficult if not impossible to control. Some of the gangs operate more or less on their own in both city and countryside (Ekholm Friedman and Sundberg 1996). Thus, the politicians manipulate the youth but the youth is liberating itself and uses the politicians for its own interest.

The Security of People

> *Il y en a qui s'arme le jour, il y en a qui s'arme la nuit*
>
> (Jean-Marc Ela).

The Congolese state in January 1997 was close to anarchy and had no real possibility of defending the rights of the citizens or of protecting them against robberies and other kinds of banditry. Two of the examples described above shows how robbery and 'ordinary' crime are treated. The police systematically use torture when taking in presumed thieves. The OCDH have proof[17] of crimes committed by the police and were trying to rouse public opinion on this issue. They were not, however, completely understood by the people, who were tired of criminals. When asked about the behaviour of the police, my informants were quite clear about the danger of police killing people without trial and what effects this might have in the long run. I was told that the criminals are sometimes used in settling old disputes between politicians.

---

17. I was given copies of the photographs of one case. The man had been burnt with the use of an iron and finally he was shot.

What has been seen in many African countries lately is that politicians orchestrate some crimes in order to blame one another. The polity becomes a space for violence and crime (Ela, J.M. 1997). In Congo there are reports of both Lissouba's and Sassou's militias ravaging and looting abandoned houses. The material destruction has been enormous.

It seems as if the security of people is 'threatened from the top', as Jean-Marc Ela states (1997). He goes so far as to say that 'we (Africans) are ruled by criminals'. Furthermore the leaders are prepared to go very far in order to keep or to gain power. In the mid-80's some children disappeared in Brazzaville. According to rumours they were taken to Sassou Nguesso who consumed their hearts. It was also said that he used literally to bathe in blood.

In today's Congo a sect, called CIFMC[18], attracts many of the haut fonctionnaires, and every Sunday at the Avenue des armées, cars in great numbers, four-wheeled drives and Mercedes etc., are parked. The woods in front of the parliament are full of people praying for power and the possibility of staying in power.

As Jean-Marc Ela points out, the imaginary must be taken into account. He uses the concept *l'économie du jour et l'économie de la nuit* (the economy of the day and the economy of the night). 'L'état lui-même bascule vers l'occulte, le souterrain. Il s'y passe beaucoup de choses qui mettent en cause la sécurité des vies humaines'. In order to understand the situation, we must distinguish between the visible and the invisible. Ali El Kenz stresses the importance of the imaginary of a conflict. The imaginary is important in the interpretation of reality. When reality no longer produces signs of hope, the imaginary takes

---

18. CIFMC: Communauté des femmes, messagères de Christ. Apparently this started in Canada as a movement among women to come together and pray for issues important to women. It was a kind of ecumenical movement, but in Zaïre it has become a church or sect. It is no longer just for women.

over. Nationalism was earlier related to reality and hopes for the future. By using the metaphors of Prometheus and Hermes, he tries to demonstrate how technological development and rational disenchanted modernity struggle with the cultural spiritual dimension in society. The world of Hermes allows people to fill their lives with meaning (El Kenz 1997a and b).

The interpretation and reinterpretation of the situation in the Congo takes place every moment. One example of this is what happened in 1992-93. There was a march organized from Bacongo, in which Bernard Kolelas took part. When they reached the French Cultural Centre, a disturbance occurred. The military started to shoot and some people were killed. But the real problem was, according to the interpretation, that the President never 'spoke'. As a father he should talk in order to calm the situation. He should have explained what had happened and he should of course have condemned the shootings. But he chose to remain silent. He was not even in Brazzaville at the time, which has also been the subject of various interpretations and reinterpretations.

Power and Its Expression Through the Leader

Le pouvoir c'est un tontine, à chacun son tour

(Jean-Marc Ela).

During the government of President Sassou Nguesso, a modern advertisement campaign was launched. Huge posters were erected throughout the city with pictures of the President in a field of vegetables. He was holding some tomatoes or eggplants in his hands. The idea was to encourage the country to be self-sufficient before the year 2000. But the interpretation among the people was that Sassou said to his people: Now I have taken my part and here is your share (i.e. the four or five tomatoes in his hands). This shows a great sense of humour among the Congolese, but what is more interesting is the kind of

resistance from below towards a corrupt leadership. This phenomenon is described and analyzed by Achille Mbembe in his very provoking article, 'Sexe, bouffe et obscénité politique' (*Terroirs*, no. 002-janvier 1995). He shows how intimately connected the expression of leadership is to material expressions of looking good (i.e. not too thin) and having a good love-life.

In the Congo, there is a deep resistance to the tendency of the political class, no matter what government, to 'partager les avantages matériel que procure le pouvoir' (Mandzoungou 1995). This 'leakage' of money counteracts the necessary action of trying to reduce the cost of the public sector. Mandzoungou, who has been *payeur général* in Congo, says what has not been said before, at least no so openly,

> ...le problème fondamental du Congo réside dans la nature irresponsable de sa classe politique qui, aujourd'hui comme hier, oublie le sens du devoir dans la gestion de la chose publique une fois parvenue au pouvoir. Elle est inapte à toute action qui exige sacrifice et abnégation de soi et manque par conséquence de crédibilité dans son discours et ses mots d'ordre (Mandzoungou 1995).

In interviews in May 1994 it seemed as if members and supporters of the UPADS, the political party in power, were the real democrats. They expressed the idea that as they had won the election they were now in power, and if the opposition was not satisfied with the situation, they could make a better campaign for the next election to be able to win the next time and then get their share of the cake. This is what one is fighting for, power and the possibility to 'eat' (Mbembe 1993, 1995, and Hobsbawm 1997).

As I said earlier, Bernard Kolelas, the opposition leader, is thought of as Messiah or Moses, the saviour of the country. He is also, to some, the descendent of Matswa[19] and as such is again the Messiah who has

19. André Grenard Matswa was a political leader who refused to pay taxes to the French colonialist regime and who organized the protest called 'les trois francs'.

come back to save his people. It is said that he also uses the traditional chief's blessing, or father's blessing, which means that people crawl under his legs when he touches them with a traditional whip, a buffalo tail. During the war in 1993-94, the nkisi nkondi[20] taken from the museum or from ORSTOM were used as protectors of Bacongo and the Kolelas territory.

At the beginning of 1996, a strike was organized by the workers at the state-owned electric company. In the heat of the conflict, some of the workers cut the electric wires including those leading to the President's palace. This made President Lissouba so angry that he put those workers in jail. The news was transmitted to the International Workers Union and to national unions around the world. The Swedish Workers Union (LO) was informed at a time when the Congolese ambassador to Sweden was guiding a Swedish delegation. The event caused some problems in relations with the Swedish government. The President's action could be interpreted as an attempt to intimidate the workers as they expressed their opinion in the new democratic context. Lissouba himself was however, very surprised at the strong reaction coming from different countries. 'I am the chief, they cannot do what they want to the President'[21] was his reaction. The law is conceived as an expression of the President's power, and under him of lesser power-holders. This is a traditional feature. It is noted in earlier ethnographic-historical material about kingdoms in Central Africa that the authority of the king was fourfold; economic, political, religious and

---

He died in prison in France and quite soon people started to 'pray to him' and some said that he would come back as Messiah. He was a Lari from Kinkala.

20. Fetish used for protection. The ones taken from the museum are from the nineteenth century and they were put up at the entrance to the territory occupied by Kolelas, where the Ninjas were in control.

21. These are not his exact words, his reaction was given to me by sources close to the Congolese consul in Sweden.

judicial (Ekholm Friedman 1972, 1984), which to some extent explains the general acceptance of the behaviour of former rulers.

During the Sassou regime, there was no separation between the private and public economy. The traditional strategy was to use resources to expand the size of one's own group and to establish and maintain alliances with other groups. This traditional authority is challenged today and attempts have been made to separate the judicial system from the political system and to disconnect the economic sphere from the political.

Traditionally, a political system was established by military means and the king was, above all, a conqueror (Ekholm Friedman and Sundberg 1996:5). In June 1997 Sassou Nguesso was militarily well-equipped, owing to the wealth he had acquired while ruling the Congo. It is not known whether France contributed financially to his military force, but the French have at least sold weapons both to him and to the regular army. It is clear that Sassou could not have won through ordinary elections, but had to conquer the kingdom.

Recent Development in the Congo

On June 1997, President Lissouba decided to start taking back arms from the different militias, starting with the Cobras, the militia of former President Sassou Nguesso. The agreement about the collection of arms and the demilitarization of the militias was already signed in December 1995 but nothing had been done. On 28 May 1997, the Council of Ministers decided that all activities of and even the existence of militias were henceforth forbidden (*L'Autre Afrique*, 1997, no. 3 du 4 au 10 juin). The question is of course what made Lissouba take the decision at that moment. The temperature of the debate regarding the presidential elections had been increasing since April. Sassou Nguesso had also started campaigning in the north by provoking Yhombi in his home town Owando. Apparently Sassou wanted to be received in the

traditional manner, which meant being carried in a *tipoy* into the town. Everything was arranged. He had sent his security to organize a bodyguard during his visit. It happened that somebody loyal to Yhombi was recruited and at one moment he felt threatened and pulled out a gun. But Sassou's bodyguard was faster and the young man was shot. Yhombi sent his own son to calm things down, but the son was also killed. As Yhombi organizes the President's campaign, this was a provocation for both sides. Ali El Kenz talks about the symbols in a conflict and that the degree of violence has no reference to the level of violence of the first crime. When the Congolese Armed Forces (Forces armées congolaises—FAC) surrounded Sassou Nguesso's head-quarters in Mpila, Sassou ordered his militia to fight back. The FAC was taken by surprise by the resistance of the Cobras and their military force. They were totally unprepared for the military strength of Sassou's 'army'. Sassou had seemingly been preparing his defence for a long time. His weapons were new whereas those of FAC were older and their men not so well-trained.

What may not be evident to everybody was the reason why the negotiations in Libreville did not seem to work. It was said in the news from Radio France International, RFI, that Lissouba had accused Omar Bongo of being partial. Omar Bongo happens to be married to Sassou Nguesso's daughter and it is obvious to every Congolese that this will make him partial. It is also interesting to note that Laurent Désirée Kabila wants to get on the stage of international negotiation. Is he trying to rehabilitate himself in the eyes of the world? It can be noted with the same interest that France is not too keen about the prospect of a success for Kabila.

What is the resemblance between the war of 1993-94 and today's (1997) war? Today's conflict is more clear in the sense that it is a war between two warlords, two politicians who have been enemies for a long time and who are so alienated from the people that they are quite

prepared to sacrifice them. In 1993-94 the ethnic element was much more important and ordinary people took part in the killings and looting. So far ordinary people have tried to keep out of trouble and have left Brazzaville in their hundreds of thousands. There are stories about northern families hiding people from Niboulek and helping them to get out of Sassou Nguesso territory. In Pointe-Noire the situation has so far been kept under control. People from the north living there had not yet been threatened in August. But as the situation seemed to worsen, it could be only a matter of time before the whole country would be at war. On 27 August 1997, RFI reported that Lissouba had started bombing Mpila at 5.30 in the morning of the same day as the negotiations in Libreville were supposed to be reopened. There were rumours about Sassou Nguesso taking over the north, but also other news saying that it was a question of attempted mutinies and that the army was still loyal to the government.

Significantly Sassou Nguesso did not call Lissouba President but Monsieur Lissouba, when interviewed by RFI. He does not recognize the legitimacy of Lissouba's power. 31, August 1997 was the end of Lissouba's mandate. Lissouba was militarily defeated on the 15 October 1997, with the help of Angolan troupes.

France and Its Relation to the Congo

The role of France cannot be underestimated in the recent conflict. France has always kept a very close relationship to its former colonies and has signed defence treaties as well as providing technical assistance for military training. It is obvious that France tries to gain influence in Central Africa in order to be more influential in world politics. This is confirmed in a recent research report where Inger Österdahl argues:

> Les liens étroits entre la France et l'Afrique francophone sub-saharienne dans le domaine militaire a autant servi les intérêts de la France que ceux des pays africains. Les liens militaires à leur tour se sont manifestés dans les accords de défense et d'assistance militaire technique et dans maintes interventions armées entreprises

> par la France dans ces pays depuis les indépendances. La France a
> pu garder d'une manière assez étonnante un empire quasi-colonial
> en Afrique sans que le reste du monde ne s'en aperçoive sans qu'il
> ne s'en inquiète. L'Afrique a servi les intérêts de la France en lui
> permettant de rester une grande puissance sur la scène
> internationale (1997:86).

However, the official policy seems to be to withdraw from the African
scene. In the media there has recently been much talk about an end of
the French era (*L'Autre Afrique*, 1997, no. 25, 12 au 18 novembre). The
paradox between discourse and policy on the one side and the
importance of profit and control over resources on the other. France has
managed to get control, through ELF Congo, over the two new
oil-fields off the Congolese coast and will certainly do a lot in order to
keep them. President Lissouba actually asked the French military
present in Brazzaville, because of the problematic situation in
Congo-Zaïre, to stay on, but the French declined. 'Les congolais ont
rompu l'accord de défense avec la France il y a une vingtaine d'années',
was the answer of Jacques Chirac gave (*Le Point*, 1997, no.1297, 26
juillet). This was understood as the French giving 'carte blanche' to
Sassou Nguesso. Officially France refused to choose between its 'two
friends'. *Le Point* continues, however, its critique of the French
attitude:

> Cynisme d'un Etat qui attend que le meilleur gagne, puisqu'il
> entretient des relations avec les deux belligérants dans ce pays où les
> rivalités politiques ont de fortes odeurs de pétrole?

The present image of France is darker than it used to be. The young
'southerners' are very frustrated, to say the least, by this policy, and
when France refused to help Lissouba, some of the Zulus were so
outraged by this that the French living in Brazzaville, who wanted to
leave the country, had a hard time managing to get out. The Zulus
stopped cars going to the airport in order to check the nationality of their
occupants. If they were French, they were killed. A group of Swedes,
who had been stopped, saw all four people in another car shot. The
Swedes had to prove that they were not French.

It seems that when Sassou is back in power, we will be able to get international approval if he manages to impose control over the anarchistic situation and to re-establish the order needed by external commercial interests. By alliances with companies like ELF, he managed to finance his war against the militias in Congo. These ideas have been suggested by Patrick Quantin:

> ..., ces gouvernants s'attirent les bonnes grâces des bailleurs de fonds et des ONG donnant l'impression de lutter contre l'instabilité en même temps qu'ils se débarrassent de leurs concurrents locaux (Quantin 1997:2-3).

The influence of external forces cannot be neglected in the recent conflict. The former President Lissouba has filed a complaint against ELF for its part in Nguesso's successful takeover of power.

Conclusion

Il faut déghettoiser le discours africain (Jean-Marc Ela).

Many social scientists in Africa fervently criticize the present regimes all over Africa and the behaviour of what have been called the kleptocratic/vampire states. The causes of the present situation are more often sought from within, even if reference is still made to colonialism and imperialism. The old Dependency School is no longer a sufficient theory. This new debate gives more room for a new and creative search for solutions. Africa is, of course, not damned, despite being faced with multiple problems, even though Achille Mbembe has introduced the thought of a Return to Darkness (Robert Kaplan 1996). The important questions of today concern the problems of

- rights and liberty,
- war and violence, and
- security within society.

It is very important for scholars to join forces in order to try to understand today's conflictuality. We are faced with similar problems around the world. Some scientists have stressed the specificity of Africa

and therefore also argued for special solutions. I would like to argue, on the basis of my research in the Congo and as an Africanist coming from the North, that in times of economic decline, society becomes more and more fragmented and dehomogenized.

In this paper I have tried to show how ethnicity is used by both politicians and people to compete and fight for power. In the Congo, the young men, who have become more individualized, feel 'abandoned', i.e. deceived, by their political leaders. At the same time, they have organized themselves in militias to fight over the distribution of resources. Ethnic identity has become a very powerful tool. When ethnic groups turn against each other, the outcome is often lethal.

Society is disintegrating. Families no longer have the means to carry out their economic or social strategies and therefore groups other than the family or the clan become more and more important. Sometimes it is a group formed on the basis of ethnic belonging, such as the militias, where young men hope for integration into the regular army, or operate on their own. Sometimes other groups such as sects or secret associations play the role of social networks.

I have also tried to show that the organization of militias and the proliferation of banditry can be seen as a challenge to those in power. The frustration of poor, young men with no opportunities becomes dangerous, especially since the politicians have handed out weapons so freely. Meanwhile the people are left with no security whatsoever. In such a situation, the imaginary, with its own ways of creating meaning, or a cultural/ethnical mobilisation seem to be the only way to interpret reality. The state has lost its legitimacy and can no longer protect its citizens. The interpretation of reality according to the symbolic order underlines the power of the politicians and their ability to use the dynamics of the imaginary for their own purposes.

Bibliography

Atipo, D., 1985, 'La politique du développement de l'élevage au Congo', in Haubert, Frelin and Nguyen Trong Nam Tran (eds.), *Politiques alimentaires et structures sociales en Afrique noire*, Paris, presses universitaires de France.

Bayart, J.F., 1989, *L'Etat en Afrique: la politique du ventre*, Paris, Fayard.

Bayart, J.F., 1993, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*, Longman, New York.

Bayart, J.F., 1997, *La criminalisation de l'Etat en Afrique noire*, Paris, Ed., Complexe.

Bazenguissa Ganga R., 1996, 'Milices politiques et bandes armées à Brazzaville — Enquête sur la violence politique et sociale des jeunes déclassés', *Les Etudes du CERI*, no. 13, avril, Paris.

Bourdieu, P., 1984, 'The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups', in *Theory and Society* 14, no. 6.

Chatterjee, P., 1997, *Our Modernity*, Lecture During Tour in Africa in 1996, SEPHIS/CODESRIA, Dakar.

Diouf, M., 1998, *Libéralisations politiques ou transitions démocratiques: perspectives africaines*, CODESRIA, Dakar.

Ekholm F. K., 1972, *Power and Prestige: The Rise and Fall of the Kongo Kingdom*, Uppsala, Skrivservice.

Ekholm F. K., 1984, *Sad Stories of the Death of Kings: The Involution of Divine Kingship*, Ethnos, Stockholm.

Ekholm F. K., 1990, *Den politiska eliten struntar i Folket*, SIDA - Rapport 3, Stockholm.

Ekholm F. K., 1992, *Catastrophe and Creation*, Harwood Publishers, New York.

Ekholm F. K., 1994a, *Den magiska världsbilden*, Carlssons, Stockholm.

Ekholm F. K., 1994b, *Den afrikanska mardrömmen*, Smedjan, no. 5.

Ekholm F. K. and Sundberg, A., 1995, *Ethnic War and Ethnic Cleansing in Brazzaville*, in Occasional Paper, IDS, Roskilde University.

Ekholm F.K., 1996, 'Reorganization Efforts and the Threat of Ethnic War in Congo', Paper presented at the conference on Humanitarian Disasters, Regime Breakdown and Civil War: The True Face of African Politics?, at SUM (Senter for utvikling og miljö), University of Oslo, 25-26 March.

El Kenz, A., 1997a, 'Prométhée et Hermès', in *Les sciences hors occident au 20e siècle*, l'ORSTOM, Paris.

Gluckman, M., 1955, *Custom and Conflict in Africa*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

Goma, J.J., 1994, *Le peule Koongo — parlons-en un peu aujourd'hui*, ms, Brazzaville.

Hobsbawm, E., 1997, «Qu'est-ce qu'un conflit ethnique?», in *Acte de la recherche en science social*, no. 102, Paris.

Horowitz, D., 1985, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict,* Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press.

Horowitz, D., 1991, *A Democratic South Africa?: Constitutional Engineering in a Divided Society.*

Kaplan, R., 1996, 'The Coming of Anarchy', *Atlantic Monthly.*

Kä, M., 1993, *Théologie africaine pour temps de crise,* Karthala, Paris.

Mandzoungou, J., 1995, 'Le Congo ne sera pas plus performant en 1995', *Le Chemin,* no. 50, janvier-février, Brazzaville.

Mbembe, A., 1993, 'Diagnostic sur les dérapages de la transition démocratique en Afrique', interview in *Afrique 2000, Revue africaine de politique internationale,* no. 12, jan-mars, Bruxelles.

Mbembe, A., 1995, 'Sexe, bouffe, et obscénité politique', in *Terroirs, Revue africaine de sciences sociales,* no. 002, Janeiro, Paris, l'Harmattan.

Quantin, P., 1994, 'Congo: les origines politiques de la décomposition d'un processus de libéralisation', août 1992, décembre 1993, in *L'Afrique politique,* vue sur la démocratisation à marée basse, Paris, Karthala.

Quantin, P., 1997, 'Congo-Brazzaville: du parti-Etat aux parti-milices', lecture at the Conference 'Privatisation des économies, privatisation des Etats', journée d'étude du 5 décembre 1997', Paris, (CEAN-IEP Bordeaux), manuscript to be published in a book by Béatrice Hibou.

Soret, M., 1963, 'La propriété foncière chez les Kongo du Nord-Ouest: caractéristiques générales et évolution', in *African Agrarian Systems,* ed. Biebuyck D., International African Institute, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Sundberg, A., 1995, 'Ninjas, Zulus, Cobras i kamp om makten i Kongo (in the fight about power in Congo), En analys av konflikterna mellan etniska grupper i Kongo', C-uppsats, Avd. För Socialantropologi vid Lunds Universitet.

Zandous, A., 1996, 'Article' in *Le Chemin,* no. 56:12.

Österdahl, Inger, 1997, *La France dans l'Afrique de l'après-guerre froide,* research report, Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala.

Lectures

Given at the CODESRIA Governance Institute 1997, 1 August - 12 September, Dakar Sénégal.

Diouf, Mamadou, CODESRIA, 'Conflicts in African History'.

Ela, Jean-Marc, University of Laval, Canada, director of the Governance Institute.

El Kenz, A., Nantes, France, 1997b, 'The Algerian Conflict: The Imaginary and the Political', 1997b.

Honwana, Joao Bernard, Center for Conflict Resolution, Cape Town, South Africa, 'Resolution of Conflicts: Situation and Research Trends'.

Mbembe, Achille, Executive Secretary CODESRIA, 'Theories and Theorization of Conflicts in Africa: Critical Approach'.

Newspapers and Magazines

L'Autre Afrique, no. 3, 4-10 juin 1997, and no. 25, 12-18 novembre 1997.

Jeune Afrique, (Various Issues).

Le Choc, no. 45, January 28th -February 8th 1997.

Le Chemin, 1995, no. 50, 1996, no. 56.

The Economist, September 10th -16th 1994.

Le Point, no. 1297, 26 juillet 1997.

Interviews

The president of the National Assembly, M André Milongo, high judges and economists in Congo (who must remain anonymous for well known reasons) 'ordinary' people, commoners, in the different areas of the capital, interviews with some people at the countryside.

Other sources

The Congolese Constitution of the 15th of March 1992.

KONGO

LIKOUALA

SANGHA

CUVETTE

LEKOUMOU

NIBOULEK

PLATEAUX

NIARI

POOL

KOUILOU

Brazzaville

BOUENZA

0   50   100   150   200 km

Scale   1:10 mil.

BRAZZAVILLE

Lissouba Territory   NiBouLek

Aubevillois'

Talangai

Moukondo

Ouenze

Harbour

Maya Maya Airport

Moungali

Sassou Territory

Cobras

Mfilou

Plateau de 15 ans

Poto Poto

Moutabala

Mpila

Zulus

Diata

Railway sm

O R S T O M

Centreville

Harbour

Mbamou-is

Djoué-river

'University

Kinsoundi

Moukoundzingouaka

Plateau

THE CONGO-RIVER

Bacongo

Makelekele

Mansimou

KINSHASA

Kolelas Territory

Ninjas

Lari

Frontiers between different militias in the city

0   750   1500   2250   3400

m

Scale 1: 75 000

Citizenship, Alienation and Conflict in Nigeria

William O. O. Idowu[*]

Résumé: Le présent article se propose d'examiner le lien complexe entre les problèmes de citoyenneté, d'aliénation et de conflit au Nigeria. Il commence par une analyse du concept de conflit et de certains termes connexes de violence et de crise. A partir de cette analyse, le document procède à l'identification et à l'examen critique de certains points de vue avancés par les chercheurs sur les causes profondes des conflits au Nigeria, comme l'existence d'enjeux politiques et de conflits de classe, le problème de l'Etat et du paradigme résistant de l'ethnicité. L'article affirme que les hypothèses et présuppositions centrales de ces points de vue ne suffisent pas à expliquer le problème des conflits au Nigeria. L'article conclut que le problème de conflits au Nigeria est intimement lié à l'absence de citoyenneté authentique et véritable dans les interactions et attitudes politiques. Il décrit la vie politique au Nigeria qu'il assimile à l'état conjoncturel de la nature où il n'existe aucune idée de citoyenneté véritable. Etant donné la manière particulière dont est contruit le modèle de citoyenneté nigerianne, c'est-à-dire, un modèle d'exclusion et non d'inclusion, il décrit l'existence d'une relation inter groupes dans laquelle la citoyenneté se définit au niveau sous-étatique. Les enjeux politiques, dans ces conditions, deviennent des enjeux d'antagonisme et de guerre, car ils participent de l'aliénation et de l'exclusion de certains groupes du pouvoir et de ses fruits, et de la domination par des groupes ethniques qui ont réussi à reléguer d'autres groupes à un status marginal.

Introduction

This paper is concerned with interrogating the complex linkage in Nigeria between the problems of citizenship and alienation on the one hand, and that of conflict on the other. I propose to argue that where different attitudes are expressed by individuals and groups in a particular geo-polity on the idea of citizenship, this seems in a sense bound to lead to the generation of conflict.

It is worth asking some questions at this stage, to illuminate the subject matter. In the first instance, how do we define citizenship? What

[*] Department of Philosophy, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife.

peculiar strands of thought are there about the idea of citizenship in Nigeria and in the larger African setting? What is it about the nature of citizenship in Nigeria that makes it conducive to conflictuality? What is conflict? In the light of these questions, there seem to be two possible approaches to the subject matter. The first is properly to examine the nature of citizenship in Nigeria, with a view to establishing the conflictuality inherent in it; the second is to examine the various ways in which an intellectual analysis of conflict can be made, and based on that analysis, to show that the idea of citizenship and the related component of alienation are central to understanding conflict in Nigeria. In this paper, I choose the latter approach. Once again, the thesis I wish to uphold is that conflict in Nigeria is interwoven with the absence of democratic, good governance, and that its focus is the problem of citizenship and the related problem of alienation.

At this point, clarity of terms and directions is needed. In the first place, it is not suggested that there can be no conflict in democratic governance. Far from it. What this paper is suggesting is that the nature of conflict in the Nigerian political scene is fundamentally opposed to the ideals of democracy. There are conflicts which are necessary to consolidate the tenets and principles of democracy; and concerned citizens in such a geo-polity engage in them in order to address the problems of injustice and the absence of fair play. The endless picture of conflict in Nigeria, however, is one of irreconcilable differences and struggles between individuals and groups over access to power and the opportunities and privileges that go with it. Secondly, the idea of citizenship within which conflict in Nigeria is to be considered is one that takes on a second-order level of analysis. The first-order level of analysis of the idea of citizenship is one that establishes the legal or constitutional conception of citizenship. This order of analysis is not the issue at stake when considering conflict in Nigeria. In fact, it might be a mark of intellectual bravery to contend that the legal or constitutional conception of citizenship is either in abeyance or simply non-existent in

Nigeria. Femi Taiwo (1996:15) contended that 'beyond phrase-mongering, there are no citizens in Nigeria, only citizens of Nigeria'. People flood Nigeria, but in actual fact, there are either no Nigerians or there are only a very few of them.

The second-order level of analysis of the concept of citizenship is, I believe, central to an understanding of conflict in Nigeria. This takes us away from the 'relevant irrelevancies' and cruel mockery of mere constitutional provisions to the social conditions in which the nature of citizenship can be best defined. John Scott (1994:145) has argued that the second-order level of the concept of citizenship, herein referred to as the social or sociological concept, is important because of its role in our understanding of the social conditions in societies where the legal status, and by inference the first order analysis, is not recognised. But the problem may not really be in the fact that the legal or constitutional concept is not recognised, it may be that the idea of citizenship in people's mental awareness is one that comprises a whole complex of institutions, practices and conventions. These may be embodied, in often contradictory ways, in the cultural and sub-cultural perspectives of a society and will inform its political and ideological struggles (Scott 1994:46). It is this idea of citizenship in the social sense where I wish to explore the irreconcilable struggles over power, i.e., conflict in Nigeria. But then, what is conflict?

The Nature, Description and Anatomy of Conflict

The fundamental philosophical problems in discussing conflicts, I believe, are the problems of situating conflict, of describing and analysing its structure, of articulating its modes and themes, and of showing how various kinds of conflict may be related. Apart from the above, there is no consensus amongst scholars about the philosophical criteria to be applied for defining and describing conflicts. It is no wonder then that the lack of consensus on the definition and description of conflicts has often resulted in the misuse of related terms. For

example, the words *crisis, conflict, and violence* are related though distinct terms. Scholars tend to regard them as synonymous, but this is not so.

Violence is often the manifestation of an extreme, consistent and intense level of conflict. To this end, violence is always conflictual, while conflict may not necessarily be violent. In an elementary fashion, without much loaded philosophical jargon, violence is harm perpetrated on persons or property. In the case of persons, it ranges from restraining their freedom of movement to torture and death, and in the case of property, from simple fine or damage to complete expropriation or total destruction (Girvetz 1974:185). On the same level of analysis, conflict is said to occur where there is interaction between at least two individuals or groups whose ultimate objectives differ (Nicholson 1971). These simple definitions show the difference between violence and conflict: conflict may not be necessarily destructive, but violence, in most cases, is. That is why we often hear of violent conflict in political parlance, which implies that not all conflicts are violent. What of crisis?

In most cases, crisis is taken to be synonymous with conflict. Some scholars have often identified crisis with conflict just as some others confuse the term conflict with violence. For example, on a pre critical level of analysis, Mike Oquaye (1995:10) associates, almost rigidly, crisis with conflict. According to Oquaye,

> Conflict is a sequence of interactions between groups in society, between groups and governments, and between individuals. The causes of such interactions, the methods employed and their consequences may lead to conflict... Connoting crisis, conflict evokes feeling of tension, fear, and insecurity within the state. Its inherent corollaries include disputations, disagreements, struggles, bad relations, and identification of others as 'enemies' or 'potential enemies'.

Crises are structurally differentiated from conflicts. It may be said that both conflict and crisis are events, but a little application of the rigorous

tool of logic expresses clearly the differences between them. Structurally, crisis goes beyond the occurrence or the manifestation of conflicts. It is true, no doubt, that a crisis cannot be said to be in existence without a prior manifestation or existence of conflict or even violence, but the fact remains that a state of crisis is what comes after a persistent manifestation of moments and states of conflicts. In other words, crises are states of events after a consistent level of conflict and violence have occurred. They denote a turning point, either for good or bad, after conflict or violence. A single occurrence of conflict or violence does not signify a state of crisis. It requires more manifestations of conflicts and violence to establish a state of crisis. At such a level of consistent incidence of violence and conflict, what describes the state of events is called crisis.

We need to explore further the state, nature and description of conflict. Lewis Coser (1956:8) describes conflict as a 'struggle over values, claims to status, power and scarce resources in which the aims of the 'opposing' parties are not only to gain the desired values but also to neutralise, injure or eliminate rivals'. But does the logic of elimination always apply to every single act or incidence of conflict? What sort of elimination could Coser be referring to? A critical look at the above may quickly suggest that the definition of Coser properly fits into an anatomy of the definition of violence where the aim of elimination, especially in the destructive sense, properly applies. Conflict may suggest to us an idea or picture of struggle, but opponents are not literally eliminated in every case of conflict. For example, someone may lose a position of dominance but may not be totally denied any status, power or resources, nor be eliminated Miall suggested four criteria as useful to distinguish a conflict situation from other situations. A closer look, however, will show the insufficiency of his criteria. According to Miall:

> • a conflict can only exist where the participants perceive it as such;

- a clear difference of opinion regarding values, interests, aims, or relations must lie at the root of a conflict;
- the parties in a conflict may be either states or a significant element of the population 'within' the state;
- the outcome of the conflict must be considered extremely important by the parties (Miall 1992).

The application of the rigorous tool of logical exhaustiveness indicates some problems with these criteria. Specifically, I have problems with the second criteria: Miall seems to have omitted the most fundamental factor in describing a conflictual situation. Mere difference of opinion, values, interests, aims or relations does not establish the conflictuality of that situation. Some other action will have to follow that difference of opinion, interests, etc. This is the action that resolves to achieve those aims at the expense of the other party. If two or more individuals or groups have a difference of opinion, and are mute about it, then there is no conflict, although one may say that a conflict situation is in process of being formed. It is the resolve to achieve different aims that denotes the conflictuality. Miall's suggested criteria suffer from the problem of sequential incoherence.

The insufficiency of these criteria becomes rather obvious in another way. If the outcome of the conflict is considered extremely important by the parties, one may then ask what the outcome is supposed to be. Is it an outcome that consists in having achieved an aim at the expense of someone else, or could it be an outcome in terms of the resolution of the conflict? Moreover, if a difference of opinion is at the root of the conflict, then it follows that that difference of opinion is not synonymous with the conflict. An extra, extremely important, factor is needed to establish the conflictuality of that situation, namely the resolve or actions to pursue the aim, which is at variance with the aim of the opposing party.

To this end, therefore, in a descriptive or functional sense, a conflict can be seen as a situation of interaction involving two or more parties in

which actions in pursuit of incompatible objectives, or interests, result in varying degrees of discord. (Deng 1996:220). In most respects, the situationality of conflict and its twin sister, violence, makes all the difference in the world, for questions of conflict and violence are fundamentally questions of order and disorder. It is in fact an argument of intellectual and empirical importance in some scholarly works that conflict is the normal state of human interaction (Zartman 1991:229). In the larger realm of politics, the opinion is loudly expressed that politics is intrinsically related to or, better still, generates conflict. This is due to the fact that the quintessence of politics is power, and where there is talk of power, there is bound to be conflict and compulsion (Oquaye 1995:10).

From this descriptive definition, certain gems of truth can be gleaned in respect of the nature of conflict. First, conflict is a state, a situation, an event or a process which involves a distinct category of social behaviour. Secondly, this distinct category of social behaviour is evident in the clash of two incompatible, yet valued objectives. In other words, it is a process of interaction or striving. It involves a contradiction, a pushing and pulling.

According to Rummel (1976:238-42), conflict embodies the levels of potentiality, dispositions, or manifestations. Conflict as 'potentiality is then the space of possible conflicts; the realm of potential opposing vectors of power' (*Ibid*.238). Dispositions are 'potentialities transformed into tendencies toward specificity and their strength to be so manifest' (*Ibid*.239). Such dispositions have two facets: a conflict-structure and a conflict- situation. The former consists of indicators of the existence of dispositions which have a tendency to conflict, such as slaves and masters, proletariat and bourgeoisie, etc. In other words, a conflict- structure consists of those dispositions opposing each other within the conflict space. The conflict-situation consists of opposing powers, the activation of the opposing tendencies,

such as when the slaves become aware of the equality of all men and the evils of slavery and of their own exploitation at the hands of their masters, while the masters themselves become aware of the need to protect their own interests. Dispositions have become actual opposing powers: a conflict situation exists (ibid.). Manifestations of conflict consist of either of two realities: a balancing of powers or a balance of power. This balancing process occurs at the level of both dispositions and powers, and of manifestations; the process may involve both the conflict situation and manifest confict. The balance of powers indicate the final stage of momentary equilibrium established between the opposing powers (Ibid. pp.240-42).

The concept of conflict is multidimensional; it embraces a family of forms. We select one depending on our analytical purposes and practical problems. Conflicts that exert an effect, directly or indirectly, on the direction and content of public policy are political conflict. In essence, political conflict is ultimately about publicly determined access to public goods and services. It is about the distribution of the rights and privileges available in the public domain. The key to understanding political violence and conflict, argues Neiburg (1969), '...must be found in the dynamics of bargaining relationships rather than in the chance issues of the conflict'. Political conflict therefore arises in the structure of power and the various attitudes or differences of social behaviour that control access to it. It therefore entails a relationship. Politics is nothing more than the exercise of power, which entails a relationship between groups and individuals. Such a relationship has the potential for conflict, especially where the desire to exercise power involves an irreconcilable struggle. In short, therefore, according to Charles Tilly (1969:4-45), political conflict 'seem to grow most directly from the struggle for established places in the structure of power'.

But this is not the whole truth. The idea of power is significant but it must go along with a crucial social category. Political conflict in Africa, for example, is about identity. To use the term loosely, the root cause of political conflict in Africa, particularly Nigeria, is your identity, which side of the country you are identified with and what you are ready to do to protect that identity. The idea of 'struggle for established places in the structure of power', which Tilly hinted at above, is only a physical manifestation of a more fundamental cause of national conflict. The idea is that the identity of who controls power is the most crucial issue at stake. This explains the root cause of conflicts in Nigeria. What I am suggesting therefore, is that the most plausible explanation for the era of national conflict in Nigeria is that of the problem of citizenship. What then is peculiar about the notion of citizenship in Nigeria in relation to political conflict?

Conflict in Nigeria: Plethora of Views

At the present time, there is a plethora of views on the nature and cause of conflict, particularly political conflict in Nigeria. I think it necessary to have a critical look at the presuppositions on which such views are based, in order to establish where they falter.

There are at least three sets of factors which are generally adduced in any meaningful, scholarly work, as having contributed to the problem of conflict in Nigerian political society. The first derives from the endless and irreconcilable struggle for power and for the resources of the state by a defined dominant class, with its highly consumerist behaviour pattern. The second stems from the nature of the Nigerian state as a 'specific modality of class domination', immersed in the struggle among contending social forces. As a result of a lack of autonomy, therefore, the state is unable to mediate and resolve the conflict between these contending social forces who use venal means to dominate and perpetuate themselves in power. The third has to do with

the resilient paradigm problem of ethnicity and tribalism, I examine each of these in turn.

Central to the incidence and occurrence of conflict in Nigeria's political system is power. In explaining conflict in Nigeria, therefore, scholars such as Ake and Onimode have found the notion of class politics and struggles and the consistent consumerist pattern of the dominant class as a causal factor in the conflictual and unstable nature of political interaction and attitude in Nigeria. Ake (1989:43-65), for instance, argues that there is an irreconcilable struggle between an existent dominant class and subordinate classes over who should hold power. This irreconcilable struggle for power triggers off conflict and violence, hence the state of consistent crisis. According to Ake, class politics is central to conflict in Nigeria. In his words 'the dominant social forces struggle to maintain their domination and the subordinate social forces struggle against their subordination and its related disabilities' (1989:44). The end result is antagonism and warfare: 'Politics, essentially the struggle for control and use of state power becomes warfare and antagonistic. Power is over valued and security lies only in getting more and more power'.

The above analysis is also found in the works of Onimode. According to Bade Onimode (1988:97-125), the idea of class politics is central to explaining not only conflict in Nigeria's politics and the formation of political attitudes and interactions, but also gives us a better understanding of the whole process and foundation of economic, social and political inequality. According to Onimode, the classes most prominently involved in the struggle are the petit or bureaucratic bourgeoisie, the political class and the class of working people. A central feature of political interaction among these groups, according to Onimode, is that of a 'terrain of struggle between bourgeois ideology proper and working class ideology' a struggle he describes as 'inter-class' and 'intra-class'. Sam Nolutshungu (1990:89-115) also

conceives of conflict in Nigerian political society as resident in the political class. To him, 'the Nigerian political class right from inception, had always presented an image of a class in perpetual conflict'.

Central to Ake and Onimode's idea of class politics and its place in conflict in Nigeria is the role of the state. To these scholars, class differences do not by themselves explain conflict in Nigeria. They emphasise the role of the Nigerian state, which is said to be an actor in the production, mediation and control of conflict. For example, Eme Ekekwe conceives of the state as the major source of struggle amongst social classes, because of the political power invested in it which can be used to achieve the aim of accumulation and economic prominence (Ekekwe 1985:53) To him, the state is the focal point of conflict expressed in class struggle. In the same vein, Ake conceives of the state as 'a specific modality of class domination' one that lacks autonomy, an inherent inability to differentiate itself from the other social forces and classes, especially the dominant, hegemonic class (1985:1) Larry Diamond attributes crises and conflict in post colonial politics in Nigeria to the emergence of a modem state with vast economic resources. 'The legacy that colonial rule left was the development of a modem state that dwarfed all other organised elements of the economy and society' (Diamond 1988:28-30). In this line of thought, Ekekwe and Diamond agree that the state in the post-colonial era was of a capitalist type because the dominant few usually controlled it and translated political power into the means of accumulating for themselves the wealth and resources of the state. (Ekekwe 1985:12-13, Diamond 1988:28-32).

It is no doubt true that the basic assumptions of these scholars are given prominence in Marxist analysis of the political economy of developing countries. Their conclusions and judgements on the nature and cause of conflicts in Nigeria's political system can reasonably be said to be influenced by Marxist thought. One way of stretching the

argument further could be to argue that the predisposition of these
scholars to conceive of the state and its dominance in capitalist·terms is
essentially, though not necessarily, Marxist. Classical and modem
Marxist thought has heightened, to the point of intellectual significance,
the idea of politics as necessarily one of class struggle and antagonism.
Marx thought that the 'history of all hitherto existing society is the
history of class struggles', with the capitalist stage of history being the
most advanced one in antagonism and conflict. One can say that the
presuppositions and assumption of these scholars on conflict in Nigeria
are essentially linked to the central features of that school of thought.

One way of examining these viewpoints is to contend outright that
the Marxist postulations are irrelevant to interpreting and
understanding the politics of West African countries, particularly
Nigeria, and that therefore the assumption of these scholars that the
nature and cause of conflict in Nigeria is class conflict and struggle is a
false one. But such a line of reasoning would be fallacious. Another
shade of argument may be the view that since politics in Nigeria is not
defined in a Marxist line of thought, and since class politics is central to
Marxist thought, therefore, politics in Nigeria is not that of classes, or
that there is no class politics, and talk of conflict in terms of classes is
false. The proponents of such a viewpoint (see for example, Arthur
Lewis 1965:18-36) base their view on the following: first, there are very
few capitalists in the strong sense conceived by Marx; secondly, the
classes in question are those that control the instruments of production,
for in strong terms, economic power also determines political power;
thirdly, since there is no such control of economic power to determine
political power, then politics is not that of class politics.

The direction of thought I have identified in attacking the view that
conflict in Nigeria's political society is one of class struggle and
conflict is one that is linked to the nature of the state. The role of the
state in class struggles and conflict is given prominence. But it can be

said that the missing point in these analyses is the heterogeneous environment in which the classes have found themselves. Class politics is not the exclusive preserve of Nigerian political society. Such a way of politics is universally practised. To identify conflict with class politics also means associating conflict elsewhere with class politics. In practical terms, this may not be true. But the environment in which politics is practised is a telling argument on the nature of conflict in that society. Class politics may entail a modicum of conflict, but it does not tell the whole truth, especially where the social conditions in such a society manifest to the observing eye a crisis or conflict of identity stronger than the identity of classes.

The state has been designated as a principal actor in the sources of conflict in Nigeria. But those who hold that view have failed to consider the failed state phenomenon in the Third World. which revives or sustains the spirit of ethnic nationalism (Snyder 1993). According to Snyder, ethnic nationalism predominates when institutions collapse, when existing institutions are not fulfilling people's basic needs and when satisfactory alternative structures are not readily available — in other words when there is a lack of effective statehood. (Snyder 1993:12) Two options emerge from a failed state phenomenon : political society revels in anarchy and there follows the process of carving out mini-states around dominant ethnic groups. It can be argued that the process of state-making was constructed along the line of alienation and exclusion of ethnic societies from political participation and exercise of power. This keeps on generating a conflictual process which eventually turns into the state failure experience. In most cases, the failure to admit the democratic experiment in state-making can be found deeply rooted in the problem of national identity which, rightly interpreted, is an identity crisis. An identity crisis in any state-making process can be interpreted along the line of the absence of democratic behaviour.

Ethnicity is a resilient paradigm used in explaining the nature of conflict in Nigeria. It is held that Nigeria as a political society comprises many ethnic groups, which rub shoulder with each other, so there is bound to be conflict. The central assumption of this viewpoint is that ethnicity has the potential to transcend other loyalties and obligations and become the sole basis of identity. This may lead to conflict when peoples' multiple identities are narrowed down to a single focus, and social divisions become deeper and more rigid. Ethnicity is a deeply emotional basis of mobilization that not merely distinguishes one group from the other but can also dehumanize and demonize the other group (UNIRISD Report 1995:95). The hallmark of ethnicity in Nigeria is group opposition and competition for political power and the resources it controls. Ethnicity, therefore, explains conflict in the Nigerian political society because ethnicity 'is the relations between ethnic groups within the same political system' a relation not of mere ethnic contact but ethnic competition (Nnoli 1989:10). Smith (1981:15) offers an exaggerated version of the conflictual nature of ethnicity: 'In modern times, even the smallest ethnic communities have adopted an aggressive, if not always expansionist, posture.' What all these postulations portray is that ethnicity is inherently conflictual, and that in plural societies such as Nigeria, ethnic political conflict is therefore inevitable. In one word, therefore, political conflict in Nigeria is ethnic.

Deeper reflection shows, however, that although ethnicity is powerful, it is neither absolute nor immutable, nor is it inherently destructive. Ethnic identities are not pre-ordained: they are deliberately constructed and constantly modified. People choose to be ethnically inclined when this meets their needs and expectations. Ethnicity is what remains after all else is lost — that is a deprivation of the determinants that make an individual, socially, economically and politically. Ethnicity is an individual falling back onto an identity which provides him with a psychological safety net. It is a weapon of manipulation by the state, particularly where what obtains is not the national state but the

nation state. To quote Omari Kokole, ethnic consciousness and loyalties 'lend themselves to easy manipulation particularly because other identities are either weak or altogether absent' (1996:126). As Femi Taiwo has argued (1996:19) 'the absence of genuine citizenship is not unconnected with the dominance of ethnic politics driven by the requirements of rootedness in physical space'. The problem of citizenship and the inflation of the idea of ethnic consciousness out of all proportion in political analysis and interpretation revolve around the problem of identity: what I am suggesting therefore is that although ethnicity as a social phenomenon is not unimportant in any analysis of political interaction and attitude in Nigeria, conflict in Nigeria, in its purest form, is more connected to the absence of democratic governance and behaviour, exacerbated by a heightened sense of identity problem - i.e a citizenship that is full of holes. In one word, we must look to the idea of a problematic citizenship as a potent factor in explaining conflict in Nigeria's political attitudes and interactions.

Citizenship, Alienation and Conflict in Nigeria: A View Point

Studies of the concept of citizenship in relation to the problem of conflict have generally taken on the first order level of analysis. In most of these studies, the idea of the conflictual nature of citizenship has been drawn in a way that neglects the social conditions which establish the contradictory conventions and practices that define the boundaries of citizenship.

Peter Ekeh (1978:3-5, 9) has preserved a wealth of unbroken analysis and interpretation of the salient characteristics of the notion of citizenship in Africa. Ekeh had earlier postulated in concrete terms the relationship between crisis and conflict in Nigerian political society and the problem of citizenship. According to Ekeh (1972:77), 'the Nigerian crisis is a crisis of citizenship... Differing attitudes to citizenship have given rise to political conflicts... the type of ethnic group to which one

belongs is central to one's definition of and relations to, political conflicts in Nigeria'. It is time to unpack the central distinction in the above analysis.

Studies of the problem of citizenship and conflict often take on the first order level of analysis. Such studies are based on the natural conflict-generating property inherent in the denying of rights and privileges of citizenship as defined and set out in written constitutional documents. Such denial is attributed, by various scholars who hold those viewpoints, to several problems in the existing political order, from which such conflicts of citizenship emerge. For example, Goran Hyden (1992:14) argued that conflicts in Africa are brought about when `citizens' perceive the existing regime to be lacking in legitimacy. As a result of the exercise of naked force, therefore, citizens are likely to go underground in violent opposition to the regime. In a related sense, Ninsin conceived of conflicts, in terms of citizenship, as the removal of obstacles to the entitlements that complete the citizen's status as a free and equal person (1995:68) In furtherance of this claim, Ninsin theorised on the fact that the nature of demands by citizens determines the intensity of the conflict. According to him, conflict is the attempt by aggrieved or alienated and deprived people to redress the failure to meet their demands. But what are demands? According to Ninsin, demands are either negotiable or non-negotiable. Negotiable demands are not fundamental to the claims of the protagonists to equality. These demands do not generate intense conflicts, for they are non-zero sum conflicts. Non-negotiable demands belong to the category of being fundamental and potentially explosive. They are zero sum : the victory of one is the loss of the other (1995:55). According to this analysis, the idea of alienation is crucial in establishing the link between conflicts and citizenship. It follows from the identification of alienation and deprivation with the conflictual tendencies inherent in citizenship that if citizenship is structurally defined as consisting of rights and duties, one can expect a denial of rights to occasion the outbreak of conflicts.

It must be admitted that this interpretation of conflict and citizenship is one that relates more closely to the political-cum-legal concept of citizenship. The nature of citizenship I refer to is social or sociological. The above analysis cannot adequately describe the concept of citizenship which obtains in the Nigerian political order. For one thing, in a Nigerian setting, the structural definition of citizenship in terms of rights and duties is not really compatible with the conventional idea of citizenship which obtains in the Western world. Marshall, for example, concluded that 'citizenship is a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community', with all those 'who possess the status equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is bestowed (1949:87). The meaning one gets from this is that in a given political community, duties are owed to that same political community from whom every citizen expects his rights to be accorded. But a quick reflection on the Nigerian political scene suggests how unreal this is. For example, according to Ekeh, three principal contradictory notions of citizenship, in terms of rights and duties, are manifest in Africa generally, and in Nigeria in particular. These are:

- identification of citizenship with rights, and not with duties;
- dissociation of rights and duties in the concept of citizenship;
- the development of two publics, in respect of the concept of citizenship in political life: an amoral civic public from whom rights are expected, duties are not owed; a moral primordial public defined in terms of one's ethnic group, to which one's duties are paid, but from which we never expect any rights. (1978:317-319).

Pursuing this analysis, one can state that citizenship in the Nigerian setting is defined at the sub-state level. Citizenship is now conceived as an exclusion not an inclusion. This precipitates conflict. Viewed in this sense, it becomes easier to climb to a higher level of analysis of why political interaction and attitude turns into antagonism and warfare. In other words, political interaction entails a level of awareness and consciousness defined in one's identity. Citizenship entails an identity

and such an identity can be defined as being a member of a nation-state, a member of an ethnic group, or as a member of a communal group within an ethnic group. In Nigeria's political history, a level of identity (citizenship) awareness and consciousness, explains a good deal about the prevailing nature of political interactions and attitudes. The existence of the problem of national identity in turn means the existence of the politics of alienation. It is the absence of a sense of genuine citizenship which explains the predominance of ethnic politics, with endless outbidding and alienation in the tribal domination of politics. At the root of political conflict in Nigeria is not just ethnicity, but the prevalence of an identity problem defined in terms of where each individual locates his citizenship. At the individual level, there is a dual loyalty to civil ties and to primordial ties. According to Ekeh, 'the distinction between civil and primordial ties are not mere labels that characterise social relationship in different societies at different times. On the contrary, they are the centrifugal forces pulling the same persons in different directions at the same time. It is the sharp relationship between these two ties, especially as they concern the political elites of society, that renders this distinction a useful one in an analysis of the Nigerian crisis' (1972:78).

At the collective level, the existence of a multiple sense of citizenship, defined in terms of one's identity with a sub-state status, cripples the establishment of democratic structures. In fact, the absence of genuine citizenship lies at the root of the absence of democratic governance. This explains the certainty that conflict in Nigeria is interwoven with the absence of democratic governance, because of the absence of democratic behaviour. Where identities are defined in multiple terms, politics, being essentially concerned with the exercise of power, becomes one of increased hostility. Each sub-state, where the consciousness of citizenship and identity is realized, seeks to gain access to power in order to dominate others. In this arena talk of increased marginalization of other groups and their exclusion from

power and its fruits becomes alarming and conflictual. One ethnic group become the national group. It relegates the other groups to marginal status. An individual from an area designated as belonging to a marginal group is no longer seen as a Nigerian. 'Right now,' reflects Joe Igbokwe,

> the East, the West, the Minorities and the Middle belt share a common problem — which is marginalization and oppression by the Hausa Fulani clique sustained by the Army. The only option left for these people to free themselves is to present a common front. Once there is unity among these oppressed people of Nigeria, our new colonial master will be forced to negotiate political power. The structure of Nigerian federalism is so defective that it must not be allowed to continue.

One of the fundamentals of citizenship in the modern world is the freedom to enjoy the rights and privileges of a citizen in any location of the relevant geopolity, and in the political context, the freedom to hold any post in any location of that geopolity. And Taiwo (1996:16) maintains that 'part of what typifies citizenship, especially in the modern state, is the de-emphasizing of geography and other natural facts in its composition'. The revealing feature of Nigeria's political history, in relation to the structure of the control of power, is the emphasis on which geographical part of the country each party comes from, and whether the candidates aspiring for power come from the North or the South, with heavy emphasis on the primordial order or the sub-state level from which every political aspirant comes. The end result of such political attitudes is increased marginalization, alienation and deprivation. Such tendencies have succeeded in exploding into national political conflicts. This is because the absence of genuine citizenship brings about irreconcilable struggles for power among members of each sub-state level where citizenship and identity are defined.

These social and political conditions highlight some of the peculiarities of Nigerian citizenship and the conflicts which they

generate. The image of citizenship described above is one that is necessarily conflictual. It seems clear to me that Nigeria is still in a state of nature where no true idea of citizenship exists. One way of validating this argument would be to typologize on the nature of the state. If Nigeria is politically in a state of nature, then we should examine and try to establish what is the nature of the state. There is always a correlation between the nature of the state and the state of nature. The nature of the state is one of a lack of effective statehood. An experience of such magnitude simply expresses an entrance into the failed state phenomenon. So the nature of the state in Nigeria is one that is a state of nature.

In the state of nature, the theoretical underpinning of the amoral, sleazy and conflictual state of affairs cannot sustain a true sense of citizenship. This is because the formation of the state, with all its institutional apparatus and structures, explains much about the acts of true citizenship. For example, individuals who are rational, prudent and with a sense of fair play surrender their rights to a civil state for obvious reasons: to protect their rights in common and to reverse the order of the state of nature with its conflictual and violent tendencies. In other words, an agreed social compact represents their true feelings of commitment and being identified with the state, in which every citizen and group has a say without the option of exclusion. This is not the situation in Nigeria.

If Nigeria, as a political expression, is presumed to have emerged out of the state of nature, then the idea of citizenship as a product of the identity of those who formed it would show a true sense of commitment and virtue. This, I strongly believe, is what underlies the theoretical foundations of the social compact theory. But the Nigerian case deviates alarmingly from this. From all indications, political life in Nigeria is still largely influenced by the perversions prevalent in the theoretical construct of the state of nature, where no idea of true

citizenship exists. Political life in Nigeria has given practical existence, it seems, to what was thought to be a philosophical abstraction.

Missing in the Nigerian polity is a sense of belongingness which characterises the identity of every participant in the social compact theory, who by virtue of that contract, performs his duties for the state and defends his own rights in a balanced equation. The absence of pride in true citizenship accounts for the various conflicts and crises in the accidental collocation of atoms called Nigeria. The citizenship problem is the problem of the absence of democratic governance and behaviour. Conflict in Nigeria, as pictured in this irreconcilable struggle for power, with the adoption of every model of exclusion and alienation, means there is a lack of democratic behaviour. There are no two ways about it.

These conflicts have threatened the country with infinite loss. There are conflicts that are essential to the full development of democratic ideals and structures. The conflicts in Nigeria's political society, however, have been cataclysmic in nature, with few willing to salvage it and give it a redeeming hope of stability. Many are either idle, like sauntering troubadours, in the rescue campaign, or they resist the salvaging and redeeming endeavours of the few. At both ends, conflict prevails. The identity problem, with citizenship conceived at the sub-state level, constitutes one of the reasons why there are so few heroines and heroes with a sense of commitment and civic-mindedness, who could lead the country away from the brink of total and irreparable collapse.

Conclusion

Raphael (1970) once said that in democracy, we count heads, not break them. The counting of heads signifies political maturity and the existence of democratic behaviour. It is the expression of a behaviour that shows the importance of each head to the stability and sustenance of the political community. Democracy, therefore, emphasises

inclusion, not exclusion. It values all opinions, no matter how absurd they may appear to be. The breaking of heads is another word for conflict. It connotes the absence of democratic behaviour.

The Nigerian political situation has witnessed more breaking of heads, than counting them. In fact, even when it has been politically convenient for heads to be counted, the outcome has always been the breaking of such heads instead. Conflict in Nigeria is so intense because of the lack of democratic behaviour. The head of an individual in the democratic context signifies his citizenship. So when heads are broken in the Nigerian political community, the issue in respect of the broken heads is citizenship.

If conflict in Nigeria means the absence of democratic behaviour, and the absence of democratic behaviour spells the absence of democratic governance, it follows therefore, that conflict in Nigeria is interwoven with the absence of democratic governance. Moreover, if democratic governance values heads, and does not reject them, and the metaphor of the head signifies citizenship in that democratic context, then it also follows that democratic governance regards and upholds the rights of citizenship.

Democratic governance defines citizenship as an inclusion, not as an exclusion. Where citizenship is defined as an exclusion, for example in Nigeria, there is no democratic governance. It is to this fragmented concept of citizenship in Nigeria that the problem of democratization is linked

> at the root of the problem of democratization, therefore, is not ethnic plurality but inequity... Existing within the Nigerian state is a system of inter-group relations that has not only determined the character of the state but the international expression of that statehood... The ethnic group being mobilized and politically structured, have sub-state status. This status is cumulatively strengthened by every passing national conflict. The outcome is not just the existence of dual loyalty, but of a progressively shifting loyalty in favour of the sub-state, where every Nigerian experiences

a fulfilling sense of belonging. From the local state to the federal government, Nigeria is an ethnocratic complex (Ifidon 1996:101).

No attempt by successive military and civilian governments to call for a fully fledged transfer of sentiments of citizenship from the local or sub-state level to the central state has met with success. This is because of the defective nature of Nigerian federalism, which still allows a group to 'appear' as a dominant group that makes every effort to reduce other groups to marginal status. It is in anticipation of this classic error in the structuring of a federation that scholars have hinted that in a true federation, no state desiring to form part of the union must be bigger either in geographical size or population than the other states. When this obviously important point is thrown overboard, the result is the domination of other groups and their alienation and exclusion from power and its fruits and, consequently, the absence of any sentiments of a true, national citizenship. According to Mill J. S.

> If one state is so powerful as to be able to vie in strength with many of them combined, it will insist on being the master of the joint deliberations. If they are two, they will be irresistible when they agree, but whenever they disagree, everything shall be decided on a struggle for ascendancy between the two rivals'. In present-day Nigeria, the 'Northern elites' refusal to share power is the single most important reason why tribes have been resurgent and ethno national consciousness has come to override overall Nigerian Nationalism. (Obadare 1996:10)

Owing to the absence of genuine citizenship, Nigeria has witnessed a series of baffling contradictions: a state of political conflict and instability, an irreconcilable struggle for power, reflected in antagonism and warfare, the politics of alienation, exclusion, and domination, accompanied by an incredible variety of micro-nationalisms and pseudo nationalisms; and regrettably, a forlorn search for the existence, establishment and sustenance of a well-rounded, vibrant system of democratic governance where 'heads' are not broken, but counted regardless of how 'big' or 'small' those 'heads' are.

References

Ake, C., 1985, 'The Present Crisis in Africa: Economic Crisis or Crisis of the State?' in J. Ihonvbere ed., *The Political Economy of Crisis and Underdevelopment in Africa*, Lagos, JAD Publishers.

Coser, L., 1956, *The Functions of Social Conflict*, Glencoe, Free press.

Deng, F.M., 1996, 'Anatomy of Conflicts in Africa', in L.V. De Goor et al. *Between Development and Destruction — An Inquiry into the causes of Conflict in Post-Colonial States*, The Hague, Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, pp.219-236.

Diamond, L., 1988, *Class, Ethnicity and Democracy in Nigeria*, London, George Allen and Unwin.

Ekeh, P. P., 1974, 'Citizenship and Political Conflict: A Sociological Interpretation of the Nigerian Crisis' in J. Okpaku ed. *Nigeria, Dilemma of Nationhood: An African Analysis of the Biafran crisis*, Okpaku Comunications.

Ekeh, P. P., 1978, Colonialism and the Development of Citizenship in Africa: A Study of the Ideologies of Legitimation' in O. Otite ed., *Themes in African Social and Political Thought*, Enugu, Fourth Dimension.

Ekekwe, E., 1985, 'State and Economic Development', in C. Ake ed. *Political Economy of Nigeria*, New York, Longman Inc.

Girvetz, H., 1974, 'An Anatomy of Violence', in S.M. Stanage, ed., *Reason and Violence*, Little Field, Adams and Co., pp.183-204.

Hyden, G., 1992, *Governance and the Study of Politics in Africa*, G. Hyden and M. Bratton eds., Lynne Reinner Publishers, Boulder.

Ifidon E. A., 1988, 'Citizenship, Statehood and the Problem of Democratization in Nigeria', in *Africa Development*, Vol 21, no. 4, pp.93-107.

Igbokwe, J. 1995, *The Tempo*, Lagos, 9 November .

Kokole, O., 1996, 'Ethnic Conflicts Versus Development in Africa: Causes and Remedies', in L.V. De Goor et. al. eds., *Between Development and Destruction — An Inquiry into the Causes of Conflict in Post Colonial States*, The Hague, Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, pp.126-142.

Lewis, A., 1965, *Politics in West Africa*, London, George Allen and Unwin.

Marshall, T.H., 1949, 'Citizenship and Social class', Reprinted in T. H. Marshall, 1964, *Class, Citizenship and Social Development*, New York, Double Day and Company.

Miall, H., 1992, *The Peace-Makers: Peaceful Settlement of Disputes Since 1945*, London, Macmillan Press.

Mill, J. S., 1991, *Representative Government*, Everyman's Edition.

Neiburg, H.L,. 1969, *Political violence*, New York, St. Martins Press.

Nicholson, M., 1971, *Conflict Analysis*, London, English University Press.

Ninsin, K.A., 1995, 'Conflict as Pursuit of Liberty', in M. Oquaye ed. *Democracy and Conflict Resolution in Ghana*, Accra, Gold Type Publication, Ltd.

Nnoli, O., 1989, *Ethnic Politics in Africa*, Ibadan, AAPS.

Nolutshungu, S., 1990, 'Fragments of a Democracy: Reflections in Class and Politics in Nigeria' in *Third World Quarterly*, January, Vol 12, No 1, pp. 86-115.

Obadare, E., 1996, *The Tempo*, Lagos, 16 May .

Onimode, B., 1988, *A Political Economy of the African Crisis*, London, Zed Books.

Oquaye, M., 1995, 'Politics, Society and Conflict in Africa — An Overview', in M. Oquaye, ed., *Democracy and Conflict Resolution in Ghana*, Accra, Gold Type Publications Ltd.

Raphael, D. D., 1970, *The Problems of Political Philosophy*, London, Macmillan.

Rummel, R. J., 1976, *Understanding Conflict and War*, Vol. 2, New York, Sage Publishers Inc.

Scott, 1994, *Poverty and Wealth, Citizenship, Deprivation and Privilege*, London, Longman Group Ltd.

Smith A. D., 1981, *The Ethnic Phenomenon*.

Snyder, J., 1993, 'Nationalism and the Crisis of the Post-Soviet State', in *Survival*, Vol 35, No 1.

Taiwo, O., 1996, 'Of citizens and citizenship', *The Tempo*, Lagos, Sept.-Oct.

Tilly, C., 1969, 'Collective Violence in European Perspective', pp.4-45 in H. O. Graham and T. R. Gurr. eds., *Violence in American*, New York, Bantam.

UNRISD, 1995, *States of Disarray: The Social effect of Globalization, Geneva*, The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD).

Van Der Berghe, 1987, *The Ethnic Phenomenon*, New York, Praeger.

Zartman, W.I., 1991, 'Conflict Resolution: Prevention, Management and Resolution', in F.M. Deng and W.I. Zartman eds., *Conflict Resolution in Africa*, Washington, D.C., Brookings Institution.

L'hégémonie ethnique cyclique au nord Cameroun

Antoine Socpa*

Abstract: In North Cameroon, the oppositions between the main ethnic groups seem to follow different trajectories. For instance, the conflicts pitting the Arab Choa and Kotoko stem mainly from the 'autochtonous'/ 'allochtonous' divide, while those between Fulani and 'Kirdi' are based on a religious cleavage: Islam versus Paganism and Christianity. Beyond such primary semblances, the ethnic disparities in the access to or control over resources seem to be the common denominator to all conflict episodes, whether historic or recent, whether psychologically experienced or manifested in the form of violent confrontations. With data from the literature and from some rough observations of the political developments in North Cameroon, an attempt is made to analyse the economic, political and religious bases of ethnic conflicts in North Cameroon, as well as to show how, according to the different trajectories, the Arab Choa and Kotoko divide, the Fulani and Kirdi one, are constructed and used by socio-political and religious actors, resulting in a quasi-cyclical shift of power from one ethnic group to another.

Cette réflexion discute de l'hégémonie ethnique cyclique au nord Cameroun. Depuis au moins deux siècles, les instruments d'exercice du pouvoir politique passent de mains en mains, mieux se baladent d'un groupe ethnique à un autre au gré des influences externes: Islam et l'Etat (précolonial, colonial et post-colonial). Ce phénomène s'observe pour le cas du Logone-Chari entre les groupes ethniques dominants: Arabes Choa et Kotoko et pour le reste du nord Cameroun entre les populations Peul et «Kirdi». Les tensions ethniques que les mutations politiques récentes (instauration du multipartisme) ont ravivé ne peuvent mieux se comprendre que si l'on prend en compte l'historicité des relations conflictuelles induites et entretenues par ces facteurs

---

* Research School CNWS, Leiden University, Holland.

exogènes dans cette région. Mais ces situations de tensions ethniques suivent des trajectoires différents en raison de la multiplicité et de l'enchevêtrement des éléments constitutifs des bases de domination et d'assujettissement. Cette réflexion s'ouvre par des notes introductives sur la présentation des groupes ethniques en question et sur l'enjeu de la querelle «autochtone»—«allochtone» dans les conflits au nord Cameroun. Elle analyse ensuite la contribution des facteurs religion (islam et christianisme), Etat (colonial et post-colonial) et ressources dans la crise de cohabitation ethnique Arabes choa et kotoko d'une part, peul et kirdi d'autre part.

Notes préliminaires

Le «nord Cameroun» dans le contexte de cette article renvoie à l'ensemble du Cameroun septentrional qui compte actuellement trois provinces: Extrême-Nord, Nord et Adamaoua. Les grands groupes de populations sont les Peul ou Foulbé et les «Kirdi» que l'on rencontre sur l'ensemble de ce territoire hormis le Logone-Chari peuplé pour l'essentiel par des Arabes Choa et les Kotoko. Le Logone-Chari est un département de la province de l'Extrême-Nord Cameroun, allongé dans le lac Tchad, et partageant ses frontières internationales avec les républiques du Tchad et du Nigeria. Notre prétention n'est pas de reproduire l'histoire et le peuplement de cette région; d'importants travaux (voir bibliographie) ont à ce jour suffisamment remué ce sujet. Des recherches historiques nous révèlent que depuis le XIIIè siècle, le nord Cameroun était le point de convergence des vagues migratoires d'origine Peul ou Foulbé en provenance de l'Afrique de l'Ouest et à la recherche des pâturages pour leurs animaux (Motaze Akam 1990:9). Ce phénomène migratoire, jusque-là embryonnaire, connut une accélération au début du XIXè Siècle à la faveur du vaste mouvement d'islamisation (Jihad ou guerre sainte) lancé par Ousman Dan Fodio (Mohammadou 1976, 1983; Njeuma 1974, 1989, 1993). Ousman Dan Fodio intronise Moddibo Adama comme Laamido de Yola en 1806. Sa

mission est de mener une guerre sainte dans le but de répandre le message de Allah (renforcer la foi et convertir les «païens» à l'islam) et de libérer les Foulbé de la domination politique et économique des populations «autochtones» (Thierno Bah 1989:61-62; Njeuma 1974, 1989:20-21). L'action du Jihad sera concentrée dans ce que les historiens appellent l'Adamaoua historique et qui correspond actuellement à la province du même nom, à celle du Nord et à une partie de la province de l'Extrême-Nord.

Le Logone-Chari actuel faisait partie des régions du pourtour du Lac Tchad dont l'islamisation précédait la période du Jihad. Les sources historiques (Urvoy 1949:31) signalent que l'islamisation de cette région remonte au XIe siècle et qu'elle fut le fait des groupes de populations arabes non identifiées venues d'Egypte. Sur le plan démographique, le Logone-Chari est peuplé par deux principaux groupes ethniques: Arabes Choa et Kotoko; auxquels s'ajoutent d'autres groupes plus ou moins importants en nombre: Mousgoum, Kanouri, Bornouan, Mandara, etc. Une connaissance approfondie de l'histoire du peuplement de cette région requiert que l'on se reporte aux travaux disponibles. Il serait intéressant de se reporter aux travaux de Lebeuf (1973, 1979), Hagenbucher (1973), Urvoy (1949), Nveng (1969), Maquet et al. (1971), Zeltner (1970). Pour l'essentiel, retenons, à la lecture des sources historiques, que les Kotoko seraient les descendants des populations Sao, un peuple réputé pour sa «brillante civilisation de la terre cuite» et dont l'apogée fut atteint entre le IXè et XVe siècle. Les Arabes Choa seraient quant à eux d'origine arabe. Ils seraient probablement des descendants des métissés d'Arabes blancs, d'Ethiopiens, de Peuls et de Noirs soudanais originaires de l'île de choa dans la région du Nil en Egypte. Leur installation progressive par petits groupes dans le bassin du Lac Tchad remonte vers le VIIIe siècle. Ils y auraient migré par étapes et vagues successives en empruntant les couloirs du Kordofan et du Darfour.

Toutes les populations qui peuplaient l'actuel nord Cameroun avant le Jihad étaient animistes à l'exception des groupes Arabes Choa et Kotoko islamisés depuis des siècles. L'ethno-genèse de ces groupes humains révélerait certainement qu'ils ont des récits aussi variés que divers de leur origine et de leur descendance. Ainsi, les Kotoko seraient des descendants des Sao, les Mbum et les Arabes Choa seraient venus des hauteurs du Nil en Egypte, les Gbaya seraient originaires du bassin de la Nana, les Moundang de la chefferie Léré, les peuls de l'Afrique de l'Ouest, etc. Dans le Logone-Chari, la diffusion culturelle s'effectue à l'avantage de la culture arabe choa. Cette ascendance culturelle (Urvoy 1947:31, Hagenbucher 1973) se manifeste par la primauté de la langue de communication: le parler arabe qui devient la lingua franca. A titre d'exemple, la dénomination des rues, des mares, des villes et des collines est faite par des mots et noms (y compris le titre de «Sultan») est d'origine linguistique. D'une manière générale, la culture arabe choa est la plus dominante. Cette dominance culturelle peut se comparer à celle de la culture foulbé (processus de foulbéisation) sur les cultures des différents groupes de populations animistes du nord Cameroun depuis la période du djihad. Mais à l'opposé des rapports foulbé-kirdi marqués par la domination des premiers, le rayonnement culturel arabe autour du bassin du lac Tchad ne s'accompagne pas d'une influence socio-politique et économique des arabes choa. Ces derniers restent largement victimes de la xénophobie des Kotoko et sont refusés d'accès aux ressources politiques et économiques. Cette exclusion socio-politique des Arabes choa, tout comme celle des pasteurs peul avant le Djihad se justifie par leur statut d'allochtone ou d'étranger dans leur terre d'accueil.

Base théorique des conflits: la querelle «autochtone» — «allochtone»

Au-delà de sa composition ethnique, la configuration du peuplement du nord Cameroun présente deux grandes catégories de populations: les «autochtones» et les «allochtones». Les populations dites

«autochtones» sont les groupes animistes et les kotoko alors que les «allochtones» sont les Peuls et les Arabes choa. La distinction autochtone/allochtone est foncièrement discriminatoire. Elle traduit le conflit qui oppose dans une région donnée des groupes sociaux ou des individus ayant des statuts de «premier venu» ou du «premier occupant» et du «dernier venu» ou plus précisément «d'étranger». Au cours des siècles derniers, les migrations des populations fuyant les guerres ou à la recherche des meilleurs espaces vitaux ont abouti à une extraordinaire reconfiguration sociale des terres d'accueil. D'une manière générale, les populations dont les ancêtres étaient historiquement les premiers occupants sur une parcelle foncière ont tendance à s'arroger le droit exclusif sur les ressources disponibles (terre, eau, pâturage) et sur l'exercice du pouvoir politique. C'est dire que le droit exclusif aux ressources naturelles se greffe aussi du droit d'exercice du pouvoir politique. La règle dans ces conditions veut que seuls les autochtones détiennent l'essentiel, sinon le monopole du pouvoir. C'est à eux que reviennent «logiquement» les postes de chefs des communautés ou des villages. Aux allogènes ne doit échoir que des postes subalternes dans le meilleur des cas, ou rien.

Dans les régions sahéliennes où les ressources naturelles sont rares du fait de la précarité des conditions écologiques, les conflits pour leur contrôle sont légion. Cette situation est caractéristique des relations entre Arabes Choa (allogènes) et Kotoko (autochtones) dans le Logone-Chari. Historiquement, les Arabes Choa sont méprisés et maltraités au sein des principautés Kotoko. Leur poids démographique et le rayonnement de leur culture matérielle dont les éléments sont largement adoptés et consommés par les Kotoko ne leur donnent cependant pas le droit d'accès aux ressources naturelles (terres, pâturages, eau) et politiques. La mission du conquérant Rabah consista à faire table rase du pouvoir jusque-là détenu par les Kotoko et le remettre entre les mains des Arabes Choa. Mais ses efforts seront anéantis par l'armée coloniale française, qui en 1907, défait Rabah et

restitue le pouvoir aux chefs Kotoko. Les rapports entre les groupuscules de pasteurs peuls installés dans le Fombina (Adamaoua historique) jusqu'au déclenchement du Djihad sont eux aussi dominés par les populations animistes autochtones. Le Djihad apporta une correction radicale en retournant la situation en faveur des Foulbé.

Les privilèges et les frustrations liés aux divisions entre «autochtone»/«allogène» sont donc sources de conflit. Ces classifications des populations entre «allochtone» et «autochtone» sont d'une importance capitale dans la circulation du pouvoir et dans l'accès aux ressources. Ces classifications président à la redistribution des ressources et à l'ordonnancement des rapports sociaux. Les exemples ci-dessus montrent que le fondement théorique des oppositions ethniques au nord Cameroun repose historiquement sur la distinction entre «allochtone» et «autochtone». La prise en compte de cette base théorique dans l'analyse anthropologique peut aider à mieux dégager les ressorts culturels, économiques et politiques des conflits entre groupes ethniques au nord Cameroun, de la période du Djihad à nos jours.

Anthropologie historique des conflits ethniques au nord Cameroun

Le conflit Arabe Choa-Kotoko s'offre directement à l'observateur dans ses manifestations quotidiennes comme un bel exemple de lutte pour les ressources naturelles, économiques et politiques; alors que les oppositions Peul — kirdi bien que largement déterminées par les mêmes motifs empruntent des détours et se laissent observer comme un conflit religieux: islam contre paganisme et christianisme. Les sources historiques signalent certes des cas de conflits entre groupes de populations dans l'ensemble du nord Cameroun avant et pendant le Djihad, en tout cas avant la conquête coloniale; toutefois, l'on ne peut, à partir de ces faits céder à l'hypothèse théorique de l'atavisme des oppositions ethniques en Afrique (Geertz 1963; Van den Berghe 1981).

Pour le cas du nord Cameroun, ces conflits opposant les éleveurs aux agriculteurs semblaient normaux dans un contexte où les règles d'accès aux ressources étaient mal définies. L'éclatement des conflits ne relevait donc point dans ces cas d'un quelconque comportement irrationnel de ces peuples. Bien plus, les situations de paix et d'alliances (Thiemo Bah 1993:75-78) qui alternaient avec ces guerres inter-ethniques infirment à priori toute hypothèse d'explication des conflits ethniques au nord Cameroun comme une manifestation des comportements innés. La question fondamentale est celle de la construction des identités ethniques: comment rendre compte des processus apparemment méticuleux et laborieux d'édification et d'intériorisation des «catégories ethniques» (Burnham 1996) au nord Cameroun? Une hypothèse de travail peut nous aider à mieux circonscrire notre réflexion: la construction d'une conscience ethnique propre à chaque communauté culturelle du nord Cameroun est un phénomène historique; mais une telle construction est largement déterminée par les facteurs exogènes: élites, Laamibé, prophètes, clergés, administrateurs coloniaux et post-coloniaux. Cette hypothèse de travail qui s'enracine dans l'approche constructiviste (Hobsbawn et Ranger 1983; Amselle et M'bokolo 1985; Vail 1989) souligne que les identités ethniques au nord Cameroun sont des données construites et reconstruites par les acteurs socio-politiques et religieux, en fonction de leurs intérêts. La religion (islam et christianisme) et l'Etat (colonial et post-colonial) apparaissent à cet égard comme des facteurs cruciaux.

Religion, ethnicité et mutations socio-politiques

Le sujet qui nous préoccupe ici peut se formuler dans la question suivante: à quelle mesure le facteur religion a t-il contribué dans la production des identités ethniques au nord Cameroun? La conversion à l'islam apparaît dès le début du $XIX^{è}$ siècle comme un facteur décisif dans la renaissance d'une identité ethnique Foulbé. Le parler «fulfulde» et le nomadisme pastoral comme éléments culturels communs aux

groupes foulbé de la diaspora disséminés dans l'Adamaoua historique sont ainsi relégués au second plan. L'appel de 1804 lancé par Oresman dan Fodio aux Peuls de se convertir à l'islam et de mener si nécessaire la guerre sainte pour convertir les mécréants comporte des buts religieux et politiques (Njeuma 1974): instituer un gouvernement dirigé par les musulmans (sortir le «peuple de Dieu» (les foulbé) de sa torpeur) et répandre le message d'Allah. Et comme le souligne Thierno Bah (1989:82, voir aussi Charnay 1984:13):

> Eschatologiquement, le but du Djihad est l'établissement d'un ordonnancement social islamique de la souveraineté de la logocratie musulmane sur l'ensemble des groupes sociaux composant et environnant la communauté musulmane.

En soi, cet appel comporte des caractéristiques d'un discours ethnique et hégémonique. L'aspect «ethnique» de cet appel vient de ce qu'il est lancé par une élite peule (Oresman dan Fodio) qui se fait une haute idée de son peuple (il dit que les Peuls sont un peuple béni de Dieu). Par ailleurs, son aspect «hégémonique» tient à ses trois objectifs principaux: mettre en place un nouvel ordonnancement religieux et politique visant à imposer et à placer l'islam au dessus de toutes les religions; extirper les Peuls du gouvernement des infidèles; et faire de la culture peule une culture dominante (consécration du fulfulde — une langue Peul — comme langue de l'islam, adoption des vêtements, noms et architecture de type Foulbé, etc.).

Le fulfuldé a semble t-il joué un rôle important dans le colmatage des pupilles peules disséminées dans les zones de pâturages. Cette langue a constitué un facteur de ralliement des populations dont la situation socio-économique et l'insertion sociale étaient restées précaires pendant plusieurs siècles. C'est de cette façon qu'il est possible de comprendre la force persuasive du message ethnique et prophétique de Oresman dan Fodio et ses missionnaires chargés de répandre l'islam au moyen de la Djihad — au besoin — au sein des milieux païens, du fait de leur appartenance ethnique peule et de leur

intention d'instaurer une hégémonie peule. A ce titre, ces derniers s'apparentent à des «missionnaires ethniques» (Abernethy 1969) qui se sont servis des appels de type ethnique (agitation d'uné certaine conscience ethnique peule) et de type (message du Djihad) comme ressources politiques (Wallerstein 1960:137; Nnoli 1989:19) pour obtenir et justifier l'hégémonie peule sur les populations animistes. Quant on sait depuis les travaux de Aronson (1976), Thompson et Roneou (1986) que les discours de type ethnique ont une capacité inestimable de mobilisation, on ne peut s'étonner de l'adhésion massive des pasteurs foulbé au message libérateur du Djihad.

Toutefois, des contrepoids semblent avoir amorti l'effet de serre de ce discours envahissant sur les populations animistes. Ces contrepoids sont multiples. Ils vont de l'action des éléments autodestructeurs dans le déploiement du Djihad tels que les vices et compromissions auxquels se livraient les chefs musulmans (Thierno Bah 1993:82-85) à la capacité de résistance endogène des animistes et à l'action des églises chrétiennes. Les objectifs religieux du Djihad ont été par exemple déviés dès lors que les Laamibé se contentaient d'amasser des richesses (à travers le système de la Zakkat) et de garnir leur harem des esclaves travaillant pour leur compte. Bien plus, le 'Laamido entrepreneur' recevait des tributs de la part des populations en échange de leur conversion à l'islam; toutes choses qui étaient contraires à la mission à eux assignée par Oresman dan Fodio. Ensuite, dès la période coloniale, les églises chrétiennes se sont progressivement positionnées comme des cadres de lutte contre les injustices infligées aux animistes et comme tribunes par excellence de défense et de promotion des intérêts des populations païennes (Aurenche 1987:160, Baskouda 1988). Dans de nombreux cas comme à Meiganga, le facteur missionnaire a par exemple beaucoup contribué dans la formation d'une conscience ethnique Gbaya (Burnham 1996:85-91).

Etat colonial et question ethnique

L'histoire du nord Cameroun à partir de la deuxième moitié du XIX^è siècle est marquée par les premiers contacts économiques entre l'administration coloniale et les populations locales (Njeuma 1989:46). Cette période connaît des conflits entre les puissances coloniales française, anglaise et allemande autour des territoires stratégiques. La négociation et ensuite la violence armée étaient les principales techniques de conquête coloniale communes aux Allemands, Français et Britanniques au nord Cameroun. Une fois les territoires conquis, les administrateurs coloniaux n'avaient pas dessaisi les foulbé du pouvoir traditionnel pour le remettre aux mains des populations animistes. L'administration coloniale dans son ensemble opta pour une collaboration tactique avec ceux-ci, tout en se réservant le droit de relever les chefs musulmans récalcitrants à son action politique et économique (refus de verser l'impôt collecté) et de les remplacer par des personnes plus malléables (Thiemo Bah et Taguem 1993: 140). Le remplacement de Mbring, alors chef du canton de Boboyo est un cas parmi tant d'autres; de l'avis de l'administrateur colonial français local, ce dernier était «fabuleusement orgueilleux, voleur, méchant, menteur, le dernier rebelle à l'autorité administrative» (Prestat 1945:2).

L'administration coloniale allemande collaborait étroitement avec les Laamibé foulbé dans leur politique d'islamisation forcée et d'oppression des populations animistes. Des expéditions militaires conjointes germano-foulbé étaient menées contre des villages moundang (Schilder 1994). Telles fut celles effectuées en 1906 dans le lamidat de Bindir où la cavalerie Foulbé était appuyée par des soldats allemands dans ses missions de collecte des impôts et de tributs. Cette coalition avait renforcé le sentiment anti-colonial chez les populations moundang.

Au lendemain de la Première Guerre mondiale, les positions coloniales de l'Allemagne revinrent à la France, celle-ci éprouva assez

de difficultés à redorer l'image du colonisateur auprès des Moundang. Mais contrairement à l'Allemagne, la France opta pour une politique de cohabitation, évitant d'opposer les foulbé aux non-foulbé. L'administrateur colonial français jugea sans doute profitable d'exploiter la force de travail des populations païennes plus dévouées au travail que les foulbé. Destinées à la culture des produits de rente; arachide d'abord et coton ensuite (Motaze Akam 1990:15-16), ces populations païennes étaient organisées en groupements homogènes sous l'autorité des «chefs de leur race et en dehors de toute immixtion Foulbé» (Lestringant 1964:196; Boutrais 1984:284; Schilder 1994:133-144). Cette pratique consistait à déporter et à regrouper les populations en colonies agricoles. Dans la région de Ngaoundéré par exemple, les groupes ethniques Gbaya et Kaka furent déplacés de leurs terroirs et installés sur des zones d'exploitation agricole par les Peuls. Ces populations assujetties installées en colonies agricoles (rumde pluriel = dumde) sur des terres fertiles travaillaient pour le compte des chefs peuls. Ces entités homogènes sur le plan ethnique constituaient de véritables lieux d'acculturation pour ces populations déracinées.

La politique coloniale française était un mélange d'influence, de sympathie et de générosité (Abwa 1989:203-242). Elle reposait sur une manipulation tactique de ces leaders musulmans en vue de les associer à l'entreprise coloniale. Cependant, la politique coloniale française vis-à-vis des écoles coraniques était difficile à cerner: le colonisateur français s'opposait à la création des écoles coraniques autonomes, mais était plus ou moins favorable à l'introduction de quelques heures d'enseignement coranique dans les programmes d'enseignement des écoles franco-arabes (Genest et Santerre 1982; Santerre 1982). Le but recherché était d'assurer la primauté de l'enseignement du français au détriment de la langue arabe. L'ambiguïté d'une telle politique coloniale s'observait également dans son attitude par rapport à l'islam. Ainsi, bien qu'elle fût profondément opposée à l'islam qu'elle considérait comme une menace à la colonisation, l'administration

coloniale française supportait les frais de séjour et de transport des chefs musulmans au pèlerinage à la Mecque, offrait sa contribution à la construction des mosquées; mais exerçait en même temps un contrôle sur le nombre des candidats au pèlerinage (en instituant un système de visa) et menait une lutte acharnée contre les confréries religieuses et le maraboutisme anti-coloniale (Thierno Bah et Taguem 1993:104-108). La lutte contre le madhisme dont l'action était à la fois anti-coloniale et contre le lamidalisme s'inscrivait dans cette option politique de l'administration coloniale (Motaze 1990:13-14).

Bien plus, l'une des choses qui semblait contradictoire dans le 'choix ethnique' opéré par l'administration coloniale était son alliance avec les populations qu'elle considérait elle-même comme paresseuses. En effet, dans l'esprit des administrateurs coloniaux, les populations animistes étaient plus travailleuses que les foulbé. L'on se serait attendu que des privilèges soient accordés à celles-ci, notamment, l'essentiel du pouvoir de décision. Il n'en fut rien. Dans une tentative d'explication, Froelich (1968:85) soutient que l'organisation politique assez structurée des lamidats et la toute puissance des Laamibé avaient séduit les colonisateurs. Il ajoute aussi que «l'islam était chose connue et rassurante, le musulman savait recevoir et honorer le Blanc, tandis que les populations animistes faisaient preuve de duplicité et de trahison». Abwa (1989:205) formule une réserve à cette explication en soulignant que pour les mêmes raisons, le Laamido pouvait se révéler à tout moment incontrôlable par les colonisateurs du fait de sa popularité et de l'obéissance à lui due par les populations musulmanes. Tout porte à croire que l'administration coloniale ne fut pas séduite, mais qu'elle ne voulait pas entrer en confrontation armée avec la puissante organisation militaire foulbé. C'est sans doute pour cela qu'elle opta pour une collaboration et une domination subtiles. La politique coloniale française à l'égard des Laamibé semble illustrer cette interprétation des faits. Mieux encore, la bataille entre l'armée coloniale et les troupes de Rabah semble remettre en cause l'hypothèse d'une possible fascination

par l'organisation politique et sociale des lamidats. Il semble par conséquent difficile de concilier la fascination du modèle culturel islamique, la crainte réelle du panarabisme (voir la lutte de l'armée coloniale française contre Rabah en 1900, l'interdiction de la création de l'école arabe d'Am Silga et d'autres mesures de contrôle de l'expansion culturelle de l'islam, la préférence d'une ethnie musulmane (Kotoko) à une autre (Arabe Choa) dans le cas du Logone-Chari) et la recherche permanente d'une cohabitation franco-foulbé tout au long de la période coloniale au nord Cameroun. Seul le souci permanent de protection de ses intérêts économiques et culturels semblait expliquer le choix délibéré de l'administration coloniale française à ne pas entretenir des relations conflictuelles avec les Laamibé du nord Cameroun, et en même temps à ménager par moment les droits des populations païennes. Cette «politique ambiguë et contradictoire» permettait progressivement à l'administration coloniale d'apprivoiser, de contrôler et de fragmenter l'autorité des Laamibé du nord Cameroun (Abwa 1989:205).

A l'évidence, le passif de la guerre sainte dans le domaine de la construction ethnique sera renforcé par l'administration coloniale. Certes, l'apport le plus immédiat de la colonisation au nord Cameroun a été de mettre fin à l'islamisation forcée et dans une moindre mesure à réduire la pratique de l'esclavage à des fins personnels pour les Laamibé; mais cette administration coloniale a construit des formes plus raffinées d'identités ethniques. Quelques exemples peuvent être cités: ils vont des coalitions entre l'armée coloniale et la cavalerie foulbé pour effectuer des raids hégémonique et économique dans les villages animistes à la réorganisation administrative des communautés en passant par le déplacement et le cantonnement des communautés ethniques dans des 'caseirs de colonisation' (rumde). Dans le Logone-Chari par exemple, cette attitude partisane avait amené l'administration coloniale française à préférer les Kotoko aux Arabes Choa. Pour cet exemple où les deux groupes étaient tous musulmans, le

choix était certainement déterminé par l'option de la lutte contre l'expansion du panarabisme dont le conquérant Rabah fut l'un des précurseurs à la fin du XIXe siècle. Zeltner (1988:144) rappelle que les sept années de règne du conquérant Rabah furent une courte période de prospérité pour les Arabes Choa. L'on imagine donc aisément que les nouvelles formes d'organisation socio-politique et économique mises en place permettaient de fixer de nouvelles identités ethniques, de générer des frustrations et des joies chez les uns et les autres, d'où les impitoyables règlements de comptes auxquels l'on assista à la chute du conquérant.

En somme, s'il est certain que les groupes ethniques du nord Cameroun sont antérieurs à la colonisation, il est en revanche indéniable que l'administration coloniale a exploité en sa faveur les divisions ethniques existantes. Elle a renforcé et fixé les contours des identités ethniques et religieuses préexistantes; précisément en les permettant de s'affirmer davantage. En réorganisant les structures traditionnelles du pouvoir et en s'immisçant dans la re-fixation des populations sur de nouvelles terres, les colonisateurs ont contribué au renforcement et à la reproduction de l'ethnicité. Ils ont aiguisé par le fait même de nouvelles formes de construction et de replis identitaires au sein des populations déplacées et de celles maintenues sur place. Ce jeu de manipulation des groupes ethniques a mis en place des conditions favorables à une économie de la dépendance: collecte des impôts au profit de la métropole, culture de l'arachide et ensuite du coton, activités commerciales, diffusion de la langue et de la culture du colonisateur aux dépens de celles des peuples locaux. En mettant fin à l'islamisation forcée des populations païennes, en allégeant la pratique de l'esclavage et en organisant les populations païennes en cantons indépendants, les colonisateurs ont de toute évidence assuré une condition sociale plus favorable aux populations Kirdi. Mais ils ont, par le fait même, privé les Foulbé d'une parcelle de leur pouvoir; d'une source importante de collecte des impôts (Zakkat) et d'une main

d'œuvre esclavagiste de souche Kirdi; d'où de nouvelles sources de conflits. Au lendemain de l'indépendance du Cameroun (01 janvier 1960), l'Etat post-colonial héritait de ces différentes oppositions ethniques. Comment les a t-il gérées jusqu'à présent?

Etats post-coloniaux et question ethnique

Le Cameroun a connu à ce jour deux régimes post-coloniaux: celui de M. Ahmadou Ahidjo (1958-1982) suivi de celui de M. Paul Biya (depuis novembre 1982). Comment chacun des deux a t-il géré la question ethnique au nord Cameroun?

Ahmadou Ahidjo et la question foulbé — kirdi

Pour parfaire la construction de l'hégémonie Foulbé commencée par Oresman dan Fodio et poursuivit par l'administration coloniale, le premier président du Cameroun indépendant opta, au nom d'une loi non écrite et en dépit des principes constitutionnels de respect des différences culturelles, de faire de la vaste province du nord Cameroun (35% du territoire national) un bloc musulman soudé (Mbembe 1993). En son temps, cette construction idéologique d'un bloc musulman avait renforcé l'identité ethnique peule et tenté de la disséminer au-delà des limites du groupe ethnique peul. Cette identité ethnique Foulbé diffuse et dominante sera copiée, adoptée et revendiquée par des groupes de populations non-foulbé face au pouvoir d'Etat et à ses privilèges. La politique de favoritisme des foulbé dans les promotions professionnelles, les recrutements aux concours administratifs, les activités commerciales (Ngayap 1983; Mbembe 1993; Mouiche 1995) induit une vague d'islamisation forcée ou volontaire de nombreuses élites Kirdi. La littérature sur les rapports Foulbé-Kirdi ou musulmans/animistes/chrétiens relève l'existence des relations esclavagistes et d'oppression des premiers sur les seconds (Ela 1982:119; Baskouda 1988; Bayart 1989; Nstaze 1990; Collectif C3

1992; Mouiche 1995) tout au long du règne de M. Ahmadou Ahidjo. La description des rapports foulbé-kirdi dans les montagnes Mandara que fait Ela (1982:119) illustre à merveille ces rapports inégaux et quasi esclavagistes:

> Au Nord-Cameroun où une aristocratie maintient des milliers d'hommes dans l'assujettissement et l'immobilisme, comme on peut le constater dans les chefferies confiées presque toutes à des islamisés, les migrations croissantes au Nigeria, chez les Mafa, par exemple, ne s'expliquent pas par la seule faiblesse des revenues des agriculteurs kirdi: tout simplement, les jeunes montagnards sont en quête de petits 'coins de liberté' où ils peuvent trouver les moyens de travailler et de vivre. Les brimades aveugles, les corvées qui rappellent le temps de l'indigénat, les situations d'oppression et d'injustice dont les populations entières sont victimes, provoquent un appel d'air...

Par ailleurs, l'islamisation suivit d'une adoption des traits culturels Foulbé étant pour les populations Kirdi l'unique moyen d'accéder aux postes importants dans la hiérarchie administrative, d'avoir droit au quota préférentiel des Peuls dans les recrutements, etc. C'est ainsi que pour bénéficier des mêmes avantages que leurs collègues peuls, les jeunes moundang se rebaptisaient dans des noms à résonance Peul et se convertissaient la plupart du temps par intérêt à l'islam. Cette islamisation de façade était restée durant tout le règne de M. Ahidjo une réalité massive dans la partie septentrionale du Cameroun. Au total, le phénomène n'était pas seulement juvénile; il touchait aussi les élites qui pour la prospérité de leurs affaires et pour leur avancement professionnel devaient porter le masque du musulman (Schilder 1994: 23-26).

Seulement, une telle identité ethnique était demeurée «ambivalente» voire impure comme le fait remarquer Schilder (1994: 242) pour le cas des populations animistes Moundang de Kaélé. Ces derniers, à l'instar de nombreux groupes non peuls du nord Cameroun (Toupouri, Gbaya, etc.) durent nier ou mettre entre parenthèses pour un temps leur propre identité ethnique au profit de l'identité ethnique

foulbé. Celle-là même qui était à la mode. Pour le cas des Moundang, les recherches de Schilder soulignent que l'existence d'une forme d'identité ethnique ambiguë et hybride, constamment à la recherche de sa propre identité; parce que moulée malgré elle dans le répertoire culturel foulbé (voir encore Schilder 1994:9). En effet, si les populations non peules étaient acceptées au sein du groupe ethnique peul du fait de leur conversion à l'islam et de l'adoption des éléments de la culture foulbé, elles en étaient tout de même exclues pour la simple raison qu'elles ne sont pas des foulbé d'origine (biologique). C'est dire que, la conversion à la religion du prophète et même la maîtrise de la langue fulfulde ne semblaient pas suffisantes pour l'intégration totale d'un Kirdi dans la société foulbé, son acceptation et sa reconnaissance par ses membres. Une telle situation nous place devant le phénomène de l'inclusion et de l'exclusion ethniques. Les «désertions» religieuses enregistrées au lendemain du retrait de M. Ahidjo de la scène politique et la perte progressive de l'hégémonie foulbé au Cameroun confirment que cette islamisation n'était qu'une camisole de force.

Paul Biya et la question foulbé — kirdi

Lorsque Ahmadou Ahidjo quitte le pouvoir en novembre 1982, il maintient ses fonctions de président de l'Union nationale du Cameroun (UNC). Ce bicéphalisme déboucha très vite sur un conflit de leadership entre les deux. La question était de savoir qui du Président de la République ou du président du parti politique devait définir les orientations politiques. Cette querelle, animée de part et d'autre par les proches collaborateurs des deux personnalités prit les allures d'une confrontation ethnico-religieuse et se solda le 22 août 1983 par l'annonce d'un vrai-faux complot contre le président de la république et le 6 avril 1984 par un vrai coup d'Etat manqué (pour un compte rendu plus détaillé, voir Gaillard 1994:197-245). En somme, cette crise se solda dans toutes ses phases par un déclin de l'hégémonie peule au

niveau national et surtout au niveau local (nord Cameroun). Déjà, la prise du pouvoir par Paul Biya avait suscité des espoirs au sein des populations animistes qui durant de longues années s'estimaient écrasées par la machinerie religieuse et politique peule. De nombreux témoignages (Dakolé 1993:80; *La Caravane* 12 octobre 1991; *Collectif* C3 1992) rendent compte des espoirs soudains que les populations non musulmanes avaient nourri avec l'arrivée du nouveau chef de l'Etat. Toutefois, le fait que ces écrits soient postérieurs à une série d'incidents qui ont poussé le nouveau Président à rompre les liens avec les Peuls laisse croire que ce sont des jugements a posteriori. En réalité, dès son accession à la présidence, M. Paul Biya nomme un Peul (Bello Bouba Maigari) et non un Kirdi au poste de Premier ministre. En plus, son premier gouvernement est dominé par des personnalités peules. Quoi de plus normal quand l'on sait que le nouveau chef de l'Etat n'est pas le seul maître (bicéphalisme évoqué plus haut) et que toute séparation rapide et trop voyante d'avec les personnalités politiques du nord Cameroun risquait de déboucher sur une crise. A la faveur des rumeurs de complot en août 1983, lequel était attribué aux personnalités fidèles à l'ancien chef de l'Etat et d'appartenance ethnique peule, M. Ayang Luc (un kirdi du sous groupe Toupouri) est nommé Premier ministre par intérim. Quelques mois après, le coup d'Etat manqué du 06 avril 1984 permet au nouveau chef de l'Etat de rompre les dernières attaches avec l'élite musulmane. Au congrès de Bamenda en mai 1985, l'Union nationale camerounaise (UNC), l'ancien parti unique est débaptisé au profit du Rassemblement démocratique du peuple camerounais (RDPC). Plus tard, la ré-institution du multipartisme (décembre 1990) donne lieu dans la partie septentrionale du Cameroun à la création de plusieurs partis politiques dont les plus importants sont: l'Union nationale pour la démocratie et le progrès (UNDP) et le Mouvement pour la défense de la République (MDR). Le premier parti est assimilé à une excroissance de l'ancien parti unique: UNC fondé et dirigé durant de longues années par Ahmadou Ahidjo et dont ses leaders revendiquent un certain héritage. Le second parti quant à lui se présente

comme le porte-parole des populations animistes (Kirdi). Le RDPC ratisse sa clientèle politique aussi bien dans les ethnies musulmanes que dans celles non musulmanes peu favorables aux deux «partis locaux»; supporte le MDR contre l'UNDP, mais n'hésite pas à se tailler une partie de son électorat.

Le conflit entre Arabes Choa — Kotoko: de Ahidjo à Biya

Dans le Logone-Chari, Ahmadou Ahidjo poursuit la politique coloniale française à l'égard des Arabes Choa. La nomination de Ousmane Mey (originaire de l'ethnie kotoko) comme gouverneur de la vaste province du nord Cameroun ouvre le champ libre à la continuation d'une politique d'exclusion des groupes Arabes Choa. La première confrontation ethnique post-coloniale entre Arabes Choa et Kotoko éclate octobre 1979 (Libération du 30 octobre et 6 novembre 1979) en pleine période du parti unique et de la vogue du discours sur l'unité nationale. La prise de pouvoir en novembre 1982 par Paul Biya, la crise qui l'oppose à son successeur et les réformes politiques (institution des élections au niveau des instances dirigeantes des organes de base; ré-institution du multipartisme) se soldent progressivement par l'entrée des Arabes Choa dans l'espace de décision politique. Au niveau local, les Arabes Choa (populations majoritaires du Logone-Chari) sont les principaux bénéficiaires du divorce politique entre le nouveau pouvoir et l'élite peule. Le déclassement politique des élites Kotoko, dont la plupart militent dans le parti UNDP (Union nationale pour la démocratie et le progrès) proche de l'ancien président, nourrit et accélère la mobilité sociale, économique et politique des élites arabes choa qui canalisent les sentiments de leur peuple vers le Rassemblement démocratique du peuple camerounais (RDPC), parti au pouvoir. Les affrontements ethniques Arabes-Choa — Kotoko (Tribus sans frontières 1992) survenus au cours des dernières années semblent être la conséquence de

cette nouvelle recomposition politique dans le Logone-Chari. Les Arabes Choa essayent visiblement de prendre leur revanche historique à la fois sur les Peuls et sur les Kirdi. Leur refus d'adhérer à l'UNDP se justifie par les liens entre ce parti qu'ils estiment être de souche «peulh» et l'ancien parti unique: UNC dirigé par Ahmadou Ahidjo, lui aussi d'origine ethnique peule. De même, leur refus d'adhérer au Mouvement pour la défense de la République (MDR) s'explique par le fait qu'il le considère comme un parti «kirdi» parce que dirigé par Dakolé Daïssala, un Toupouri. Face aux développements politiques dans le nord Cameroun, les Arabes choa semblent affirmer une certaine singularité ethnique: ils ne sont ni foulbé, ni kirdi, mais tout de même musulmans.

D'une manière générale, les développements qui précèdent rendent compte du processus compliqué de production de la conflictualité ethnique au nord du Cameroun. Ce processus est le fait de maints facteurs dont l'Etat (colonial et post-colonial), la religion (islam, christianisme, animisme), les groupes ethniques eux-mêmes (leur élite, leurs discours, etc.). L'une des leçons que l'on tire de l'histoire des grandes «catégories ethniques» (Burnham 1996) du nord Cameroun est que l'élaboration d'une conscience de soi de chacune d'elle s'est enrichie ou s'est dégradée au cours des siècles, au fil des migrations, au gré des rapports culturels (assimilation ou échange) avec les peuples environnants et en fonction de l'influence des écosystèmes, des facteurs économiques, politiques et religieux. Si l'on crédite une part de vérité à l'hypothèse selon laquelle les identités ethniques des groupes se reconnaissant comme Peul, Kirdi, Arabes Choa, Kotoko, etc. ont été construites et reconstruites sous l'effet de coalescence de ces facteurs endogènes et externes, il devient possible de mieux cerner le rôle d'alchimiste joué par les élites dans la production et l'instrumentalisation des identités ethniques. Aussi bien dans les relations entre foulbé et kirdi d'une part, arabes choa et kotoko d'autre part; ces élites se sont servis habillement de la religion, des ressources

(droit naturel et accès à celles-ci) et du pouvoir d'abord comme leviers et ensuite comme bases de légitimation de domination et d'octroi des frustrations.

Conclusion

Les phénomènes alternatifs de construction et de déconstruction des identités ethniques au nord Cameroun, l'intervention des facteurs endogènes et surtout exogènes dans le jeu des relations sociales entre Peul et Kirdi d'une part et Arabes Choa et Kotoko d'autre part nous inspire cette réflexion de Lonsdale (1996:99): «l'appartenance ethnique est un fait social universel: tout être humain crée sa culture à l'intérieur d'une communauté qui se définit par opposition aux 'autres'... L'identité culturelle est ce que les gens en font plutôt que le résultat d'une fatalité historique». Les développements socio-historiques à l'œuvre au nord Cameroun de la période avant le Djihad à nos jours nous autorisent à prendre une distance par rapport aux tenants de l'approche «primordialiste» (Geertz 1963; Isaacs 1975; Van den Berghe 1981, etc.) qui considèrent l'ethnicité comme un élément culturel atavique caractéristique des sociétés «primitives» dont celles de l'Afrique. En réalité, les interrelations peules et non peules ne furent pas totalement violentes; elles oscillaient comme le confirme Thierno Bah (1993:71-78) entre la violence et la non-violence. Cette vérité historique qui s'applique bien à l'exemple des rapports arabes choa — kotoko d'une part, foulbé — kirdi d'autre part attestent cependant que la violence est inscrite dans l'histoire des sociétés en tant que production consciente de ses acteurs. Au nord Cameroun, la conscience ethnique apparaît comme une construction permanente et laborieuse en fonction des enjeux sociaux, culturels, politiques et économiques. Un tel enchevêtrement destructeur des facteurs religieux (islam, christianisme), culturel (foulbéisation), politique (hégémonie peule) et économique (luttes pour les ressources) dans la production des conflits au nord Cameroun permet de dépasser l'approche univoque de

l'ethnicité comme un simple produit politique, voire un épiphénomène politique. La remise en question depuis quelques années des thèses constructivistes (Van Binsbergen 1992, 1993; Schilder 1994; Fardon 1996) peut amener à se poser davantage de questions sur les fondements clés de l'ethnicité Peul, Kirdi, Arabe Choa et Kotoko. A priori, les éruptions de violence ethniques au nord Cameroun en général et dans le Logone-Chari en particulier s'apparentent à des expérimentations de ce que Lonsdale (1996:100) nomme «tribalisme politique» et qu'il définit comme l'utilisation politique de l'«ethnicité morale» par un groupe dans sa lutte avec les autres groupes. Mais, derrière le voile des apparences, la culture de la haine tribale au nord Cameroun que la palabre d'un système de multipartisme taillé sur la mesure et dans l'esprit du parti unique, rend plus aiguë repose sur une lutte à mort (struggle for live) pour le contrôle des ressources et la pleine jouissance égoïste de celles-ci.

Bibliographie

Abernethy, D.B., 1969, *The Political Dilemma of Popular Education: An African Case,* Stanford University Press.

Abwa, Daniel, 1989, «Le système administratif dans le lamidat de Ngaoundéré de 1915 à 1945»', in *Histoire du Cameroun,* Njeuma (éd.), Paris, l'Harmattan, pp. 203-242.

Amselle, Jean-Loup & Elikia M'bokolo (éds.), 1985, *Au coeur de l'ethnie: ethnies, tribalisme et Etat en Afrique,* Paris, Editions La Découverte.

Amselle, Jean-Loup, 1990, *Logiques métisses: anthropologie de l'identité en Afrique et ailleurs,* Paris, Editions Payot.

Aronson, D., 1976, «Ethnicity as a Cultural System: An Introductory Essay», in Henry F. (ed.) *Ethnicity in the Americas,* La Haye, Mouton.

Aurenche, Christians, 1987, *Sous l'arbre sacré: prêtres et médecins au nord Cameroun,* Editions du CERF.

Baskouda, Jean Baptiste, 1988, *Baba Simon: le père des Kirdis* (avec la collaboration de Hyacinthe Vulliez), Paris, CERF.

Baskouda, Jean Baptiste, 1991, *Kirdi est mon nom,* Yaoundé, Imprimerie Saint-Paul.

Barth, F. 1976, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference*, Londres, George Allen and Unwin.

Bates, R.H., 1974, «Ethnic Competition and Mobilization in Contemporary Africa», *Comparative Political Studies*, 6(4):457-484.

Bayart, J.F., 1989, *L'Etat en Afrique: la politique du ventre*, Paris, Fayard.

Beauvillain, A. 1989, «Nord-Cameroun: crises et peuplement», Ph.D. thesis, Université de Rouen.

Boutrais, Jean et al., 1984, *Le Nord-Cameroun: des hommes, une région*, Paris, ORSTOM.

Burnham, Philip 1996, *The Politics of Cultural Difference in Northern Cameroon*, International African Library, Edinburgh University Press, London.

Breedveld Anneke et De Bruijn Mirjam, 1996, «L'image des Fulbé: analyse critique de la construction du concept de pulaaku», in *Cahiers d'études africaines*, 144, XXXVI-4, pp.791-821.

Charnay, J.P., 1984, *Principes de stratégie arabe*, Paris, l'Herne.

Collectif C3, 1992, *Le Cameroun éclaté: anthologie commentée des revendications ethniques*, Yaoundé, Ed. C3.

Dakolé, Daïssala, 1993, *Libre derrière les barreaux....*

Ela, Jean Marc, 1982, *L'Afrique des villages*, Paris, Karthala.

Epstein, A.L., 1958, *Politics in an Urban Community*, Manchester, University Press.

Fardon, Richard, 1996, «Destins croisés: histoire des identités ethniques nationales en Afrique de l'Ouest», in *Politique africaine*, no. 61:75-97

Froelich, J. M., 1968, *Les montagnards paléonigritiques*, Paris, Berger-Levrault, ORSTOM.

Hagenbucher, F. S., 1973, *Les Arabes dits «suwa» du nord-Cameroun*, Paris, ORSTOM.

Gaillard, Ph., 1994, *Ahmadou Ahidjo: patriote et despote, bâtisseur de l'Etat Camerounais*, Paris, JALIVRES, Collection Destins.

Geertz, Clifford, 1963, «The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States», in C. Geertz (ed.), *Old Societies and New States*, New York, Free Press.

Genest, Serge et Santerre, Renaud, 1982, «L'école franco-arabe au Nord-Cameroun», in Santerre R. et Mercier-Tremblay M.(éds.), *La quête du savoir. Essais pour une anthropologie de l'éducation camerounaise*, pp. 372-395.

Hobsbawn, E. et Ranger, T. (eds.), 1983, *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Isaacs, H., 1975, *Idols of the Tribe*, New York, Harper et Row.

Käre, Lode, 1993, «L'apport culturel de la mission norvégienne en Adamaoua», in Boutrais Jean (éd.), *Peuples et culture de l'Adamaoua* (Cameroun), Paris ORSTOM, 'Ngaoundéré Anthropos', pp. 248-264.

Lebeuf, Annie, 1969, *Les principautés kotoko: Essai sur le caractère sacré de l'autorité,* Paris, CNRS.

Lebeuf, Annie, 1973, «L'origine et la contribution des principautés Kotoko (Cameroun septentrional)», in *Colloques internationaux du CNRS,* no.155, contribution de la recherche ethnologique à l'histoire des civilisations du Cameroun.

Lestringant, Jacques, 1964, «Le pays de Guider au Cameroun: essai d'histoire régionale», Versailles, multicopied.

Lonsdale, J., 1996, «Ethnicité morale et tribalisme politique», in *Politique africaine,* no. 61:98-115.

Magnant, J.P., 1991, «Tchad: crise de l'état ou crise de gouvernement?», in Médard J.F., (éd.), *Etats d'Afrique noire: formation, mécanismes, crise,* Paris, Karthala, PP. 173-203.

Mbembe, Achille, 1993, «Crise de légitimité, restauration autoritaire et déliquenscence de l'Etat», in Geschiere, Peter et Konings, Piet, (éds.), *Itinéraires d'accumulation au Cameroun,* Paris et Leiden, ASC-Karthala.

Mohammadou, Eldridge, 1976, *Histoire des Férobé du Diamaré: Maroua et Petté,* Tokyo, ILCAA.

Mohammadou, Eldridge, 1983, *Peuples et royaumes du Foumbina,* Tokyo, ILCAA..

Motaze, Akam, 1990, *Le défi paysan en Afrique. Le Laamido et le paysan dans le Nord-Cameroun,* Paris, l'Harmattan.

Mouiche, Ibrahim, 1995, «Ethnicité et pouvoir au Nord-Cameroun», Communication présentée à la 8e Assemblée générale du CODESRIA, Dakar.

Nicolas, Guy, 1978, «L'enracinement ethnique de l'islam au sud du Sahara: étude comparée», in *Cahiers d'études africaines,* 18, 71, pp. 347-377.

Njeuma, M.Z., 1974, «Uthman dan Fodio and the Origins of Fulani Jihad in Cameroon Hinterland, 1809-1847», in *Afrika Zamani,* no. 3.

Njeuma, M.Z., 1989, «Les Lamidats du Nord-Cameroun (1800-1894)», in *Histoire du Cameroun (XIXe siècle, début XXe siècle),* Njeuma, (éd.), Paris, l'Harmattan.

Njeuma, M.Z., 1993, «The Foundations of Radical Islam in Ngaoundere: 1835-1907», in Boutrais Jean (éd.), *Peuples et culture de l'Adamaoua (Cameroun),* Paris ORSTOM/Ngaoundéré Anthropos.

Ngayap, Pierre Flambeau, 1983, *Cameroun: qui gouverne? De Ahidjo à Biya, l'héritage et l'enjeu,* Paris, l'Harmattan.

Nnoli, O., 1989, *Ethnic Conflicts in Africa,* Working Paper 1/89, Dakar, CODESRIA.

Prestat, M.G., 1945, *Maroua, ville d'islam* (s.i.).

Pontié, Guy, 1973, *Les Guisiga du Cameroun septentrional: l'organisation traditionnelle et sa mise en contestation*, Paris, ORSTOM.

Santerre, Renaud, 1982, «Aspects conflictuels de deux systèmes d'enseignement au Nord-Cameroun», in Santerre R. et Mercier-Tremblay M.,(éds.), *La quête du savoir. Essais pour une anthropologie de l'éducation camerounaise*, pp. 396-413.

Schilder, Kees, 1994, «Quest for Self Esteem. State, Islam and Mundang Ethnicity in Northern Cameroon», *Research Series*, African Studies, Centre Leiden.

Schultz, Emely Ann, 1979, 'Ethnic Identity and Cultural Commitment: A Study of the Process of Fulbeization in Guider', Northen Cameroon, Ph. D Thesis, Ann Arbor, multicopied microfilm.

Bah, Thierno Mouctar, 1993, «Le facteur peul et les relations islamiques dans l'Adamaoua au XIXè siècle», in *Peuples et cultures de l'Adamaoua Cameroun*, Boutrais (éd.), Paris, Orstom /'Ngaoundéré Anthropos', pp. 61-86).

Bah, Thierno Mouctar et Taguem Fah, G.L., 1993, «Les élites musulmanes et la politique au Cameroun sous administration française: 1945-1960», in *Peuples et cultures de l'Adamaoua Cameroun*, Boutrais, (éd.), Paris, Orstom/Ngaoundéré Anthropos, pp. 103-133.

Temgoua, A.P., 1990, «L'hégémonie allemande au Nord-Cameroun de 1890 à 1916», Thèse de Doctorat de 3è cycle, Université de Yaoundé.

Thompson et Roneou (eds.), 1986, *Ethnicity, Politics and Development*, Boulder, Lynne Riener.

Tribus sans frontières, 1992, «Les affrontements interethniques entre Arabes Choa et Kotoko dans le Logone et Chari», Rapport no. 1, Yaoundé, Ronéo.

Vail, Leroy (éd.), 1989, *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, James Currey, London, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles.

Van den Berghe, Pierre, 1981, *The Ethnic Phenomenon*, New York, Elsevier.

Van Binsbergen W.M.J., 1992, *Tears of Rain: Ethnicity and History in Central Western Zambia*, London, New York, Kegan Paul.

Van Binsbergen W.M.J., 1993, «Kazanga — Ethnicité en Afrique entre Etat et Tradition», in *Africa Focus*, 9, 1-2, pp.16-41.

Van Santen, Jose C.M., 1993, *They Leave Their Jars Behind: The Conversion of Mafa Women to Islam*, (North Cameroon), Leiden, VENA.

Zeltner, J.C., 1988, *Les pays du Tchad dans la tourmente, 1880-1902*, Paris, l'Harmattan.

Wallerstein, I., 1960, «Ethnicity and National Integration in West Africa», in *Cahiers d'études africaines*, no. 1.

Economic Reform, Political Liberalization and Economic Ethnic Conflict in Kenya

Oanda Ogachi*

Résumé: Le spectre de l'ethnicité et de conflits ethniques inquiète, une fois de plus, le milieu académique des sciences sociales. Les théories autrefois avancées pour expliquer l'ethnicité et ses manifestations en Africa, souvent fondées sur les analyses primordiales et modernistes, n'ont pas réussi à fournir des explications satisfaisantes sur les causes et la nature des conflits ethniques dans le cadre d'un vaste consensus intellectuel. Cependant, on semble convenir que l'Afrique connaît actuellement une nouvelle vague de manifestations ethniques et de conflits de même nature, au moment où la plupart des pays du continent se sont lancés dans des programmes de libéralisation politique et de réforme économique. Il est probable que les causes des conflits actuels se trouvent moins dans l'histoire que dans l'enchevêtrement complexe de la marginalisation sociale, de l'économie et de la politique. Une telle situation nécessite un renouvellement de la pensée théorique en vue d'élucider la manière dont les mutations socio-économiques ont précipité la création de foyers et de situations de conflit. Le présent article analyse le cas de conflits ethniques au Kenya en période de réforme économique et de libéralisation politique. Il montre la manière dont les forces de l'ethnicité, la politique et les classes, sont en train d'être manipulées pour provoquer des conflits ethniques. Il s'agit d'une contribution à une nouvelle orientation théorique sur les conflits et à la compréhension de la dynamique politique des sociétés qui sont traversées par des mutations structurelles.

Introduction

The re-introduction of political pluralism in Kenya, which culminated in the holding of multi-party elections in 1992, precipitated profound changes in the socio-economic structure of society. The drive towards multi-party democracy took place alongside pressures by the World

* Department of Educational Foundation, Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya.

Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for economic reform (structural adjustment). At the local level, the clamour for political liberalization, led by a conglomeration of local elites, lawyers, university lecturers and local entrepreneurs, went hand in hand with calls from pro-establishment politicians and elites for the creation of a 'majimbo' (regionalism) type of government, to check the political and economic domination of smaller ethnic communities by the more numerically stronger and more economically entrenched communities. It should be noted that most of the elites who championed calls for political liberalization came from the latter communities.

The liberalisation of the economy has seen the emergence of a financially endowed group of business elites from some regions of the country who appear to enjoy some political patronage. The consequence of this development has been the heightening of ethnic tensions and suspicions, in most cases resulting in violence.

Amidst the strains of a fragile economy and the burden of implementing Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPS), pro-establishment politicians tried to derail any efforts towards either political and economic reform. Statements from the political leadership suggested that the political and economic reforms were a scheme by foreigners to undermine Kenyan political and economic sovereignty. Ethnic conflicts and mass poverty were said to be the eventual outcomes of such neo-colonial schemes. This was the political and economic background in Kenya, before a new wave of ethnic hostilities and killings flared up in 1992. A broad analysis, in the context of this changing political and economic process, may therefore prove rewarding in explaining the causes of ethnicity and ethnic conflict in Kenya. For example, while the social impact of structural adjustment and liberalization programmes have been studied (see, for example Gibbon, Bangura and Ofstad 1992), the impact of the resultant structural poverty on the heightening of ethnic suspicions and conflict

has not been attended to. As evidence from elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa suggests, most ethnic conflicts have flared up during a period of political and economic restructuring.

In Kenya, literature is scant on the macro-political and macro-social issues arising from and associated with the economic adjustment process and its interplay with ethnic economic interests (Kanyinga 1994; Ngunyi 1995). This gives one little understanding of how the adjustment period in Kenya has impacted on the economic interests of ethnically based elites and how such interests have been politically manipulated to stir up ethnic conflicts. As Onimode (1992) remarks, the politics of adjustment involves not only conflicting ideas but also a struggle over resources. The struggle for resources is often manifested at the ethnic level between various social formations and social categories (classes) or at the national level between different interest groups.

Lehman (1992), for example, has shown how economic liberalization in Kenya led to a dispute between the Kikuyu and the Kalenjin, which saw the collapse of enterprises owned by members of Kikuyu ethnicity. In 1990, there emerged growing dissent and a mobilised opposition to the political leadership and the way in which reforms (SAP) were being selectively implemented. The ethnic conflicts which occurred during this period were of a political nature and resulted in 'ethnic cleansing' in some parts of the country. Subsequent programmes of parastatal reforms and privatization have been skewed towards members of certain ethnicities who enjoy political patronage. Such general observations introduce the economic ethnic factor as a contested terrain in the present political set up in Kenya. This nexus between economic reform and ethnic conflict will be analysed in this paper. But it is first imperative to provide a theoretical basis for that analysis.

Economic Reform and Ethnic Conflicts in Africa: Theoretical Perspectives

Much of the literature on ethnicity in Africa has concentrated on analysing the phenomenon from one set of variables in an isolated manner. Ethnicity is accordingly seen as a colonial invention in Africa or just a continuation of the pre-colonial manifestation of sheer tribal emotions. This at least has been the reading one makes from the literature of the modernization school and that of the extreme left. Not much theoretical exposition has tried holistically to see the basis of ethnic conflicts on the interplay of the forces of ethnicity, economics and class, all acting at the same time. The theoretical exposure presented here is an attempt to overcome the one-sidedness of the approaches of the 'modernization' and 'extreme' left schools.

It is true that violent ethnic conflicts have increased in Africa, especially from the mid-1970s, and have picked up on a large scale from the 1980s. This was a period during which most African countries entered a state of economic austerity. At the same time, pressure was put on these countries from the international community to initiate programmes of political and economic liberalization. By 1980 most African countries had entered into agreements with the international financial institutions on specific areas of economic reform without much insistence on political reforms.

Three observations can be made on this brief introduction to help to build a holistic theory of studying conflicts in Africa. The first has to do with the manner in which the reforms (both political and economic) were introduced and implemented. While the donors have insisted that democratic political systems are crucial for the success of the economic reforms, they have not always not been put into place. In Kenya for example, only threadbare political reforms which allowed the registration of many political parties were readily allowed, while on the economic front, exchange controls by the state were lifted. These

reforms did not in total ease the burden of a repressive and patronising state from the backs of citizens. The net result has been that those who were already in business cashed in on the freeing of import controls to import goods and sell them at exorbitant prices in the absence of government surveillance. At the other extreme, the level of poverty among the majority, both in urban and rural areas, increased, and this tended to follow ethnic and gender lines. Consequently poverty and social provisioning have actually been politically ethnicised in Kenya.

The second observation relates to the nature of the current spate of ethnic conflicts in Africa. The level of violence and organization makes them slightly different from those that were experienced during the colonial period and may therefore not adequately capture the internal dynamics of these conflicts — causes and effects. New theoretical postulates have to be sought.

Lastly, the point that has already been made about the occurrence of the present conflicts in Africa, concurrently with economic and political reform policies, persuades one to seek a framework which locates the converging points of ethnicity, economic austerity and adjustment regimes in Africa.

One line of theorizing which can illuminate this study is the public choice theory. Aspects of this theory can be used to explain the occurrence of ethnic tensions and conflicts in Africa during a period of economic reform. The public choice theory postulates the likely distribution of gains and losses among competing social groups during a period of adjustment (Bangura and Gibbon 1992). Accordingly, political dynamics and their outcomes are deduced from a framework that assumes a transition from a structure of incentives based on state intervention to one where markets are believed to be fully liberalised or in a state of liberalising. The theory posits two conceptual positions about resource allocation during a period of adjustment which are central to the arguments in this paper. The first position is based on state

intervention in the economy leading to price distortions and economic rents for a privileged few. Arguably, within a context of economic reform, state patronage is used to the advantage of some classes and social groups, leading to wide economic polarities based on region, ethnicity and gender. The second position is based on the fact that the economic reform policies lead to the emergence of free competitive markets which allocate resources optimally. Of course this second position has not been true under interventionist state regimes.

In practice this theory can be argued further to examine the nature of relationships, most importantly the economic relationships that develop between different dichotomous groups. One has in mind here the relationships between urban elites and rural peasants, politicians and their constituents, and the like. Within the new emerging relationships, social interests are expressed and defended through the languages of pre-existing political and ideological traditions (Bangura and Gibbon 1992). This is where ethnicity finds its place as an ideological tool for the elites to defend their gains or argue about their losses from the reform process. As Nnoli (1995) notes, in the context of an interventionist state, the ruling classes use the state to build up their business enterprises. The struggle of the ethnic factions of these classes for state patronage in the process of embourgeoisement generates and promotes ethnicity (Nnoli 1995:7).

The validity of the public choice theory to the arguments in this study is that it shows how politics has blended with economics, often driven by class-based interests to manifest itself as ethnicity. The contention of this paper is that powerful class interests of an economic nature have been largely responsible for the ethnic conflicts experienced in Africa. Social groups (classes) and individuals act at various levels of society and within the state apparatus to influence the allocation of resources. Knowledge of who the gainers and losers are, and how various groups win and lose as a result of shifts in development

strategies is important in understanding ethnicity as part of the political dynamics of societies undergoing change.

The approach of the public choice theory will also show the role that ethnic-based groups and elites have in promoting ethnicity and how they eventually gain economically by mobilising ethnic emotions. Emphasis should be placed on class differentiations within ethnic groups and the role of the elites as ethnic entrepreneurs who manipulate ethnicity for their economic and political capital (Markakis 1993).

In countries such as Kenya, the period of economic reforms and political liberalization has occasioned a realignment of both economic and political forces in society. In most cases groups who had a monopoly of political power have lost it, together with the economic largesse that this power provided them as individuals. Two trends have become noticeable consequently. The first one (which zeros in on this study) is where previously privileged elites have acted defensively, often provoking ethnic violence, to stall the economic and political reform process. The second trend has been the emergence of ethnically based urban elite coalitions as a strategy of economic bargaining. In a sense, the current space of ethnic conflicts in Africa can be said to be a manifestation of the economic frustrations of elites and particular classes in society.

Wallerstein has confirmed the above position in asserting that ethnic consciousness and conflict occur when groups feel threatened with a loss of previously acquired privilege, or conversely feel that it is an opportune moment politically to overcome a longstanding denial of privilege (Wallerstein 1979:184). The mechanisms and machinations through which these groups advance their aims is what causes ethnic tensions and conflicts. The present manifestation of ethnicity in Africa is an elite and class phenomenon where one community's elites feel excluded by another from control of economic and political power. They then indoctrinate members of their ethnicity to believe that this is

a conspiracy by a whole community against another, which should be violently resisted. Thus within the context of socio-economic insecurity generated by the economic reform process, Nnoli (1995) asserts that ethnicity holds individuals together, gives them internal cohesion, encourages them to provide natural security for each other and promotes their sense of identity and direction. Ethnicity offers a personal solution to the problems of exploitation, oppression, deprivation and alienation.

Rothchild (1986) has shown why a public choice approach is germane to studying current ethnic conflicts in Africa. The fact that in Africa, one is dealing with interest-defined groups and elites. More specifically one is dealing with the economic, political and social interests of groups and elites within the state. That is why ethnic sentiments are not as explosive in the market places [to reassert, Nnoli's (1995) position], or in other centres of vested economic interests, even though they are articulated there, as they are in the political arena. Politics is seen as an overt way to entrench oneself in the economic sphere under the guise of ethnicity. This position is again convincingly shared by Fukui and Markakis (1994), with reference to the conflict in the Horn of Africa. The ethnocratic nature of the post-colonial state in Africa, means that the exclusion from political power of members of certain communities implies exclusion from the material and social resources controlled by the state. This struggle for social resources is then waged on the political level in the form of ethnic conflicts. The struggles often represent the interest of the elite and group competition for scarce resources.

The picture so far presented is that of a whole ethnic group raising up to demand a fair distributive mechanism of scarce resources, opportunities and power. Economic scarcity, therefore, seems to be at the centre of conflicts, within the context of gains and losses being counted by different communities. This situation is mediated through a

series of political manipulations. The part played by the elite from different communities in exacerbating these conflicts has already been alluded to. What needs to be clarified is the fact that rarely does a whole community lose or win from these conflicts. Rather it is powerful class interests that are camouflaged as ethnic interests. A director of one of the parastatal firms in Kenya was sacked for corruption. The man was found to have kept millions of Kenya shillings in his house besides what was in his many bank accounts. The next day, members of his ethnic community took to the streets and petitioned the President for his reinstatement. There was no evidence that the man had spent any of this money for the well being of his community. This is the sort of situation one finds almost everywhere in Africa. It is therefore the class interests of these ethnic elite warlords which are so often the cause of ethnic animosity. Ethnicity serves the interests of privileged African classes by enabling them to increase their share of the national wealth (Nnoli 1989; Fukui and Markakis 1994).

What need to be explained in consonance with the public choice theory is why whole ethnicities have been roused to conflict situations only to benefit a few individuals, classes and social groups in society. In fact a general observation should be made here that ethnic conflicts have taken place in the sphere of the socially marginal, in the urban slums and African rural areas where poor peasants live.

One impact that the economic reforms have had in Africa has been the emergence of a 'social underclass' totally excluded from national society and economy. The term 'social exclusion', according to Wolfe (1995), refers to situations where groups and movements are excluded from any control over factors affecting their livelihood and their place in society. They are incorporated into new conditions of exploitation, insecurity and improvement. Social exclusion is said to affect in particular those subject to the multiple deprivation of gender, ethnicity and age, as well as immigrants (Gore 1994). In the context of

socio-economic change, ethnicity and ethnic affiliation intertwines with national citizenship in complex ways in Africa, with ethnicity acting as a realm of citizenship in which the morality of new forms of social inequality are tested (Lonsdale 1992).

The main thrust of this argument is that during periods of austerity, the socially excluded provide a readily available reserve army which is mobilised and manipulated by politicians and elites. A kind of multi-ethnic coalition emerges among the excluded and the 'underclass', based on their economic situation. The coalition will then appeal to persons in the government to press for what are seen as their ethnic interests. This represents a mechanism thorough which the 'underclass' fights its exclusion from socio-economic marginalisation. Bargaining for the benefits accruing from the adjustment process has been done by these multi-ethnic coalitions in Kenya. In fact a Member of Parliament in Kenya at one time organized youths from his community to what he called 'jeshi la mzee' (old man's army). The youths were meant to harass people from another ethnic community in the urban areas and defend the political interests of the President (referred to as 'old man'.

In a situation of competing economic interests, occasioned by the adjustment process, the emergence of a new dynamic of social, ethnic and religious movements has been witnessed, working from the 'bottom-up' to resist age-long frustrations (Aina 1997). The movements advocate new forms of entitlements and stake new claims to resources. These interests are pitched at the ideological and identity domains and express themselves as ethnic (Aina, Ibid).

Before concluding this discussion on the theoretical basis of the current ethnic conflicts in Africa, let me recapitulate. First, it is apparent that the economic reforms in Africa have brought with them notorious consequences of exclusion and insecurity for groups and individuals. Within this context, groups and communities, who were hitherto

incorporated in the state apparatuses as junior partners, are renegotiating the contract binding them to the nation state. Secondly, the exclusion of rural societies from the mainstream of national life exposes the peasantry to continued manipulation by ethnic elites. In a situation where poverty during the adjustment period has taken ethnic and gender lines, the ethnic community is found to be the only easily manipulated vehicle for achieving the economic goals of classes and elites. Lastly, though the aims of ethnic conflicts are economic, the battle for the control and distribution of economic resources is being fought in the political arena. Control of political power by members of one community is therefore assumed to cater for the economic interests of that community.

We now turn to the application of these theoretical positions to a discussion of ethnicity and ethnic conflict in Kenya.

Ethnicity and the Economic in Kenya:
A Historical Perspective

Since the task of this paper is to analyse ethnic conflict in Kenya and its basis in vested economic interests, it is worth looking at the historical process through which ethnic suspicions have been built. Literature on the origin of ethnicity in Africa abounds, often linking it to the colonial system of 'divide and rule'. Within this system, some communities allied themselves to the colonial powers and were rewarded both economically and politically. In Kenya, ethnicity has also been a function of the penetration of capital and the expropriation of peasants during the colonial period (Kitching 1980; Zeleza 1982). Economic factors have therefore been pivotal in the strengthening of ethnicity in Kenya. Over time, however, political manipulation has been used to gain access to economic privileges.

The independent Kenyan government was largely formed from Kenya's two major ethnic groups; the Luo and the Kikuyu. These two

ethnic communities comprise the greater part of the overall population. Besides, it is within the geographical area of these two ethnicities that the penetration of capital and socio-economic influence was first noticeable during the colonial period. At independence, the two communities thus constituted a population that was more educated, urbanised and more politically mobilised. This colonial inequality has not been entirely redressed and has occasionally been a source of ethnic tension.

After independence, minority ethnicities feared that if the Kikuyu and Luo dominated the political scene, this domination would be entrenched in the economic sphere. A coalition of these minority ethnicities formed a political party, Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU), to oversee their economic interests and check domination by Kenya African National Union (KANU), the Luo-Kikuyu alliance party that had formed the first independent government. KADU consisted largely of members of ethnic communities who had been bypassed by the colonial economy and therefore tended to be less educated, less urbanized and less politically mobilised.

From the beginning, KANU, under Kenyatta, established itself as a patron-client party. Using the promise of carrots and sticks — most notably the promise of cabinet posts for KADU leaders — Kenyatta managed to merge KANU with KADU in 1964 (Barkan 1994; Throup 1987). Consequently the Deputy Chairman of KADU, Daniel Moi, was made the Vice President of KANU and Kenya in 1966. This effectively eliminated any tangible opposition to Kenyatta's rule.

After eliminating political opposition, Kenyatta set out to address some problems which he thought were crucial in post-independence Kenya; that is land and the Africanisation of the civil service. He addressed the land issue by settling a large number of people from his ethnic community, the Kikuyu, on farms purchased from white settlers. Though some of the farms were in areas previously occupied by the

Kikuyu, those in the Rift Valley were in areas historically occupied by the Maasai. Hence large numbers of Kikuyu migrated into the Rift Valley, threatening the economic interests of non-Kikiyu ethnicities who were initially allied to KADU (Barkan 1994). It should also be noted that it is not only the Kikuyu who lost land during the colonial period. But when it came to resettlement, the other communities, especially the Maasai, never got back their land. The resettlement of the Kikuyu ethnicity was also carried on in the Coastal Region of Kenya, where they were given the economically lucrative 'Ten-mile-strip' of land formerly occupied by the Sultan of Zanzibar. Kenyatta's land resettlement policy, therefore, sowed the seeds for later ethnic conflict between the Kikuyu and other communities (*Daily Nation* 26 May 1993).

When it came to the Africanisation of the civil service, ethnic inclinations were also manifested. For example, the Industrial and Commercial Development Corporation (ICDC) and the Kenya National Trading Corporation (KNTC) were set up to provide credit and to support emerging entrepreneurs. Much of the demand for these services came from and was extended to the Kikuyu, reinforced by the fact that these bodies were controlled by Kikuyu appointees (Leys 1974). Besides Kenyatta enabled members of his ethnic group to take advantage of opportunities in the private sector. Elite Kikuyu members were allowed to be partners in joint ventures, appointed to boards of directors or to management positions or were allowed to receive commissions from newly launched enterprises (Hyden 1994). Hence Kenyatta promoted the interests of his Kikuyu people while retaining a loose alliance with patrons from other ethnic groups (Hyden 1994).

In summarising the domination of Kikuyu economic and political interests during rule, Atieno-Odhiambo has observed that, having captured the state, Kenyatta fell back on his primary lifelong agenda: tending to the needs of his basic community the Agikuyu. By 1978, he

had secured for them the state government, a vast homeland in the Rift Valley and along the Kenya Coast, had put commerce in their hands, in appropriate alliance with the Asian and European bourgeoisies, and had underwritten their security by manning the police, the military, intelligence and brutalising apparatuses like the general service unit (Atieno-Odhiambo 1996). One can perhaps agree with Atieno-Odhiambo that Kenyatta had no mental map of Kenya as a moral community. It is on these lands in the Rift Valley and the Coastal Region that serious ethnic conflicts are taking place over the control of economic extraction from the land.

One other thing that Kenyatta did was to isolate his major partners in the KANU alliance, the Luo, through political manipulations and killings. While they remained the most educated, Kenyatta effectively shut them out of politics and economics. When Tom Mboya, a Luo, with considerable support among the various groups including the Kikuyu, emerged as a threat to the Kikuyu establishment in 1969, he was murdered (Hyden 1994). This created suspicions between the Luo and the Kikuyu which still continue. Besides excluding members of other ethnic communities from economic and political power, Kenyatta saw to the strengthening of an economically endowed Kikuyu middle class.

When Moi came to power in 1978, he was aware of missed economic opportunities. His first project was to redistribute resources away from the ethnic groups that provided the social base of the Kenyatta regime to groups that constituted his own (Barkan 1994). He set out to redress what he regarded as the economic inequalities of fifteen years of Kikuyu rule. To this end, the phenomenon of 'Kalenjin' ethnicity was launched as a political project. Members of the Kikuyu community in government and administration were replaced by members of ethnic groups from the old KADU alliance, mostly Kalenjins.

Secondly, aware of the role that a powerful middle class could play, Moi started to wrest business from Kikuyu hands so as to destroy their economic hegemony. To destroy the economic foundations of the state, he denied the ascendant Kikuyu capitalist class any state patronage, politically squeezing them out of business (Throup 1987b). This policy also applied to the agricultural sector where Kikuyu economic interests were undermined. For example, the coffee industry, grain marketing, tea industry and the milk industry fell victims to official ethnic patronage (Chege 1994). The economic war against the Kikuyu culminated in a state sponsored financial and banking crisis which crippled the Kikuyu enterprises in the 1980s (*Finance* 3 November 1997). President Moi (a Kalenjin) precipitated the crisis in 1986 by having the Ministry of Finance and state companies withdraw their funds from three banks owned by Kikuyu businessmen (Lehman 1992).

Lastly, as has been argued elsewhere in this paper, Moi led a coalition of ethnic communities who were less educated and less urbanised. It is also instructive to note that the reform movement in Kenya was and is still spearheaded by educated intellectuals from the Luo and Kikuyu ethnicities. This is one fact that Moi has agonized about over time. Arguably, the economic power he has tried to 'push' to members of his ethnic group cannot be sustained without a strong educated elite who can transform themselves into an economically endowed middle class. To achieve this aim, funds were mobilised to develop modern educational infrastructures in the dominated Rift Valley. A series of reforms were made in the educational sector to favour his ethnic group, to the detriment of the educational interests of other communities. The upgrading and building of new universities and colleges in the Rift Valley can be seen as part of this scheme.

It can be safely argued that by 1990, two decades of political manipulation to advance ethnic and individual economic interests had created a volatile ethnic situation in Kenya. With calls for economic and

political liberalization, a situation of winners and losers was created on both sides of the political divide. As the saying goes in Kenya, the Kikuyu are aware of what economic opportunities they have lost under Moi and the Kalenjins are agonizing about the economic opportunities they will lose without Moi. It is within this context that elites, mainly from the Kikuyu and Kalenjin ethnicities, but also from some other ethnic communities exacerbated the violent ethnic conflicts of 1992. The clashes may be seen as an instrument used by the ethnic elite in order to derail economic reforms and to protect some of the gains in the economic sector threatened by the reforms.

The Economic Basis of the 1990s Ethnic Conflicts in Kenya

From 1990, violent ethnic confrontations erupted in some parts of Kenya. The conflicts, as we have tried to indicate elsewhere in this paper, occurred in a context of political and economic reforms. The Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP), which Kenya had started implementing in the 1980s, had by the 1990s led to an increase in the level of poverty among the population. The degree of social exclusion and marginalisation among the population had widened. Among the urban poor and in the rural areas, the level of discontent with the government was increasing because of failed economic programmes. As already noted, poverty increasingly took on an ethnic and gender perspective in Kenya.

If the economic reforms had been undertaken as prescribed by the World Bank, the immediate losers would have been members of Moi's own ethnicity. This could have brought to an abrupt end Moi's scheme of creating a powerful Kalenjin middle class to counteract Kikuyu hegemony over the Kenyan economy. But they would not have been the only losers. All over Kenya, and especially, among the communities Moi perceived to constitute his alliance of 'small tribes', powerful and economically rich individuals had emerged using state patronage. This explains the continued resistance the donors have faced over

liberalization of the agricultural sector (Toye 1992). These vested economic interests were threatened by both economic and political reform. It is from these groups and individuals that voices and forces of resistance to the process of reform have come.

But even more annoying for the supporters of the Moi regime was the fact that by the 1990s it was mainly the elites from the communities settled in the Rift Valley and the Coastal Region who were campaigning for political pluralism. While the donors saw no tangible economic reforms, a group of lawyers, university lecturers, businessmen and other professionals forged a coalition to agitate for political pluralism. As argued by Woods (1992), however, those agitating for political pluralism came from the same middle class that had benefited disproportionately from Kenyatta's paternalistic mode of governance. Hence, the Moi regime saw a convergence between the socio-economic interests of this group and their demand for increased political democratisation.

There is another reason why the economic argument may explain the occurrence of ethnic conflicts in Kenya. Clashes have occurred and are still occurring within regions where migrant communities have bought land and settled. As we shall argue later, these communities are now being seen as 'strangers' or aliens encroaching on the economic sustenance of the host communities. This has been the situation in the Coastal Region, the Rift Valley and the Western Region of Kenya. As Barkan (1994) has successfully argued, up to 1990, Moi and his inner circle of compatriots were reluctant to embrace economic and political reforms, because they correctly believed that the main beneficiaries would have been their opponents, especially the Kikuyu. However, by 1990, with donor pressure, there was every indication that the reforms could not be stopped any longer. They had to look for a way of either derailing the reforms, or forcing those communities who were focal to the reform process to concede some form of bargain.

In a series of meetings organized towards the end of 1991, prominent leaders from Moi's Kalenjin ethnic group in the Rift Valley agitated for the restoration of Majimbo (Federal) system of government, and the violent eviction of non-Kalenjins from the Province (*Weekly Review*, 27 September 1991). These threats were obviously aimed at the Kikuyu, Luo, Gusii, and Luyha migrants who had settled in the Rift Valley. According to its crusaders, the Majimbo system of government was the only safeguard for each Region's economic autonomy.

Consequently, between December 1991 and March 1992 bands of armed groups attacked migrant farmers settled in different parts in the Rift Valley. Luo farmers were the earliest victims within Nandi District of Rift Valley. In the second half of 1992, Kikuyu farmers in the Rift Valley's Olenguruone area, scene of anti-colonial resistance in the late 1940s, suffered the worst fate (Chege 1994). This was followed by attacks on Luyha farmers in Trans-Nzoia District. There is endless documentation on the nature of of the spate of displacements and killings. What was started by a group of leaders from the Rift Valley as a form of resisting imminent economic losses, has left Kenya with an endless orgy of ethnic conflict and cleansing which the government is unable to control. Even as this paper is being prepared, serious ethnic conflicts are taking place at the Coast, Rift Valley and Nyanza Regions of the country.

The outcome of the first multi-party elections in 1992 may have increased the intensity of ethnic conflict. Just before the elections, President Moi had consistently argued that multi-party politics could divide Kenyans along ethnic lines and lead to ethnic conflicts. The 'Kalenjin Mafia', as political leaders in favour of the federal system of government came to be referred in the press, warned the Kikuyu community resident in the Rift Valley to vote for KANU or move out of the region. After the elections, it was evident that the Kikuyu and most

of the other migrant communities had voted for the opposition. This fact triggered a series of declarations aimed at intimidating these communities so that they would move out.

William Ole Ntimama, a Member of Parliament from the Rift Valley declared 'Enosupukia', an agricultural area settled by the Kikuyu, to be a 'water catchment' area. The migrant settlers were asked to move out. When they hesitated, killings started (*Weekly Review*, 29 October 1993). The motive for this ultimatum and the killings was given during a meeting addressed by the 'Kalenjin Mafia'. They ordered district development communities to meet and cancel business licences belonging to non-Kalenjins in the province, since Kalenjins did not own businesses in Central Province (*Weekly Review*, October 1993:7). Ntimama, one of the leaders already referred to was more emphatic

> ...Maasais have suffered socio-economic degradation at the hands of outsiders — they have taken advantage of the Maasai pastoral way of life to exploit their resources with impunity.. the British suppressed us and we cannot have the Kikuyu suppress us again,... they have turned the Maasai into second class citizens in their own country... Kikuyu settlers are controlling about 90% of commercial activities in Narok... they are doing lucrative business and they want to control the politics of the area (Ibid. p.8).

The above clearly shows the economic motives that sparked off the conflicts. A situation where some communities are seen as 'strangers', with their right to exploit economic resources being redefined in the political arena. Later Ntimama classified the Maasai and Kalenjin as the only 'Indigenous' groups entitled to the economic resources of the Rift Valley, while the settler communities were seen as 'natives' (Amuka 1996). In a speech made in Parliament to defend his role in the Enosupukia killings, Ntimama had this to say

> ... Speaker sir, I want to say it is the Kikuyus who started this war... our cattle were mutilated, our homes were surrounded and they tried to burn them and we have normal rights of defending ourselves. We tried to raise the whole question of the plight of the people down

> stream... that they were dying, their livelihood was in danger, their cattle were dying and their economy was in jeopardy... we were provoked beyond any reasonable doubt.... we can no longer be suppressed, we can no longer be looted. (Hansard, Tuesday 26 October 1993).

The conflicts, however, have not been limited to the Rift Valley and Western Kenya only. As early as 1991, the Muslim population in the Coastal Region started raising their age-old grievances. The trend of economic expansion which had generated widespread discontent about unequal distribution of gains between social classes and across ethnic groups is more noticeable in the Coastal Region. But the discontent in the Coastal Region did not turn into an open conflict until 1996, when political and elite opportunism again provided a chance.

The ethnic violence on the Coast has mostly been directed at the Coast's migrant 'up-country' people, specifically the Luo, Kikuyu and the Gusii. These are the people who work at the port and at tourist hotels, dominate transport and trade, own land and occupy prominent positions in management, teaching and business (*Witness* 1997). The Coastal Muslim population are part of the least educated and least urbanised in Kenya. Their history of social and economic marginalisation dates back to pre-independence days. Kenyatta's government never tried to redress this imbalance nor has the Moi regime done anything apart from promoting the economic interests of a few Coastal power barons mostly of Asian origin. The indigenous Coastal population have therefore watched their economic resources being plundered. It is these people who have been easily mobilised against up-country people supposedly to resist their economic domination.

As African Rights Group (*Witness* 1997) documents, there has been a history of inequality in the Coastal Region that could be exploited for political ends. The indigenous people have not been the beneficiaries of a good education and the economic advantages associated with it. Instead, they see a system of corrupt patronage of

land ownership which further impoverishes them. This has encouraged resentment, not least because of the obvious. prevalence of rich up-country and foreign landholders at the Coast. Hence, it is true that ethnic-related suspicions have thrived at the Coast with the tacit encouragement of politicians keen to fish in troubled waters (Kenya Human Rights Commission Report, 1997).The up-country people are perceived as having enjoyed more than their share of economic and social resources on the Coast.

On 5 September 1997, the *Daily Nation* published a letter by David Odhiambo, a one time civil servant on the Coast in support of the grievances of the indigenous coastal people. He says:

> ...about 80% of the coastal people are squatters on their own ancestral land. Almost everyday, notices are given by the provincial administration to evict them from their homes. It has become common for up-country people, mainly Kikuyu and Kalenjin elites to be issued with title deeds giving them land occupied for generations by the natives. Most of the hotels, large factories and industries are owned by people from up-country who make massive fortunes... local schools, hospitals and religious centres are collapsing while the rich up-country investors continue to develop their home areas.

There seems to be a general consensus that the deliberate economic interest of the coastal people in favour of the economic interests of up-country communities was bound to escalate (*Update*, 30 September 1997). As early as 1978, the Kenyan Parliament had debated the issue of land ownership at the Coast. It was then noted that if personal economic interests were not tamed, the situation at the Coast was bound to explode into a full scale ethnic conflict (*Weekly Review* 5 May 1978). The onset of the economic and political reform period seems to have accelerated the rate of land speculation and economic marginalisation at the Coast. As one Muslim elder remarked in an interview with *Update* (September 1997), 'How do you expect people to keep quiet in such circumstances that alienate them from their own economic

resources'. The issue here, therefore, is the economic importance of land and the need to redefine land rights and rights of economic use.

While the masses. the Coastal Muslim population, had long-standing grievances against economic marginalisation, certain individuals and party operatives used this as a rallying point to settle political scores. As in the Rift Valley Region, the up-country population at the Coast provided a strong opposition force. Hence, elaborate plans were made by KANU barons to 'cleanse' the coastal area of its up-country population, which was seen as upsetting the political balance of power by overtly supporting opposition parties and giving them a decent presence in the area, to the chagrin of KANU politicians not accustomed to serious challenges (Kenyan Human Rights Commission Report 1997; *Witness*, October-November 1997).

Conclusion

Ethnic conflict is not just a primordial phenomenon in Africa. As the Kenyan case shows, ethnic hegemony over economic interests within the context of economic reform explains much of the current wave of ethnic conflicts. One result of the economic reform process is that communities and social groups are demanding a redefinition of some economic rights, most notably land rights, in a way that could give them advantages in a liberalised environment. Unfortunately, these calls for redefinition have been made through appeals to ethnic economic sentiments. Besides, the economic reform process has created economic disparities between those who have continued to accumulate while the rest have been increasingly marginalised along ethnic and gender lines. Deteriorating economic conditions have led to the rise of ethnically based polarities and economic groups. These groups, often led by ethnic elites, have presented a platform for the elites to defend their economic interests under the guise of ethnic interests. The elite, therefore, bring one ethnic community into violent confrontation with another. The Kenyan case shows that not a single member of the upper

class or their business have been affected by the conflicts. Those affected are the already wretched peasants controlled by those either already in powerful positions or who are aspiring to them (Kenyan Human Rights Commission Report 1997). It can certainly be argued that economic and political reform posed a threat to some elite and ethnic interests.

The elite, realising the importance of political power for wealth accumulation, have fought for the control of political power. That is why ethnic conflict in Kenya has generally been seen in the media as a political conflict. However, careful analysis shows that this conflict would not have erupted without the economic implications discussed. Rex (1995) clearly summed this up when he asserted that the emergent ethnicities of the 1990s should not be regarded as being merely concerned with identity, but rather as forms of mobilisation in pursuit of political and economic interests.

References

Aina T. A., 1997, 'Globalization and Social Policy in Africa; Issues and Research Directions' Working Paper Series 6/96, CODESRIA, Dakar Senegal.

Amuka P. S. O, 1997, 'The Romance of Nationalism: Kenya as Word and Desire' in *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Democracy in Africa*. Ogot B. A. (ed), Institute of Research and Postgraduate Studies, Maseno University College, Kenya.

Atieno-Odhiambo E. S., 1997, 'Reconditioning the Terms of Fact: Ethnicity, Nationalism and Democracy as Political Vectors', in Ogot B. A., *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Democracy*.

Bangura Y. and Gibbon P., 1992, 'Adjustment, Authoritarianism and Democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Introduction to some conceptual and empirical Issues', in *Adjustment: The Politics of Economic Reform in Africa*, Gibbon, Bangura and Ofstad (eds), Uppsala, The Scandinavian Institute of Africa Studies.

Barkan J. D., 1994, 'Divergence and Convergence in Kenya and Tanzania: Pressures for Reform', in *Beyond Capitalism vs Socialism in Kenya and Tanzania*, Barkan J. D. (ed.), Nairobi, Kenya, East African Educational Publishers.

Chege M., 1994, 'The Return of Multi-party Politics' in Barkan J. D., *Beyond Capitalism*.

Daily Nation 26 May 1993, 5 September 1997.

Fukui K. and Markakis J., 1994, *Ethnicity and Conflict in the Horn of Africa,* London, James Currey and Ohio University Press.

Finance Magazine, 3 November 1997.

Gibbon P., Bangura Y. and Ofstad A., 1992, 'Authoritarianism, Democracy and Adjustment', *The Politics of Economic Reform in Africa.*

Gore, C.G., 1994, 'Social exclusion in Africa South of the Sahara: A Review of the Literature', Discussion paper series No. 62. Geneva, IILS

Hansard, records Tuesday 26 October, 1993.

Hyden G., 1994, 'Party, State and Civil Society; Control Versus Openness' in Barkan J.D., Beyond Capitalism.'

Kanyinga K., 1994, 'Ethnicity, Patronage and Class in a Local Arena: High and Low Politics in Kiambu, 1982 -92', in K. Kanyinga, A Kiondo P. Tidemand and P. Gibbon, *The New Local Level Politics in East Africa,* Uppsala, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Research Report No. 95.

Kenya Human Rights Commission Report, 1997, 'Kayas of Deprivation, Kayas of Blood; Violence and the State in Coastal Kenya'.

Kitching, G., 1980, *Class and Economic Change in Kenya: The Making of An African Petite Bourgeoisie,* 1905-70. New Haven, Yale University Press.

Lehman, H. P., 1992, 'The Paradox of State Powers in Africa: Debt Management Policies in Kenya and Zimbabwe', *African Studies Review,* Vol. 35 (2) 1-34.

Leys, C., 1974, *Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-colonialism 1964 – 71,* Berkeley, University of California Press.

Lonsdale J., 1992, 'The Moral Economy of Mau Mau: Wealth, Poverty and Civic Virtue in Kikuyu Political Thought', in Berman and Lonsdale (eds), *Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya and Africa,* Book II: Violence and Ethnicity, London, James Currey.

Markakis J., 1993, 'Solving the Riddle of Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflicts' in Arvi Hurskainen and Mohamed S. (eds), *Social Science and Conflict Analysis,* Helsiniki.

Ngunyi, M., 1995, 'Religous Institutions and Political Liberalization in Kenya', in Gibbon P (ed) 1995, *Markets, Civil Society and Development in Kenya,* Uppsala, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.

Nnoli O., 1989, *Ethnic Politics in Africa,* Ibadan, Vantage Publishers.

Nnoli O., 1995, *Ethnicity and Development in Nigeria,* Aldershot, Avebury.

Onimode B., 1992, *A Future for Africa: Beyond the Politics of Adjustment,* London, Earthscan Publications.

Rex J., 1995, 'Ethnic Identity and the Nation State; The Political Sociology of Multicultural Societies', in *Social Identities* 1 (1) 21-34.

Rothchild D., 1986, 'State and Ethnicity in Africa; A Policy Perspective', in Neil Nevitte and Charles H. Kennedy (eds), *Ethnic Preference and Public Policy in Developing Societies*, Boulder, Colorado, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.

Throup D. W. 1987b, 'The Construction and Deconstruction of the Kenyatta State', in Michael Schatzberg (ed) *The Political Economy of Kenya*, New York, Praeger.

Toye J., 1992, 'Interest Group Politics and the Implementation of Adjustment Policies in Sub-Saharan Africa', in Gibbon, Bangura and Ofstad (eds), *The Politics of Economic Reform*.

Update, 1997, Issues No.56, 'Why Clashes Erupted in Mombasa', National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK).

Wallerstein I., 1979, *The Capitalist World Economy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Wolfe M., 1995, 'Globalization and Social Exclusion: Some Paradoxes', in Gerry Rodgers, Charles Gore and Jose B. Figueiredo (eds), *Social Exclusion: Rhetoric, Reality, Responses*, IILS/UNDP.

Woods D., 1992, 'Civil Society in Europe and Africa: Limiting State Power Through a Public Sphere', in *African Studies Review*, Vol.35, no.2, pp.79-100.

Weekly Review 27 September, 1997

Weekly Review 29 October, 1993

Weekly Review 5 May, 1978

Witness, October-November, 1997, 'Violence at the Coast: The Human Consequences of Kenya's Crumbling Political Institutions', A publication of 'African Rights', Oct.-Nov.

Zeleza P.T., 1982, 'Dependent Capitalism and the Making of the Kenyan Working Class During the Colonial Period', Dalhousie University, Unpublished PhD. Thesis.

The Political Economy of Ethnic Conflicts and Governance in Southern Kaduna, Nigeria: [De]Constructing a Contested Terrain

Toure Kazah-Toure*

Résumé: Les conflits ethniques dans le Nigeria du 20ᵉ siècle peuvent être considérés comme une lutte, à la fois violente et subtile de reconfiguration du paysage politique du pays. Une lacune constatée dans la plupart des analyses existantes, l'absence d'une compréhension des conflits ethniques en tant que produits de phonomènes et contradictions sociaux plus complexes, et donc, en tant que manifestations de crises plus profondes. Il demeure le facteur d'inclusion et d'exclusion: ceux qui se croient appartenir à des groupes ethniques dominés, se mobilisent pour faire face à ceux-là qu'ils croient les dominer. Au cœur du débat et des enjeux politiques, c'est la question de la réorganisation des relations inter-ethniques et du partage du pouvoir. Lié à cela, la réalité selon laquelle la gouvernance, de par sa nature et ses fonctions, a été un facteur majeur dans la génération de conflits ethniques autour de l'équité sociale, des droits de citoyenneté, la paix, la démocratie, et la survie de l'Etat nigérian. Le présent article, se concentre sur une petite localité certes, mais son but est d'éclairer la grande scène nationale — et peut-être même au-delà. A moins qu'il y ait un élargissement démocratique du pouvoir, une garantie des droits ethniques et collectifs, une société civile et une gouvernance démocratiques, ainsi qu'une répartition équitable des ressources, les conflits éthniques ne sauraient être réduits au minimum.

Introduction

The current epoch of the construction of the new world order is full of promise. There is an expectation of a world of democratic governance and peaceful relations among peoples. However, it is also an epoch full of dangers, with the possibility of a series of explosive conflicts.

* Department of History, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria.

In Africa, the spread of a mighty wave of ethnic tensions and conflicts, and indeed civil wars, is already threatening the survival of some states. Several complex crises are currently manifesting themselves in ethnic forms (Markakis 1994). Michael Ignatieff (1993:2) argues that 'the key language of our age is ethnic nationalism'. Not all aspects are gloomy, however. For alongside disintegration and separatism in some states emerge calls for renewal and democracy. Current dynamics could also be viewed as efforts by dominated and marginalized groups to assert themselves, to fight for equality and to guarantee their rights. Ethnic conflicts have become the serious challenge of our times, which perhaps explains why ethnicity is seen by John Markakis (1994:5) as 'the reigning concept in African studies at present'.

A major contributory factor to ethnic conflicts is the undemocratic nature of governance. Many African regimes and rulers have repressed sections of the people and, by implication, ignored their aspirations (Ibrahim 1995a). Some have employed divide-and-rule methods in governance, and created more ethno-religious divisions than the colonialists ever did. Once degenerate regimes find their legitimacy put in question, because they no longer care for the majority of the people, or protect the public good, and fail to defend the peoples' rights, they tend to intensify the process of repression. When governance decays, the people retreat into sectarian enclaves, which are seen as providing security (Ibrahim 1993).

Ideas of a Nigerian state with common citizenry, free from ethnicity, religious bigotry, regionalism, and statism, have been pursued by many patriots during the twentieth century. They have generally envisaged a state with equality, united in common political practices and under the same law. In the post-colonial period, this dream of civic nationalists has not materialized. Attahiru Jega (1997) states that the post-colonial project of constructing a common citizenry

with the same aspirations, one Nigerian identity, secularist, with a cosmopolitan outlook instead of 'tribal' loyalty, has largely failed. Over the decades, the deepest attachment has tended to shift increasingly towards primordial tendencies, as ethnic and regional consciousness has become more important (Nnoli 1995:158-159). Ethnic nationalism has increasingly won support in an atmosphere of greed and clientelism. What has made the situation worse over the years is that military regimes, with their foreign occupier-like practices of oppression and repression, have awakened forces and organizations which fight for ethnic, statist, and regional goals (Davidson 1992:228 and 313). This has been exacerbated by the implementation of unpopular policies such as the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP).

The Southern Kaduna zone has occupied a volatile position in the in the twentieth century history of inter-group conflicts and tensions in Northern Nigeria. It has experienced complex conflicts, occasionally violent, and mostly assuming an ethnic form. Linked with these have been questions of social equality, citizenship, community rights, and democracy. All this has taken place in a rural zone, which is a miniature Nigeria, with about forty ethnic groups. Until the mid-1960s, most of its now predominantly Christian population — also a component of what is referred to as northern minorities — were followers of traditional African religion(s). There is a Muslim population, mostly Hausa and Fulani, which is in a minority in the area, although part of the majority at the regional and national levels. Recent conflicts erupting in the zone have taken on a national dimension. This study analyzes the ethnic conflicts and the crucial matter of governance. It attempts to penetrate the nature and essence of these by exposing the structure and operations of the socio-economic and political systems in the historical process, the notions and perception of people about who does what to whom and who controls what, how justice and truth are perceived, and how reactions which affected the historical process were influenced both by

the memory of concrete human experience and also by what is located in the realm of the imaginary (Diouf 1997 and Mbembe 1997). A study of a relatively small historical specificity, to borrow from Archie Mafeje (1991:7), aims to throw light on a particular context and also add to our understanding of the wider scene.

Nature of Society, Inter-ethnic Conflicts and Governance: The Late 19th Century

In the period preceding European colonization, there were various communal polities in the Southern Kaduna zone. The people were mainly of the semi-Bantu family of Niger-Congo languages, sharing similarities in traits and culture (Gunn 1956:36). Archaeological and ethnographic evidence shows that despite continuous local migration within the zone and from the neighbouring Jos Plateau area, most people were autochthonous (Jemkur 1992:1-20).

In the late nineteenth century, state organization was less developed than in the northern emirates. Within the different social formations no single person wielded power as the chief of an entire ethnic group. The emergence of contradictory classes was still at an infant stage. Political power, which was not completely separated from spiritual power, was controlled by the clan elders. There prevailed a broad popular participation in the affairs of society and daily life. Even the chief priests of the religious shrines had no executive power, but exercised limited authority through the clan elders and the lesser priests (Kazah-Toure 1991:97-100). Clan and spiritual leaders of each ethnic group discussed the affairs of their homeland and held broad consultations with the different sections of their constituencies before collectively taking decisions. The different polities had some elements of democratic governance. Stanley (1935) depicts this in relation to the Adara people: 'The 'government' of an average pagan village is a queer combination of autocracy and communism. The controlling influences are essentially 'religious' and the police force is marginal'.

Religion as an institution was used to mobilize its followers, to maintain norms, and to preserve law and order. However, religion was also used as a means of exploiting women by imposing fines on them for showing what was considered to be disrespect towards their husbands, and also as a means of putting a check on youth. Gerontocrats appropriated some surplus wealth through the control of political and religious power. In spite of their leadership positions, however, they were also involved in production. There were no sharp contradictions between the ruling strata and the ordinary people. These acephalous societies experienced limited conflicts amongst themselves. These socio-political formations were generally non-expansionist (Kazah-Toure 1991:77). Inter-ethnic disputes and conflicts were based on the question of land, control of fishing and hunting areas and the ownership of other resources. Armed clashes occasionally occurred — such as the ones between the Bajju and the Ham — but these were on a small scale (Kirkpatrick 1926).

Inter-ethnic conflicts featured more in the relationship between the Southern Kaduna zone and the neighbouring emirates of the Sokoto Caliphate such as Zazzau (Zaria), which was feudal, predominantly Hausa and Muslim. M. G. Smith (1960:2) relates the migration of Hausa people into the zone to the expansion of international trade. The history of some of the Hausa settlements, such as Zangon-Katab, established as mid-way bases for Hausa traders on their way to or from the southern forest region, dates back to around 1750. This development led to beneficial economic interaction, mainly in terms of trade, between the zone and the emirates. Agents of Hausa merchants began to emerge among the so-called indigenous peoples. By virtue of what accrued to them, as agents for foreign trade, they constituted an incipient social stratum. On the eve of the colonial era, some of them had started to take Hausa titles, but did not enjoy recognition by their own people as chiefs (Brandt 1939). Later, these were to be the main collaborators with foreign interests.

Arnett E. J. (1920:16) advanced the argument that Zazzau played a leading role in slave raids and the slave trade, and that its economic prosperity was attributable to slavery. Yusufu Turaki (1982:85) and Simon Yohanna (1988:78) argued forcefully that slave raids were the dominant forms of relations between the Southern Kaduna zone and the emirates of the Sokoto Caliphate, and that these involved the enslavement of the non-Hausa and the non-Muslim peoples of the zone. The crucial issues are here analyzed from a simplistic ethno-religious perspective. The reality was more complex. Although aggression, slave raids and enslavement were directed more to other societies, slave raids and slavery existed within the emirates and were directed at both the Hausa and the Muslim population. As Tukur (1992:105-109) puts it, more complex factors and explanations can be found by analyzing relations of production, class relations, the designs of the emirate ruling classes and their expansionism, and by placing the slave raids and slavery in the context of a phase in the development of contrasting socio-economic systems and territories.

In the emirates, the feudal ruling circles used slaves, as a separate labour force to work on their estates. There was also a flourishing export market for slaves, in connection with the trans-Saharan trade. Owing to the communal nature of Southern Kaduna polities, with a relative low level of development of productive forces, there was a limited scope for the exploitation of man by man. There was no internal market for slaves nor any significant need for slave labour. The few slaves were basically captives taken during inter-ethnic conflicts over land, and in counter-attacks against emirate slave raiders. Slaves in the Southern Kaduna zone formed an integral part of household labour (Bonat 1985:108).

Massive slave raids were launched against the communities in the zone. The heaviest were carried out in 1849, 1858, and 1897 (Kirkpatrick 1926). Thousands of people were either killed or captured

as slaves. These acts of aggression devastated, destabilized, and even depopulated some of the communities with serious economic, demographic and other consequences (Omotosho 1988:78; and Yohanna 1988:77). Most studies have neglected the internal linkages which facilitated slave raiding. The Hausa settlements lacked the capacity to carry out such ventures against the host communities they had pacts with. There were swift reprisals against local Hausa suspected of collaboration (Kazah-Toure 1991:83). In both the Hausa settlements and the host communities, however, were elements recruited by slave raiders as secret spies, who carried out espionage activities which aided the capturing of slaves by external forces. Whenever these elements were uncovered, society meted out severe punishment (Kazah-Toure 1991:68-69). Stubborn resistance by the various polities to violent slave raids and to military and political aggression by the emirate forces, continued. Until the British colonial conquest, no other external power had been successful in establishing political control over the people.

In spite of prevailing internal contradictions, the polities of Southern Kaduna did not develop oppressive institutions, and there was no taxation or forced labour. Major forms of domination, exploitation, oppression, and repression — associated with the feudal emirates of the Sokoto Caliphate — hardly existed. Yet, the British colonialists and most colonial anthropologists branded these peoples as 'raw pagans', 'savages', and 'uncivilised' (Orr 1904). The 'Rukubas who inhabit the hill east of the Piti are the most raw of all', claimed Resident J.M. Fremantle (1913). However, B. Swai (1991:7-8) states that despite attempts tot reduce their culture to a superstitious and primitive way of life, all this was neither 'ridiculous nor undignified' before such people made contact with either feudalism or capitalism. Although such communities were called primitive, 'it is this very phenomenon which helped reduce the need for violence and brutality as means of control,

something which was much pronounced in the so-called civilised societies' (Swai 1991:8).

Transformation of Socio-Economic and Political Relations: The Generation of Ethnic Conflicts Under Colonialism

British colonial incursions into the zone began in January 1900.[1] The West African Frontier Force (WAFF) encroached on some territories, claiming that its troops were on a crusade to stamp out slave raids (Adeleye 1971:244). People generally interpreted the acts of encroachment as territorial violations and physically resisted. In the ensuing military confrontations, the WAFF burnt and destroyed a number of towns and villages (Adeleye 1971:244). With the conquest of Zaria in 1902, the British created Zaria Province and declared most[2] of the area of this study part of it. By doing so, the colonialists made the polities into parts of the emirates.

Tukur (1979:153) argues that the British were just as violent and destructive as the emirates had been in dealing with the communal polities, in terms of both human life and property. Some resistance to the British took on an anti-Hausa character. Various ethnic groups embarked on blocking roads, raiding caravans, and attacking itinerant Hausa traders passing through their homelands (Orr 1907). The Hausa were perceived as collaborators with the British invaders. This was partly based on the fact that the Hausa towns, in the zone of this study, did not resist the colonial military offensive. Bonat (1985:191-192) explains the stiff resistance of the non-Muslim peoples such as the Agworok as being due to their history of struggles against emirate expansionism. A critical examination can deepen such an interpretation. The high level of participation in many aspects of

1. This was in the wake of the British formal proclamation of the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria, by Colonel F.D. Lugard, at Lokoja on January 1, 1900.

2. Few of the polities were included in the newly established Nassarawa Province.

communal life, and the low level of exploitation and oppression in these
societies, contributed to their being more cohesive. This differentiated
them from the emirate formations, where feudal exploitation and
brutality had largely discredited the rulers and isolated them from the
people. While the far more developed and militarily strong emirates
were defeated by the British in the first five years of the twentieth
century, it took the colonizer up to 1915 to crush some of the Southern
Kaduna ethnic groups who 'were determined on a joint resistance'
(Sciortino 1915).

Colonial military operations against the people went side-by-side
with the establishment of administrative structures. The Native
Administrations (NAs) were created as appendages to the Provincial
Administrations and as local governments, to be controlled by African
rulers. The emirs were placed at head of the NAs, and were to be
assisted by subordinate principal and lesser officers. By this new
formula in governance, the British transformed the emirate feudal
aristocracy into a buffer in the power structure between the colonialists
and the colonized. Furthermore, the emirate aristocracy were imposed
as overlords on the peoples of the zone. In the three districts of Moroa,
Kwoi, and Kagoro, which had no Hausa settlements or population, local
elements, mainly agents of Hausa merchants in the pre-colonial days or
other collaborators, were appointed as chiefs. But they had little power.
In matters of finance, recruitment of staff, and major decision-making
they were subordinated to the NAs headed by the Hausa-Fulani emirs
(Beck 1934).

Right from 1907, when the first set of Muslim Hausa-Fulani rulers
were posted into the zone as District Heads and other NA officials, there
were continuous outbreaks of peasant revolts in such places as Kachia,
and these took ethnic forms (Kazah-Toure 1995). For the first time, all
the ethnic groups in the zone were now confronted with taxation, forced
labour, and extortion by rulers. A main cause of ethnic conflict was that

the rulers were imposed on communities that were largely different from them, in terms of language, religion and other aspects of culture. The so-called indigenes were occupying only the lowest positions in the scheme of things as hamlet or village heads (Administrative Policy 1935).

Colonialism was not devoid of racism, and its ideology was extended in Northern Nigeria to assessing the different ethno-cultural groups. Lugard's colonial officers categorized the ruling circles of the defeated Sokoto Caliphate, both in theory and practice, as the most ingenious, intelligent, cultured and politically sophisticated. Owing to the key role of Hausa officials within the system, a widespread impression emerged among the people that they were facing 'Hausa colonialism' (Sokop 1940). This perception was influenced by an empirical reading of the form colonialism took in the zone. Nigeria did not have a colonizing settler population and British officials were few. British political officers were not physically based in the area of study, except for the occasional tours. Up to the 1940s, all the NA officials, from the highest to the lowest in administration, judiciary, security services, such as the police and prison, labour, and all other departments, were people of Hausa nationality (Reynolds 1951 and Hay 1929).

In several colonies in Africa, the occupiers introduced segregation among the colonized (Drayton 1995:10 and Nnoli 1978:3-4). A colonial practice in the area of study was the physical separation of the Hausa people from the non-Hausa in settlements and schools. Reforms in the latter were only partly introduced towards the end of the colonial period. Also, although all communities had lost their rights over land to the colonial state, the practice by the NA aristocrats of expropriating land from the peasants of other groups in favour of Hausa elements was a major factor in ethnic conflicts. Although peasants of all ethnic groups, including the Hausa, were conscripted for official forced

labour, unofficial exactions, by the Hausa NA rulers, were directed at the non-Hausa. Illegal forced labour was utilized in the construction of markets and the personal houses of Hausa officials. Non-Hausa women were forced to sweep markets, provide firewood, and exploited as carriers of loads for Hausa officials when travelling. These practices were experienced by Hausa commoners elsewhere in Northern Nigeria but not in the area of this study (Kazah-Toure 1995). Relatively big farmers, middlemen and buying agents of European firms, those controlling local trading activities, those controlling markets and owning stalls, were to be found only among the Hausa.

In the working sites and accommodation of the labour camps, the British authorities introduced ethno-religious segregation. Forced labourers and migrant labourers were separately treated in the tin mines along the lines of 'native Africans', 'non-native Africans', Christian, Muslim, and 'pagan'. The so-called pagans 'were despised by the more sophisticated Hausa, Yoruba, Fulani... of the Christian and Mohammadan communities' (Browne 1939). They were excluded from occupying even the demeaning position, reserved for Africans, of headmen in labour camps. One racist justification the British gave for drafting forced labour was that it benefited the so-called pagans by giving them confidence in 'their dealing with the more civilised Hausa neighbours and encouraged them to lay complaints when unjustly treated' (Ormsby 1909). The British imposed taxes on non-Muslim women in the early part of the colonial period, while sparing Muslim women, on the grounds that non-Muslim women owned property, in contrast to Muslim women, a reason not historically correct (Tukur 1979:575). Both Muslim and non-Muslim women were left out of leadership roles in the system.

The differentiation between the Hausa and the non-Hausa, and the inequality, discrimination, evictions and exclusions that accompanied it, have led to the advancement of the thesis of internal colonialism

(Yohanna 1988 and Kukah 1993). However, it should be noted that the principal ruling class was foreign and British. It ultimately controlled state power and institutions. The Hausa aristocracy, in spite of the power it wielded, derived its authority from the British, and did not have an independent socio-economic and political base outside the colonial state. This negates the idea of internal colonialism. There was a subjugation of all the colonized peoples. British occupiers maintained sovereignty over all the ethnic groups. The Southern Kaduna context differs from the ones with which the controversial thesis of internal colonialism has been associated, as in South Africa (Slovo 1988:148-149).

An analysis of colonial education is vital for grasping the process of class formation and the emergence of an elite, and how this affected ethnic relations. E.P.T. Crampton (1978:102) argues that the exclusion of missionary activities from Muslim areas restricted the spread of education. Turaki (1982:162) proves, with irrefutable evidence, that even in non-Muslim Southern Kaduna, where the missions were relatively more free, their main preoccupation up to about 1940 was proselytizing. Provision of education in the zone was not a central objective of either the colonial government or the dominant Christian mission.

In historical reality, the British school system was established for the scions of the ruling feudal aristocracy. Since the NA ruling circles were Hausa and Muslim, colonial education was restricted to them up to the early 1930s (Kazah-Toure 1991:245-250). It was indeed only in 1928 that the first school for the sons of NA officials — their daughters were excluded — was opened in the zone. Later, when the authorities introduced education among the non-Hausa groups, it excluded the children of commoners. It was directed at the children of village heads and prominent elders (Morgant 1933). An argument often advanced by analysts (Bonat 1985:235) is that Hausa rulers opposed the spread of

schools in the area on the basis that secularism was going to undermine Islamic education. This is not valid, because the colonizer's interests had prevailed in other sectors in spite of local opposition. Therefore, if the provision of education for the non-Hausa had been central to the objectives of the colonialists, the negative views and attitudes of Hausa rulers — employed by the British — would not have prevailed.

It is important to emphasize that the missionaries established their first school in the zone in 1929 — and it was a Bible school. The predominant mission in the zone was the puritan Sudan Interior Mission (SIM). The SIM made the zone its sphere of influence with the collaboration of the colonial authorities. In 1933, Dr. A.P. Strirett spelt out the mission's general policy and line on education:

> Don't lead them into English, Maths, Science etc. Keep the Bible as the textbook and the only one... Thus sending out successive relays of young men with the word of God in their hands and Christ of God in their heart (as cited in Turaki 1982:206).

In ideological and practical terms this type of education was aimed at producing docile and subservient characters. The SIM was 'more interested in the preaching of the gospel than establishing schools' and was suspicious of and hostile to missions that were inclined to the opposite (Crampton 1978:104-105). That was why the education provided in government schools was more secular and superior to the type obtained in the mission schools up to the late 1940s. The change came when the SIM and other missions began to establish schools and to create an African clergy, as part of their decolonization reforms. It was when the Church became a viable means to secure a place in school that proselytism started to make an impact among the non-Hausa and non-Muslim peoples. By the late 1950s they were fast overtaking the Hausa in the field of education (Wreford 1957). However, the system continued to exclude and marginalize them. They were mainly kept out of the NA bureaucracy, government jobs, and the private sector. Side-by-side with the tremendous awakening among a frustrated elite,

were their increased roles in the struggles for assertion by their ethnic groups.

The focus of this study now turns to the anti-colonial struggles, which took mainly ethnic forms of different magnitude and dimensions. As Mamdani (1996:24) argues in relation to Africa in general, once domination took an ethnic form, resistance to it was bound to assume the same form. Peasant revolts and other social and political struggles in the zone were directed against the Hausa (Kazah-Toure 1995). The Hausa people continuously faced the threat of political exclusion by the other ethnic groups. The former were never viewed by the latter as citizens in the area. The state itself had a contradictory position, to the extent that on paper citizenship was not on the basis of residency but on the basis of ancestral origin (Mustapha 1997:216-219).

In 1910 a peasant revolt broke out in the Atyab community of Zangon-Katab District against forced labour and taxation, and the people showed an 'open resentment against their District Head' (Gills 1910). In 1922 the Bajju and Atyab waged a joint struggle which involved non-payment of taxes, non-compliance with forced labour demands, and physical attacks on Hausa officials. The uprising was quickly suppressed by military intervention (Laing 1922). In 1934 there occurred a revolt by the Gwong people, which witnessed civil disobedience in Kagoma District. They targeted the Hausa-Fulani officials in charge of the district and demanded the creation of a Gwong Chiefdom out of Jema'a Emirate (Turaki 1982:194). One aspect of the agitations was connected with what the colonialists called the Muslim Courts, in which there was widespread discrimination in litigation involving non-Muslims and Muslims. The colonial authorities admitted to the prevalence of injustice in the judicial system. In 1924 Resident E.H.B. Laing of Zaria Province noted that: 'I am not altogether satisfied with the Native Courts generally. In the pagan areas little or no use is

made of the Moslem Alkali courts except by the minority Moslem population' (Laing 1924).

During World War II , ethnic conflicts escalated in the zone. The thorniest issues of the times were tyranny, brutalization, lack of employment, and oppression by the Hausa rulers. Militants of the movements engaging in the struggle mobilized their communities on the path of civil disobedience. The state responded by arresting, torturing, and jailing the activists. In May and June 1946, major revolts broke out among the non-Hausa communities of Zangon-Katab District. The people were fighting partly to be detached from Zaria. Civil disobedience in the revolt included a refusal to pay taxes, a boycott of the market, and non-compliance with the orders of the authorities. Attempts were made physically to attack and expel the Hausa people. A.D. Yahaya (1990:8) observed that in the struggle the British gave their backing to the Hausa rulers 'but never to the genuine demand by the people for improved social and political conditions'. It is worth noting that it was the same Hausa feudal rulers, against whom the others fought, who presided over the trials, passed prison sentences, and were in charge of the NA prisons where the activists were dehumanized and some died (Kazah-Toure 1991:386-387).

In the course of the decolonization process, political parties and organizations, which occupied more prominence among the non-Hausa ethnic groups, focused more on reforms in the NA system, integration of the elites within the system, the issue of ethnic discrimination and inequalities, rather than on the concern for national independence. When the Northern Nigeria Non-Muslim League was founded in 1949, it found acceptance among the embryonic educated stratum in the Southern Kaduna zone. The league's viewpoint was directed at challenging what it called Hausa and Muslim domination (Okpu 1977:66 and 127-128).

Within the terrain of politics, the Non-Muslim League, led by an emerging Christianised elite (largely mission-trained teachers and evangelists who were not in government employment), made demands for the same concessions and opportunities in the system as had been given to the Hausa elites. The league was organised under the umbrella of ethnicity and religion. In 1950 it was transformed into the Middle Zone League (MZL). In reality it was a conglomeration of loose organisations, each defining its objectives within its immediate environment. That is why Bryan Sharwood-Smith (1969:217) describes the MZL as 'an untidy complex of non-Muslims and tribal unions.' MZL's president in the zone, Dauda Kwoi, listed the organisation's preoccupations as 'the future of the pagans whether Christianised or not', the creation of a Middle Belt Region and 'saving the pagans from Hausa domination' (Political Bodies 1958). It excluded the Hausa from its ranks. In January 1954 it organised demonstrations to protest against Zaria's dominance, and the non-Hausa groups were up in arms in a joint anti-Hausa revolt which was suppressed (Administration of Southern Zaria 1954). MZL propaganda further fuelled animosity and hatred towards the Hausa in a most negative direction. The MZL was incapable of transcending ethnicization in politics. For the MZL, the colonizer should not allow national independence in Nigeria, lest the peoples of central Nigeria be dominated by the Hausa (Kazah-Toure 1995).

The struggles waged by the communities did not lead to significant concessions. In connection with inter-ethnic relations, the only reform introduced was the creation of village group councils for some of the non-Hausa communities in 1955. A president of council was appointed for each ethnic group, with the village heads placed under that leadership. But all the presidents were strictly subordinated to the Hausa district heads. On the whole, village group councils were not democratic and the NA feudalists ensured that only their tested loyalists

were appointed. Thus the people were not satisfied with the reforms (Yahaya 1980:163).

In 1955 the MZL merged with some other groupings to form a political party, the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC). R.L. Sklar (1983:372) points out that the UMBC lacked coordination and there was 'no effective central authority.' Its most conservative wing remained the MZL, as the various organisations were allowed to retain their identities. By the late 1950s when the British and the Northern People's Congress (NPC) — the pro-colonialist and pro-feudalist ruling party of Northern Nigeria — began to give MZL's leaders such opportunities as political appointments, jobs, loans, and so on, which gave them personal and class advancement, their rhetoric about Hausa and Muslim domination mellowed and their agitation became feeble.

Only a bit of the ethno-religious agitation was maintained, as a weapon to bargain for crumbs of concessions for a tiny opportunistic elite. Later the MZL went into alliance with the NPC, and some of its leaders took appointment in the regional government, without informing their followers and their allies in the UMBC (Kazah-Toure 1991:494-495). Billy Dudley (1968:98) shows how a leading member of the MZL in the Southern Kaduna zone, Maude Gyani, kowtowed to the Hausa ruling circles and the British in the regional assembly and thanked them for 'civilizing' and 'uplifting' the non-Hausa groups. By 1960 the MZL faction of the UMBC in the area veered completely and crossed over to join the NPC (Yahaya 1980:154-155).

When Nigeria got its independence from the British in 1960, the various contradictions and points of inter-ethnic conflict had not been resolved. The post-colonial order was founded on the same socio-economic and political structures which were already in existence. The institutions and mechanisms for generating conflicts remained intact. Thus ethnic conflicts were to remain part of the historical process.

Political Development and Ethnic Conflicts: The Post-Colonial Era

The ruling class which inherited political power from the colonialists was composed of the most conservative and aristocratic forces, who were the main agents of colonial domination. Owing to their class nature and interests, their entrenched control of power, their ideological orientation and world-view, coupled with their ethno-religious chauvinism, they were not favourably disposed towards reform in managing of ethnic relations. Their history and survival were rooted in class and ethnic inequalities as well as in undemocratic governance. So, introducing serious reforms would have amounted to their embarking on a suicidal path.

A significant development was the level of intolerance which the ruling NPC demonstrated in dealing with the political opposition, both in relation to political parties and groups seen as belonging to it. The NPC government tightened its control of all NAs. In pre-1960 years the NPC won no single seat at any level of elections in Southern Kaduna. In fact, despite rigged elections, the NPC only secured a third of the votes in the entire Zaria Province. This was drastically altered, after independence, when the Emir of Zaria started a vigorous political drive to reverse the situation, by cracking down on opposition of the radical and most popular Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) and that of the UMBC.

The various organs and layers of the NA were put together as a machinery to pursue the objectives of the party of government. A few non-Hausa supporters of the NPC were recruited into the service of the NA. For the first time, two people from Southern Kaduna were promoted into the senior cadre of Zaria NA. The Emir of Zaria invited UMBC leaders, offered them personal concessions for self-advancement, and 'made it clear that if he had his way he did not want to see any other party in the Emirate' apart from the NPC (Yahaya

1980:138). Those leading members of the UMBC who refused to defect
— after some of their colleagues had been enticed by way of small loans
and jobs — were arrested on trumped-up charges and subsequently
imprisoned.[3]

Mostly die-hard members of the NPC were posted as district
officials in Southern Kaduna. District authorities went all out to clamp
down on opposition to the feudal aristocrats and the NPC. Taxation (on
children and the old who were legally exempted from payment of
taxes), forced labour, physical brutalization, imprisonment, and murder
by state agents, were used as instruments of repression against many in
the opposition. Basic facilities and services were denied to most of the
Southern Kaduna districts, and their educated youth were mainly not
employed, because they — and their area — were defined as being
predominantly on the side of anti-government forces (Kazah-Toure
1995).

The NPC government was characterized by massive repression of
popular organizations, and there was no demarcation between the
ruling party and the government. NPC's northernization policy
involved only loyalists of the party. Ethnicity was a factor, but Hausa
elements who were members of the radical and popular NEPU were
even more vigorously excluded. From 1959 onwards, there was an
explosion of mission schools in Southern Kaduna, and a massive influx
and output were recorded. Christianity was rapidly embraced by the
non-Muslims. An educated elite continually emerged, which felt it
owed more to the missionaries and the ethnic communities than to the
state. Christianity came to be interpreted as a kind of liberation by many
in the Southern Kaduna communities, in contrast to the government,
which they portrayed as having links with Islam (Achi *et al.* 1987). The

---

3. This cross-checked information is derived from field-interview with a former
    leader of the UMBC and a member of the Federal House of Representative from
    Southern Kaduna, Shekarau Kau Layyah, who was incarcerated.

educated elements from these communities were, on the whole, working as mission school teachers and in other voluntary agencies. The political fortress of the NPC was built around NA officials, their agents, at all levels, and the rich Hausa merchants. It was the latter who monopolised government contracts and loans, distribution and retail trade, and were the buying agents of the government owned marketing boards. The petty traders among the non-Hausa communities were completely subordinated to the Hausa merchants and had no real chance to compete or prosper. Government projects, services, and infrastructure were concentrated in the Hausa settlements, partly because there were the district headquarters, and thus the centres of rural power.

On 15 January 1966, a military coup terminated civilian rule and banned political parties and activities in Nigeria. Sectional, regional, provincial, and ethnic conflicts had reached a climax elements were leading Nigeria towards disintegration. Yahaya (1980:191) argues that owing to the humble origins and professional training of most of the military leaders, they were less committed to the NA system. To justify their intervention, and to create a base of support, the military had to look into some of the old grievances of opposition political forces and ethnic minorities. As part of their reforms, the military abolished the four regions and created twelve states in May 1967.[4] In line with this, the powers of the emirate aristocracy were reduced in 1968. The NA courts, prisons and police, hitherto controlled by the emirs, were transferred to the jurisdiction of either the state or federal governments.

---

4. Six states were created from the defunct Northern Region. Southern Kaduna became part of North Central State — made up of Zaria and Katsina Provinces. Provinces were abolished in 1967. In 1976 North Central State was renamed Kaduna State. In 1987, Katsina State was created from it, and the rest still retains the name Kaduna State.

These reforms slightly weakened the grip of the NA rulers over the Southern Kaduna communities, who pressed for more reforms. For the first time, two non-Hausa district heads were appointed, even though the Zaria Emirate Council only picked its loyalists without consultation with the communities. All this took place at a time when the ruling forces in Northern Nigeria, and indeed the federal government, were mobilizing groups to confront secessionist Biafra in the civil war that broke-out in 1967. Provincial Administrations were replaced by Administrative Councils, in 1969, and three of these were created in Southern Kaduna. With the civil war, and the introduction of a kind of local government structure, the non-Hausa elite was now being absorbed into the state system.

Significant changes occurred in the wake of the termination of the First Republic and the outbreak of the civil war. First, the area witnessed a tremendous increase in the recruitment of both non-commissioned and commissioned officers into the armed forces. Elements of non-Hausa origins, locked out of the state and private sectors over the years, had avenues opened up to them as a result of the violent national conflict. The argument here is that a large number of youth enlisted into the military, not necessarily because they wanted to defend the unity of the Nigerian state against the Biafran secessionists, but because of the job opportunities the war offered. It is important to observe that relative to their population, people from the zone became more dominant in the Nigerian military (especially in the middle and lower ranks) than the Hausa. The emirate ruling circles, the northern bourgeoisie and bureaucrats, and their allies, turned to mobilise the same working people and groups they had dominated and repressed over time. Appeals were made to them to take leading positions in the fighting forces in the civil war, while the ruling class remained prominent in controlling politics.

Secondly, the civil war brought more access for non-Hausa to education, resources, and jobs in both the public and other sectors, as a result of the exit of the Igbo workers, traders, and so on.[5] Between 1966 and the 1970s, Southern Kaduna took a lead in education. It is claimed that most of the educated elements from the non-Hausa groups were concentrated in the sphere of education as school teachers and in the middle cadre of the civil service, while the Hausa were dominant at the highest levels of the bureaucracy (Bonat 1989:55). All this was contested by the Kaduna State government which always maintained that compared with the population of the zone, the Southern Kaduna communities had more than their quota of representation at all levels in the civil service (White Paper 1987:19).

Thirdly, from 1966 onwards, more contractors, transporters, fertilizer and petroleum products dealers, big traders, and controllers of major economic activities, have emerged among the Hausa than ever before. M.H. Kukah (1993:54) states that whereas the system produced more intellectuals and other educated elements, more military officers and more workers from among the other ethnic groups, the economically powerful class developed more among the Hausa.

Local government reforms introduced changes in government, which marked a complete negation of the NA system. Power in terms of grassroots institutions was now to lie with elected local councils and thus with democratic representatives of the people. Emirs and chiefs were now to take dictates from the local councils, and could no longer expropriate land from the peasants (Guidelines 1976:19-24). The

---

5. Quite a sizeable number of workers in the public and private sectors were Igbo and other people of Eastern Nigerian origins. This was more so in the railways. With the outbreak of Igbo massacre in 1966, and subsequently the civil war as from 1967, Igbo returned to the East leaving many vacancies to be filled. Igbo community schools were abandoned, and thus taken over by government to provide education for others.

Emirate Councils were subordinated to the Local Government Councils (LGCs). The snag is that what was supposed to lead to democratic gains has been largely eroded by constant military intervention. Emirs and chiefs are supposed to retain only nominal powers in the new order, although in reality this principle has been undermined. Local councils are now instructed to spend five per cent of their monthly budgets on 'traditional rulers'. They enjoy unspent amounts from the state and federal governments (*Tell* 1997:15). This has not affected the increased entrenchment of the non-Hausa ruling class within the system.

A bugging question is why the emirs, chiefs, and other so-called traditional rulers are still wielding influence in political affairs, regardless of their being less powerful in constitutional theory. The main pillars sustaining these parasitic forces have been the unelected, undemocratic, unpopular and repressive military regimes, which find the equally undemocratic emirs and chiefs to be natural allies. Successive military governments and their leaders continually treat this class as so-called natural rulers and fathers of the nation. The latter too tend to prefer the military and do its dirty work, and in this way, they both have influence and accumulate capital. The military appoints them as chairpersons of companies and government boards, and holds on to them as an alternative to any semblance of democracy, which the soldiers are paranoid about.[6]

Emirs and chiefs support the military because democratically elected civilians see themselves as those with the people's mandate and

---

6. Whenever there is a military take-over the coupists, appeal for the understanding of 'traditional rulers' and pay them courtesy calls to explain their action. The Emirs and Chiefs are always the first to recognise the military, with appeals to the population to co-operate. That is why they are called 'Any Government in Power' (AGP) in some Nigerian circles. Recently both serving and retired military officers go for chieftaincy titles. Also, more and more of the retired soldiers are displacing civilians in the race to occupy vacant thrones as Emirs and Chiefs. In fact this is the vogue especially in the north.

thus the constitutional right to rule and they tend to reduce the former to the background. The 'traditional rulers' occupy a strong position in relation to lobbying for contracts for themselves and their allies, for appointments including ministerial ones for their own circles, getting the military to locate projects in their areas and in having influence over decision-making behind the scenes. That is partly why the demand for the creation of chiefdoms continues — by the elites — in Southern Kaduna,[7] while they maintain the propaganda line that chiefdoms are the symbol of self-determination for their ethnic groups (Mallam and Gadoh 1991). Increasingly, ethnic-based political demands in Southern Kaduna are linked with the issue of chiefdoms, but in different conditions from decades ago, as ethno-religious agitations have in part become keenly calculated tools in the hands of different sections of bargaining ruling classes. Today's reality is that dominant factions in national politics use moribund institutions and titles to enrich themselves in a multi-ethnic state, where both ethno-religious chauvinism in politics and authoritarianism in governance are on the ascendancy (Ibrahim 1995b).

The State, Degenerate Governance, Growing Constraints on People's Rights, and the Escalation of Ethnic Conflicts

From the 1980s, ethnic conflicts have intensified in Southern Kaduna and throughout Nigeria in general. At the national level several groups have used ethnicity, statism, regionalism and religion, as instruments either to include or exclude others from power and access to resources. These weapons have now taken centre stage in the process of political mobilization as well as marginalization (Ibrahim 1977). In Southern

---

7. In October 1995, this author attended a seminar where a former Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, in the previous civilian government of Kaduna State, openly cried-out seriously that he wants a chiefdom to be created in the area he hails from so that his chief can go to Aso Rock (the Nigerian Presidency at Abuja) to lobby for him to realize his dream to become a federal minister!

Kaduna, in recent times, ethnic conflicts have assumed the additional dimension of a Muslim versus Christian dichotomy. The Kafanchan crisis of 1987 was a major departure from previous conflicts, which were essentially inter-communal in nature. For the first time, a conflict arose from religion, and spread to polarize mainly Christians and Muslims in Nigeria — other religions do not matter. It was not just a matter of lives being lost, places of worship burnt, and a reign of insecurity over who lived where and who was a neighbour to whom, but the Nigerian press, with many distortions and partisan reports, inflamed the conflict in a most polarised fashion over the Muslim and Christian divide (Muazzam and Ibrahim 1997).

The 1980s saw a rise in religious fundamentalism, with an influx of foreign influence, ideological and material, on Muslim and Christian sects. The Nigerian state also politicized religion. The escalation of this division can also be connected to the patronage of sectarian ethnic and religious organizations, and the extension of largesse to their leaders, by the regimes of Generals Ibrahim Babangida and later Sani Abacha, which have gone round in circles looking for legitimacy, even at the expense of undermining national unity (Ibrahim 1997). The regimes have also made ethno-religious bases relevant in the recruitment of their agents. The Babangida years (1985-1993) witnessed the growing of ethno-religious consciousness, tensions, and conflicts. The ethnic groups claiming to be indigenous in their areas have been experiencing a tremendous rise of their ruling class elements in the military, public and private sectors, and so on. At a psychological level they have a particular memory of the past, based on revenge. More important, however, they now compete in the political and economic domains with their Hausa rivals (Ibrahim 1977). The main issues involved in the battle are the land question, political power and who provides the leadership in governance, the control of plus access to and distribution of resources, citizenship, identity, justice, and democracy.

Inter-ethnic conflicts have been heightened by the economic crisis which started in Nigeria in 1982, and worsened with the introduction of the SAP from 1986. This reduced people's wealth, and they tended to perceive their enemies as those who belong to other ethnic or religious groups. Inside the same group, the sect, district, class, or gender could be the yardstick. As the various tiers of governments increasingly relinquish responsibilities towards the citizenry, class- and ethnic-based political oppression and economic deprivation are galloping. Militarism is making governance more repressive and authoritarian. The military dictators have been reducing guarantees of minimum rights and the protection of the citizenry. The collapse of state institutions and the onslaught on civil society — such as labour, students' movements, and professional bodies — have made many in society fall back on ethnic associations and religious organizations. People now also tend to rely on these new found terrains to struggle for reforms 'or to demand autonomy and self-determination.'

The working people in Southern Kaduna have been enmeshed in serious difficulties. The SAP has been characterized by a collapse of the school system, public health system, and so on. Rural poverty is growing and the majority of the people face massive destitution. School and hospital fees and those in other spheres have increased. Peasants are paying more for agricultural inputs, while the prices of consumer goods and services have been escalating with the skyrocketing inflation. Retrenchment of workers is part of daily reality, and many of them have been thrown back into rural communities. School leavers and even university graduates have been swelling the number of the rural poor as unemployment grows. Even the majority of the elite have been pauperised. There has also been a massive retrenchment by the military, which had been a major employer in the zone. In an area with a shortage of land suitable for farming, the pumping of ex-soldiers back into the peasantry, without any concrete resettlement scheme, has made them restive. This is linked with the growing ethnic and communal conflicts

(Mahmood 1992). These are now fought in typical military style. Some of the retired military officers, partly in search of new relevance, join ethnic and religious groupings and become spokespersons in all kinds of agitations (National Impression 1992:22). It is argued by some analysts that the military have somehow been responsible for triggering conflicts and insecurity so as to perpetuate themselves in power (Usman 1987).

The roots of the present phase of the ethno-religious conflicts can be traced to January 1986 when the military government took the controversial decision for Nigeria to join the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). The Jama'atil Nasril Islam (JNI) and the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) started vicious and emotional campaigns on the country's membership of the OIC. They paraded themselves as representatives of Nigerian Muslims and Christians respectively. CAN called on Christians to rise and resist what it tagged as the march of Nigeria towards Islamisation. Powerful Muslim leaders sponsored demonstrations in favour of joining the OIC and embarked on a huge propaganda campaign against the domination and marginalization of what they called the Muslim majority in Nigeria by a Christian minority. Both sides called on their faithful to rise in defence of their religious persuasions (*Newswatch* 1986:12-17). The regime, headed by both Christian and Muslim dictators, watched as religious hostility and hatred deepened in civil society. Partisan sections of the media waged a press war, and the chauvinistic elite were at each other's throats in a conflict which engulfed ordinary people.

The new malady of ethno-religious hysterics precipitated a crisis. On 6 March 1987, there was a Muslim-Christian clash among students at Kafanchan, the biggest town in Southern Kaduna, over what were considered blasphemous remarks about Islam by a Christian preacher. This exploded into a full inter-ethnic confrontation between the Hausa community and the other local ethnic groups. People were killed,

mosques were burnt, and a lot of property was destroyed. The crisis took a serious religious dimension and spread to all the other major towns in Kaduna state. In the process hundreds of people were killed, many churches were set ablaze, hotels were destroyed, and there was massive destruction of property. The conflict was the most spontaneous inter-ethnic religious carnage in the history of the state. As Kukah (1994:453) concludes, it is the 'poor people (who) remain the victims in the macabre dance as they are the ones that get killed; it is their relations that are destroyed'.

In 1992 rivalry between Hausa and Atyab, based on economic and political interests, and specifically a tussle over the location of a market, exploded in Zangon-Katab. Old grievances were unearthed and led to a bloody ethnic conflict. In the process many lives were lost and much property destroyed. Trouble extended to other parts of Kaduna State. It went the same way as the Kafanchan crisis. What started as an inter-ethnic conflict widened into a national crisis with a religious dimension. As the Cudjoe Report of Inquiry (*Citizen* 1992:15) noted, there was a 'lack of decisive and prompt action by the government organs in the state' to check the situation. While investigations were still going on, a bigger clash broke out in May 1992, which resulted in a massacre of the Hausa. Hundreds of human lives were lost and a state of anarchy engulfed the entire state. The state finally adopted a repressive solution, in a situation where it was difficult to determine guilt.

Part of the problem is that the military in power are a major obstacle to the emergence of a democratic society (Olukoshi and Agbu 1995). Unofficially the diffusion of power, based on a federal system of government which still exists in theory, has been eroded. The military have continuously undermined the emergence of a democratic culture. State institutions of governance, their organs and official positions are used for repression and the accumulation of wealth. In the new era, governance has become a question of power without responsibility.

Owing to the fact that the roots of ethnic conflicts are not being tackled, cosmetic solutions, such as the creation of more local government councils and chiefdoms, lead to the emergence of new minorities and more agitations. Even within the same ethnic group there are class contradictions, and their primordial political game deepens conflicts along clan lines. The absence of a democratic order has tended to encourage people to compete among themselves for access to the state and for influence in policies. As A. Olukoshi (1995:162) stresses, in the course of this, ethnicity becomes a vital tool to be utilized (both ideologically and otherwise) in the achievement of objectives.

For decades, the politics of the non-Hausa elites have been increasingly organised on an ethno-religious basis. With time, peasants and other commoner strata are no longer mere victims of the virus of ethnicity. Because of indoctrination and the promotion of wrong notions of history, in which the other group is always blamed for all one's problems, the psyche and consciousness of the ordinary people develops increasingly along ethnic lines, with an almost pathological hatred of those perceived as their oppressors (Kazah-Toure 1995). The new struggle, waged under the banner of self-determination, involves a clamour for the creation of the same feudal institutions through which many of the communities in Southern Kaduna were oppressed for decades. With the creation of chiefdoms for some of the communities in 1995, and in a situation of a nominal power shift away from the Hausa, the new question is which of the so-called indigenous ethnic groups is dominating the other. Within the same ethnic group, the battle is over local power and resources. Clans are revived to support the fight. The non-Hausa groups are now turning against themselves in the struggle for appointments, control of local councils and over ownership of land. In a repressive and undemocratic atmosphere, the psychology of fear of domination — real and imaginary — is great. Hatred is induced which could cause more conflicts. Government officials and politicians create

constituencies for their support through ethno-religious propaganda (Bangura 1995:23).

There is a growing wave of migration into the Southern Kaduna zone. Land ownership and control is becoming an ever more delicate issue, the more so because there are no other channels of employment. This is potentially another source of ethnic conflicts. Meanwhile, in spite of the influx of population, there is no strong legal recognition of citizenship based on residency. Groups such as the Fulani, who have been in the area for hundreds of years, are seen as settlers because they do not control land. There are also ecological and environmental problems over grazing land and sources of water, which have been led to clashes between the pastoral and nomadic Fulani and the more sedentary groups who are mainly engaged in farming. All this takes place in a context where political constituencies are solely based on geography, with no provision for proportional representation. This prevents many citizens from making political headway in a hostile environment.

Conclusion

This analysis has investigated the complexity of ethnic conflicts and governance, at different phases of the historical process, and the ways in which the socio-economic and political systems generate ethnic conflicts. At the level of governance, the state plays a crucial role in relations between ethnic groups. At a different level, there is an interesting link between the development of classes and the ethnic category.

In pre-colonial times, the conflict in the area of study was mainly between communal formations and the feudal emirates of the Sokoto Caliphate, and concerned slave raids. The small communal polities strongly resisted these and maintained some kind of sovereignty, with democratic practices in governance which reduced internal conflicts.

With the imposition of British colonialism, there was a transformation in ethnic relations. Alien and undemocratic governance, feudal institutions, and practices were superimposed on ethnic groups to which all these were anathema. Colonial policies — and indeed British pragmatism — with a racist ideology, absorbed the dominant old ruling circles of the Hausa-Fulani emirates into the system, while excluding the other ethnic groups in the zone. Furthermore, there was enforced physical and social segregation over settlements, schools, control of markets, and between the so-called migrants and the so-called indigenous peoples. Both principal and lesser Native Authority employers were, up to the 1940s, of different socio-cultural background from those they lorded it over. Conflict, besides being ethnic, also had a religious dimension, between Muslims, on the one hand, and the followers of traditional African religion(s) on the other. Precisely because of the ethnic character of the socio-economic and political domination, peasant revolts and nationalist efforts also mainly took on an ethnic character.

Post-colonial reforms were superficial, and there was no deep attempt to mediate conflicts in inter-ethnic relations. The social order of the former colonial state, undemocratic governance and its institutions, repressive methods, and even the ideology of the old regime were largely retained. Chauvinistic practices, structural imbalances, rivalries and clashes between different factions of the ruling circles further divided the people and trapped them in ethnic tensions. In recent times more than ever before, the state occupies the centre of the stage in giving impetus to the divisions and complex conflicts which manifest themselves in ethnic forms. Military regimes, with their variant of dictatorship in governance, coupled with unpopular and anti-people policies, have aggravated the situation. The state continues to abandon its responsibilities, and the citizens are left to their own sectarian devices. The way people perceive their history,

confront their realities, become educated or indoctrinated affects their reactions, and this further shapes the process.

The multi-ethnic nature of the Southern Kaduna zone is not the cause of the numerous and deep ethnic conflicts. Some of the problems are located in the conditions of existence and the absence of rights faced by the ethnic communities and the people. Society has not evolved democratic ideals and practices in governance and in civil society. The opportunity for people to participate in running their own affairs and to have a say in controlling their resources is lacking. Only equity, equality, and a democratic order could provide a bed-rock of unity and peaceful co-existence which could soften ethnic conflicts.

References

Achi, B., et al., 1987, 'Memorandum Submitted to the Committee to Investigate into the March 1987, Crisis in Kaduna State', Mimeo.

Adeleye, R.A., 1971, Power and Diplomacy in Northern Nigeria 1804-1906, London, Longman.

'Administration of Southern Zaria 1953-54', NAK: ZAR PROF C.7/1953.[8]

'Administration Policy 1921-1935', NAK: ZAR PROF 1554.

Arnett, E.J., 1920, *Gazetteer of Zaria Province*, London, Waterlow and Sons.

Bangura, Y., 1995, 'The Pitfalls of Recolonization: A Comment on the Mazrui-Mafeje Exchange', *CODESRIA Bulletin* No.4, Dakar, CODESRIA.

Beck, D.M.H., 1934, 'Zaria Province Annual Report for 1934', NAK: ZAR PROF 2152.

Bonat, Z.A., 1985, 'Colonialism and the Underdevelopment of Zaria Province, 1902-1945', M.A. Thesis, Zaria, Ahmadu Bello University, unpublished.

Bonat, Z.A., 1989, 'Aspects of the Economic and Social History of the Atyab c.1800-1960 A.D.', in *Savanna*, Vol.10, No.1, Zaria, ABU Press.

Brandt, P.F., 1939, 'Social and Economic Organisation of Tribes in Southern Zaria', NAK: ZAR PROF 9.

---

8. A number of references such as this are archival materials. NAK: Means National Archives Kaduna. ZAR PROF, Reg., SNP, are file numbers.

Browne, J.D., 1939, *Labour Conditions in West Africa*, London, Colonial Office —
copy found at NAK: Reg. No.6/41.

Citizen, 1992, 15-21 June, Kaduna, Magazine.

Crampton, E.P.T., 1978, *Christianity in Northern Nigeria*, Zaria, Gaskiya Corporation.

Davidson, B., 1992, *The Black Man's Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation State*,
London, James Currey.

Diouf, M., 1997, 'Conflicts in African History,' Presentation at CODESRIA
Governance Institute, Dakar, unpublished.

Drayton, S., 1995, 'De-Mystifying 'Tribalism': Identity, Politics and Conflict in
Modern Africa,' *CODESRIA Bulletin* No.1, Dakar, CODESRIA.

Dudley, B., 1968, *Parties and Politics in Northern Nigeria*, London, Frank Cass.

Ela, Jean-Marc, 1997, 'Pedagogical memo: Governance and the Political Economy of
Conflicts', CODESRIA Governance Institute, Dakar, unpublished.

Fremantle, J.M., 1913, 'Zaria Province Annual Report No.6 for 1913,' NAK: ZAR
PROF 2560.

Gills, J.W., 1910, 'Zaria Province Annual Report 1910', NAK: ZAR PROF 2557.

Government of Kaduna State, 1976, Guidelines for Local Government Reforms,
Kaduna, Government Printers.

Government of Kaduna State, 1987, White Paper on the Report of the Committee to
Investigate Causes of Riots and Disturbances in Kaduna State of Nigeria of March
1987, Kaduna, Government Printers.

Gunn, H.D., 1956, *Pagan Peoples of the Central Area of Northern Nigeria*, London,
International African Institute.

Hay, D., 1929, 'Lere District — Assessment Report on', NAK: ZAR PROF 18205.

Ibrahim, J., 1993, 'Pluralism and Religious Conflict in Nigeria: A Research Agenda',
Paper presented at ASA Conference, Boston, ASA, unpublished.

Ibrahim, J., 1995a, 'The Narcissism of Minor Difference and the Rise of
GenocidalTendenciesinAfrica: Lessons from Rwanda and Burundi,Paper
Presented at the 8th CODESRIA General Assembly, Dakar, CODESRIA,
unpubshed.

Ibrahim, J., 1997, 'The Transformation of Ethno-Regional Identities in Nigeria', Paper
Presented at the CRD National Seminar, Kano, CRD and NAI, unpublished.

Ibrahim, Jibrin, 1995b, 'The Tribe, the Faction and the University', Paper Presented at
Seminar on University Governance and Crisis, Zaria, ASUU, unpublished.

Ignatieff, M., 1993, *Blood and Belonging: Journey into New Nationalism*, Toronto,
Viking-Penguin.

Jega, A.M., 'The State and Identity Transformation Under Structural Adjustment in
Nigeria', Paper presented at the CRD National Seminar, Kano, CRD and NAI,
unpublished.

Jemkur, J.F., 1992, *Aspects of Nok Culture,* Zaria, Ahmadu Bello University Press.

Kazah-Toure, T., 1995, 'Inter-Ethnic Relations, Conflicts, and Nationalism in Zango Katab Area of Northern Nigeria: Historical Origins and Contemporary Forms', Paper presented at the 8th CODESRIA General Assembly, Dakar, CODESRIA, unpublished.

Kazah-Toure, T., 1991, 'The Development of the Nationalist Movement in Zaria Province, 1902-1960', M.A. Thesis, Zaria, Ahmadu Bello University.

Kirkpatrick, Y., 1926, 'Kaje Tribe — Anthropological Notes on', NAK: SNP 17 2985.

Kukah, M. H., 1994, 'Religion and Politics of National Integration in Nigeria', in Mahadi, Abdullahi, et al, (ed.), *Nigeria: The State of the Nation and the Way Forward,* Kaduna, Arewa House.

Kukah, M. H., 1993, *Religion, Politics and Power in Northern Nigeria,* Ibadan, Spectrum.

Laing, E.H., 1922, 'Zaria Province Annual Report 1922', NAK: ZAR PROF 2569.

Laing, E.H., 1924, 'Zaria Province Annual Report 1924', NAK: ZAR PROF 2571.

Mafeje, A., 1991, *The Theory and Ethnography of African Social Formation: The Case of the Interlacustrine Kingdoms,* Dakar, CODESRIA.

Mahmood, Y., 1992, 'Submission on behalf of the Hausa Community to the Cudjoe Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Zangon Katab Riot and other Subsequent Riots,' Kaduna, Mimeo.

Mallam, Kure, and, Gadoh, I., 1991, 'Briefs on the Bajju Chieftaincy Issue,' Mimeo.

Mamdani, M., 1996, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism,* Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press.

Markakis, J., 1994, 'Group Conflict and Human Rights in the Horn of Africa', in ISSUE: A *Journal of Opinion,* Vol. xx/1/2, ASA.

Mbembe, A., 1997, 'Theories and Theorization of Conflicts in Africa: Critical Approach', Presentation at CODESRIA Governance Institute, Dakar, unpublished.

Morgant, W., 1993, 'Zaria Provincial Annual Report 1933', NAK: ZAR PROF 1593.

Muazzam, I., and, Ibrahim, J., 1997, 'Religious Identity Under Structural Adjustment Programme in Nigeria', Paper Presented at the CRD National Seminar, Kano, CRD and NAI, unpublished.

Mustapha, A.R., 1997, 'Ethnicity and Democratisation in Nigeria: A Case Study of Zangon Kataf', in Ibrahim, Jibrin, ed., *Expanding in Nigeria Democratic Space,* Dakar, CODESRIA.

National Impression, vol.3 No.2, 1992, Kaduna, Magazine.

Newswatch, 24 February 1986, Lagos, Newswatch Publications.

Nnoli, O., 1995, *Ethnicity and Development in Nigeria,* Aldershot, Avebury.

Nnoli, O., 1978, *Ethnic Politics in Nigeria*, Enugu, Fourth Dimension.

Okpu, O., 1977, *Ethnic Minority Problems in Nigerian Politics: 1960-1965*, Stochholm, Liber Tyckab.

Olukoshi, A., 1995, 'The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria', Mkandawire, Thandika, and, Olukoshi, Adebayo, ed., *Between Liberalisation and Oppression: The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Africa*, Dakar, CODESRIA.

Olukoshi, A.O., and, Agbu, O., 1995, 'The Deepening Crisis of Nigerian Federalism and the Future of the Nation State', Paper Presented at the 8th CODESRIA General Assembly, Dakar, CODESRIA, 1988.

Omotosho, K., 1988, *Just Before Dawn*, Ibadan, Spectrum.

Orsmby, G., 1909, 'Zaria Province Annual Report 1909', ZAR PROF, NAK: ZAR PROF 2556.

Orr, C.W., 1904, 'Zaria Province Annual Report for 1904', NAK: ZAR PROF 2551.

Orr, C.W., 1907, 'Zaria Province Annual Report for 1907', NAK: ZAR PROF 2554.

'Political Bodies in Nigeria — 1958', NAK: ZAR PROF c.45.

Reynolds, J.A., 1951, 'Kaje Tribe Report on 1905-51', NAK: ZAR PROF 4846.

Sciortino, R., 1915, 'Kaje and Kaninkwom — Rising Against the Emir of Jema'a', NAK: ZAR PROF 2089.

Sharwood-Smith, B., 1969, 'But Always as Friends': Northern Nigeria and the Cameroons, 1921-1957, London, Allen and Unwin.

Sklar, R.L., 1982 edition, *Nigerian Political Parties: Power in an Emergent African Nation*, Enugu, Nok Publishers.

Slovo, J., 1988, 'The Working Class and Nation-Building', in, Diepen, Maria Van, ed., *The National Question in South Africa*, London, Zed Press.

Smith, M.G., 1960, *Government in Zazzau*, London, Oxford University Press.

Sokop, O., 1940-1942, 'Petition of Osuman Sokop', NAK: ZAR PROF c.6/1942.

Stanley, R.C.S., 1935, 'Kadara of Zaria: Intelligence on-1935', NAK: ZAR PROF 2159.

Swai, B., 1991, 'Towards an Explanation of the Underdevelopment of Zuru History', in Augi, A.R., and, Lawal, S.U., ed., *History of Zuru Emirate*, Enugu, Fourth Dimension.

Tell, 22 December 1997, Lagos, Magazine.

Tukur, M.M., 1979, 'The Imposition of British Colonial Domination on the Sokoto Caliphate, Borno and Neighbouring States 1897-1914: A Re-interpretation of Colonial Sources', PhD. Thesis, Zaria, Ahmadu Bello University, unpublished.

Tukur, M.M., 1992, 'The Nature, Extent and Essence of British Social Policy in the Emirates 1900-1914', in Abubakar, Tanimu, ed., *The Essential Mahmud: A Selection of his Writing, Zaria*, Ahmadu Bello University Press.

Turaki, Y., 1982, 'Social-Political Role and Status of Non-Muslim Groups of Northern Nigeria: Analysis of a Colonial Legacy,' PhD. Thesis, Boston, Boston University.

Usman, Y.B., 1987, *The Manipulation of Religion in Nigeria 1977-1987,* Kaduna, Vanguard Press.

Wreford, C.K., 1957, 'Zaria Province Annual Report 1957', NAK: ZAR PROF STA/30.

Yahaya, A.D., 1980, *The Native Authority System in Northern Nigeria 1950-70,* Zaria, Ahmadu Bello University Press.

Yohanna, S., 1988, 'The Colonial State and the Evolution of Social Stratification in Central Nigeria: The Case of Southern Zaria, 1902-1960', M.A. Thesis, Jos, University of Jos, unpublished.

Social Rationality and Class Analysis of National Conflict in Nigeria: A Historiographical Critique

Ehimika A. Ifidon*

Résumé: Depuis son acession à l'indépendance en 1960, voire avant, le Nigéria a connu plusieurs épisodes de conflits nationaux. L'analyse des classes sociales sur la base d'une critique du modèle de conflit ethnique pré-dominant, s'attache à démontrer que le Nigéria est capitaliste, et que le conflit national, est donc un conflit de classes. Le présent essai constitue une critique du modèle de conflit de classes appliqué au contexte nigérian. L'essai soutient que l'analyse de classes, non-structurelle, a été une appropriation du modèle de pluralisme culturel. En définitive, la question n'est pas une question théorique de savoir si tous les conflits dans une société capitaliste sont des conflits de classes ou pas, mais une question historique de savoir si les conflits nationaux au Nigéria ont des conflits de classes.

The Nigerian Situation

In the early years of independence, the prognosis for Nigerian politics and society was highly optimistic: 'The prospects for democracy in Nigeria are probably as favourable as in any of the developing countries and indeed more promising than in most'. The basis for this optimism lay in what was perceived to be a reasonable population growth, the availability and mobilization of resources, the existence of a newly-formed and therefore non-political army (Bretton 1962:105-6), and the receipt of 'a heritage from Great Britain that points the way to parliamentary government' (Herring 1962:242-4). That Nigeria in 1992 was still 'a conflict and suspicion-ridden agglomeration of disparate groups' (*Guardian* 6 February 1992) showed how differently things turned out.

* Department of History, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria.

Three tendencies characterise the Nigerian situation in the late twentieth century: the emergence of a parasitic, hegemonic and inefficient public sector, a distorted mobilisation of resources (Alokan 1994:233) and an unstable political order. Discussing Africa in general, O'Kane (1993) has suggested that these elements are not isolated, but form a causally interrelated complex. It is argued that political instability, either in the form of democratic dysfunction or of a coup d'etat, is the consequence of economic instability, the result of a lack of control over demand or the price-fixing mechanism for exported primary goods. The loss or the absence of the ability to earn foreign currency, and the debt problem are also connected to the failure of development (Taylor 1989; IBRD 1990:126).

Applying the argument that there is a link between economic performance/poverty and instability to Africa as a whole introduces a paradox into the link between democracy and development (Owolabi 1994). It is argued at the same time that democracy is the 'foundation for the elimination of poverty', but that real material poverty is an impediment to its growth (African Leadership Forum, 1991:2-6). The argument by Kieh, Jr. and Agbese (1993:423) that the 'only obstacle' to political instability is 'a vivid commitment, on the part of politicians, to improve the lot of ordinary Nigerians', or a 'real commitment to democratic values among political leaders' (Huntington 1991:22) must be a superficial one, in the light of the constraints of the global economic order.. It would follow from the above, therefore, that African states can never generate stable democracy[1].

---

1   The growth stability problem could be conceived of as a vicious circle: 'political instability reduces the incentives to save and invest and therefore reduces the growth'. On the other hand, poverty leads to zero growth which generates instability, hence 'poor countries are sociopolitically unstable' (Alesina and Perotti 1994:359). In short, as Huntington (1991:31) concludes, 'The future of democracy depends on the future of economic development'.

Political instability in Nigeria cannot be attributed to mass poverty[2] or to the failure of growth, even though the Nigerian economy is largely based on a single export, crude oil, over whose demand Nigeria has no control and little say in fixing its price. The breakdown of civil-political regimes have brought about national conflicts which nearly undermined the integrity of the Nigerian state. These national conflicts, which ranged from the 1953 crisis over the `self-government in 1956' motion to the 1993-1994 crisis episode, have been explained in terms of the sectional configuration of Nigeria (Post and Vickers 1973). How valid can such an explanation be?

Critique of Ethnicity as Explanation for Conflict

Every society is heterogeneous, and conflict is a feature of interaction among its components. This assumption has yielded two apparently opposing interpretations of the relationship between pluralism and statehood: the first that social heterogeneity is a condition for democratic breakdown (Lijphart 1977:1) and the second that it is the source of 'stable democratic government' (Kuper 1971:7) and civil statehood (Aristotle 1962:II.2).

The existence of these two traditions can be explained by the different assessments of the relationship between sub-national identities and social conflict. Such identities are usually built around sex, kinship, culture, language, religion, occupation, spatial location and race. For every conflict, therefore, there is a dominant identity factor. Because of the aggregated character of the states that were produced by colonialism in Africa, the identity symbols usually considered relevant are kinship, language, culture and spatial location, conveniently referred to as ethnic identity.

---

2   To say, like Huntington (1996:7), that third wave democratisation broke down because Nigeria is 'extremely poor' is to place too much emphasis on statistical correlations.

The basic elements of an ethnic conflict model include:

1. the coexistence and interaction of at least two distinct (and mobilized) ethnic groups or coalitions within a state;

2. the identification of the ethnic groups or coalitions (or their elites) with particular territories or collective interests within the state;[3]

3. access to or exclusion from and therefore competition for the resources of the state by its components[4].

The application of this model to the study of conflict in Nigeria has been heavily criticized from the materialistic, functional and methodological standpoints. Dudley (1978:82-3) identifies as the 'crucial weakness' of this model the necessary linkage between ethnic identity and conflict behaviour — 'periods of uncertainty' — and the implication that ethnicity-based explanations of conflict 'subsume all under uncertainty'. Adebisi (1989:330-1), on the other hand, characterises 'ethnic man' or 'ethnic community' as an imprecise category, denies the existence of ethnic interest and argues that the interests of any group can 'best be defined in materialistic terms'. For Ekweke (1986:v), the application of the model has not led to 'any significant improvement' in Nigeria's political and economic process. Above all, it has led to an 'intellectual cul-de-sac' (Ibid. p.2).

Arguments of greater theoretical significance are based on the idea of a dying ethnicity, or of ethnicity as a dependent variable, either an objective one, or a manipulated one. The modernisation component of

---

3 The question of elite manipulation of ethnic symbols is beside the point if it is not suggested that ethnic interests are necessarily mass interests, or reify the distinction between the elite and the masses.

4 Although absolute equality of access to resources is not presupposed, neither is a condition of 'domination and subordination' that erodes the basis for competition (Kuper 1971:14). A maximal condition of conflict is defined by the principle: the more equal the access, the more intense the competition and conflict potential.

Marxian class theory posits that the crystallisation of the critical classes is contingent upon the disappearance of organic or traditional structures and relations. And for Nigeria, Adebisi (1989:333) insists:

The dependent capitalist mode of production introduced in the colonial situation and vigorously promoted by the post-colonial ruling class has led to the maturation of social classes across Nigerian ethnic communities. Therefore, in its vital sectors, the original ethnic community is dead. What goes by that name today is in fact a 'community' of antagonistic social classes with distinct class interests, with or without class consciousness.

An early angle of attack on the interpretation of conflict in Africa in terms of ethnicity is that class relations had developed more recently, that class and ethnic identities were incompatible, and that because colonialism had introduced capitalist relations, ethnicity had necessarily weakened or disappeared or would soon do so (Skinner 1969:153; Cohen 1974a:95).

Relying on the Marxian notion of the material determination of the superstructural social, political and other relations, some appraisals recognise ethnicity only at the level of consciousness. Post characterises the study, *Structure and Conflict in Nigeria* (1973:10, no.10; see comparatively Nnoli 1989:14 and 1995:31), as directed at 'the super-structural level of institutions and consciousness, and therefore tends to be epiphenomenal in character'. Nwala (1981:164, n.4) insists on the predominance of capitalist over feudal and communal social formations; and Nnoli (1978:11-2) limits ethnicity to the level of 'mere empirical observation' incapable of 'explaining or changing society'. In short, Nnoli concludes:

Ethnic contradictions have an objective basis in the social structure of society. As an element of the ideological superstructure of society, ethnicity rests on, is functional for, and is determined by the infrastructure of society, the mode of production (1978:11).

For the manipulation theory, ethnicity retains the status of a dependent variable which calls for explanation, but not as an objective dependent variable. It performs only an instrumental function, being 'created or maintained as a basis for collective action when there are clear competitive advantages attached to an ethnic identity' (Carment 1993:138). Whether merely as 'the new men of power' (Sklar 1976:151), 'dominant social classes' (Falola and Ihonvbere 1985), 'emerging bourgeoisie' (Randall and Theobald 1985:50), or the non-class 'political class' (Haruna 1994:71), the purpose of manipulation is argued to be the realisation of the political interests of the dominant class however defined.

National Conflict in Nigeria: Patterns of Class Analysis

The identification and definition of the groups in conflict, with the mode of their formation and sustenance, and their motivations for conflict provide a logical basis for defining a conflict situation or describing conflict relations. Relating this to the pattern of a class analysis of conflict in Nigeria, certain features stand out:

1. the general non-uniformity of identified classes and their composition;

2. the multiplicity and centrality of bourgeois factions as the inevitable conflicting classes; and

3. the attribution of a non-material basis for the classes identified, and their motives for conflict.

That Nigeria is capitalist is a basic assumption of class analysis. Two broad categories have been identified: 'dominant social classes' (Falola and Ihonvbere 1985:238) or 'privileged classes' (Nnoli 1981:129), and 'oppressed classes' (Nwankwo 1987:143) or 'underprivileged classes' (Onimode 1982a:91). These categories go beyond the classical Marxian classes. The former includes the 'Hausa-Fulani aristocracy' (Randall and Theobald 1985:50) or 'feudal masters of the NPC' (Lawal 1972:267). Everyone includes the peasantry in the latter, while some

add 'the youths, particularly the students' (Nzimiro 1985:7), jobless primary school leavers' (Onimode 1981b:170) and 'catechists' (Nwankwo 1987:143).

Although the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, in one form or the other, constitute the most significant elements of these categories, their definition, composition and mode of formation and sustenance vary, particularly in the case of the bourgeoisie. The petty bourgeoisie, for example, is considered the most dominant class or bourgeois sub-class, or technically governing class, since the ruling class is associated with the agents in Nigeria of multi-national capitalism (Ekweke 1986:89; Nwankwo 1987:132-5). Its composition, however, is not only an *omnium gatherum*, but the basis for its existence is not really the private ownership of production factors but statutory control, and in the last analysis, visibly pretentious social behaviour. Hence the prominence of higher bureaucratic and military elements, in addition to the usual petty traders, contractors, big farmers, and independent artisans (Agbese 1990:26). To include students in this class is baffling (Onimode 1981b:170).

The exclusion of Nigeria's small productive bourgeoisie by the distinction made between an international ruling class and a dependent governing class has the effect of further strengthening the superstructural basis of the definition of the bourgeoisie. This is so since the ruling class owns all the means of production, which the governing class only administers on behalf of an international clique. The criteria for inclusion have been identified simply as 'high-status occupation, high income, control of wealth-producing enterprises, and superior education' (Sklar 1976:153).

With traditional Marxism, the discernment of factions of the bourgeoisie is based on antagonisms rooted in the process of production itself (Marx and Engels 1967:90), and according to Therborn (1980:175), 'in the differential position occupied by certain of its

sections within the relations of production'. Hence Marx and Engels (1976:83) had identified intra-class conflict as an inevitable impediment to class crystallisation, action and unity. Yet, inter-factional conflict could not surmount the fundamental class conflict, or be made contingent on the social roles of individuals. Class position and membership are necessary and constant, hence the reproduction of capitalist relations. This precludes the possibility of belonging to one class today and its opposite the next.

But with the Nigerian petty bourgeoisie, the factions defined are based on :

> 1. sector: 'economic, political and military segments' (Nwankwo 1987:135), 'civilian and military factions' (Ihonvbere and Shaw 1988:135), state servants, 'independent professionals and intellectuals', and 'chiefs, obas and emirs' (Ekweke 1986:8), bureaucratic, comprador, and the 'middle and lower-salaried sectors' incorporating primary school teachers and students (Onimode 1981b:172-3); and

> 2. level of urbanisation, party and ethno-region: 'Eastern Nigerian commercial and bureaucratic bourgeoisie' of the NCNC, 'Western Nigerian rural bourgeoisie', 'Western urban bourgeoisie' and 'feudal masters of the NPC' (Lawal 1972:267-70)[5].

Although Agbese (1990:26-7) divides this class into 'industrial, compradorial, military-bureaucratic, financial and technocratic factions', a classification that is more mythical than historical, he admits that these groupings are also factionalised along ethnic, religious and regional lines. While the interests of these factions do not appear to be materially antagonistic, intra-bourgeois conflict has been made to surmount the crucial class conflict.

---

5   Although not consistently used as the basis of analysis, Dibua's (1988) identification of factions of the domestic bourgeoisie along the line of productive/non-productive capitalism is an exception to this trend.

There has been a tendency in radical historiography to narrow the gap between Marxian class analysis and the liberal theory of social stratification. This follows when the identification of specific classes and their relations is not derived from analyses of particular modes of production, or when the concept of class analysis is defined without reference to a material base. Kitching (1980:440-2) has observed, in relation to this sociology of class, the adoption of such criteria as monetary income, wealth, both liquid and illiquid[6]. Thus class conflict, as Boulding (1963:206) characterised it, becomes merely 'the conflict of the poor and the rich, of the privileged and the unprivileged, or of the dominant and the dominated'.

It must be conceded that the identified groupings in Nigeria could be analytical or descriptive units, but they are not capitalist classes. Not even Lubeck's (1987:6) addition of technocratic management to commodity production in the definition of the African capitalist problematic affects this. The description of the process of class formation and sustenance is superstructural. Williams and Turner (1978:132), for example, define classes 'by their place in the process of production', but for the Nigerian bourgeoisie, they insist that 'politics was the means of class formation, financing the accumulation of money' (p. 139). In accounting for the perceived bourgeoisification of 'upper middle-class elements and bureaucrats', Ihonvbere and Shaw (1988:11) had recourse to such explanation as exploitation of 'connections with established bourgeois elements'.

For Onimode (1983:199-200), the military has a two-member class structure: the officer corps, which is a 'component of Nigeria's bureaucratic bourgeois class', and the rank-and-file, who are objectively part of the working class, but are also psychologically

---

6   In describing the military as a faction of the bourgeoisie in uniform, Ihonvbere and
     Shaw (1988:135), for example, resorted to the criteria of 'status and income'.

'aspiring members of the lower strata of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie'. In determining the 'group interests of the military dictatorship', however, Onimode proposed to identify 'their leaders' position in the social hierarchy' (p. 198), and demonstrate 'the class character of the military regimes' by references to the following parameters: the 'parental, social and residential background' of Nigeria's military officers, and their 'class affiliation... in terms of contacts between civil and military spheres' (p. 199).

By being rooted in the political control of state resources (Hettne 1990:95), Fernando Cardoso's 'state bourgeoisie' parallels not only the bureaucratic bourgeoisie or the 'state sector capitalists' (Turner and Badru 1985:19) in the Nigerian historiographical context, but also the broader general category of bourgeoisie. This analysis, because of its tenuous basis for class definition, totally ignores the important question of the reproduction of the existing pattern of social relations. The use of income level, monetary worth, position within the machinery of state, profession, occupation, social status or position in an organizational hierarchy to group population or fix classes belongs properly to liberal social stratification theory (Kitching 1980:442), and is an expression of Connell's (1977:4) categorical theory of class[7].

Proceeding from the Marxian argument that under capitalism, the conflict of the classes is inevitable, because of their irreconcilably antagonistic interests, it has been argued that to identify classes is to allude to this historic conflict (Bozzoli 1981:6). Sklar (1976:153) suggests however that class formation rather than class conflict is 'more significant' as an expression of class action in Africa. This would minify the significance of colonialism in bringing Africa into the world capitalist system. But, of course, Sklar (1991:206-7) distinguished two

---

7   The categorical theory defines the mere ordering of people, as against the
     generative, which starts with fundamental processes and ends with structures or
     social groupings.

models of class analysis: one limited to the industrial West based on economic determination, and the other based on 'political' determinants, which was limited to the non-industrial world. For the latter, 'class domination on an economic basis, primarily, is not a credible idea'. If capitalism has been implanted in Africa, why not capitalist classes?[8]

Although the radical literature has identified the existence of the two polar classes and alluded theoretically to their antagonistic interests and inevitable conflict, the description of class conflict in Nigeria, however, has been of intra-bourgeois conflict. In spite of the identification of `antagonistic' bourgeois factions, whose conflicting interests are unconnected to the process of production, national conflict in Nigeria from the perspective of class analysis has been explained in terms of inter-regional conflict.

Nnoli (1978:28) accounts for the regional character of class conflict in Nigeria in terms of the organisation of the colonial economy 'around regional enclaves isolated from each other', and reduces class analysis to the description of the politics of exclusion.

In their search for the crumbs from colonial production, contending factions of these parasitic classes emphasised the exclusion of their counterpart from other regions. And when they got into positions of political power they used the government to exclude them.

Applying this model to the 1966 crisis, Nnoli (1978) concludes that when, as in 1953, the 'privileged classes of the North again felt politically insecure they threatened secession and organised rioting against southerners' (p. 162).

---

8   Sanggmpam (1995:39, 49-50) contends that African pre-colonial non-capitalist core relations abridged capitalism. What Africa has is 'pseudocapitalism'; for Ake (1991:324), Africa's unproductive variety of capitalism is the consequence of 'accumulation by state power'.

For Lawal (1972:267; see also Sklar 1971:50), the contending factions have been the Eastern Nigerian commercial and bureaucratic bourgeoisie, the feudals of the North and the Western urban bourgeoisie. In the early years of independence, the commercial and bureaucratic bourgeoisie of the East allied with the feudals of the North against the rural and urban bourgeoisie of the West. The 1966 crisis with its violent aftermath was, however, caused by the Eastern bourgeoisie which, 'hating competition from the Western bourgeoisie and resenting domination from the Northern feudal', wanted an exclusive arena to dominate (p. 270).

Even if such explanations are classified as applications of manipulation theory, explicit reference must be made not only to the ethno-regional elite, but also to the mechanism and symbols of mobilization. To conclude simply that 'ethnicity in Africa has a class character' (Nnoli 1978:30) and to proceed to give a class analysis of ethnic conflict is illogical. Manipulation theory is not an element of class analysis.

An explanation for this difficulty is the apparent ethnic coalitional and regional character of conflict in Nigeria, and the consequent appropriation by class analysis of the structure of the cultural pluralism model. Compare, for example, a variant of the latter model, applied by Bamishaiye (1976:89-90) to the early 1960s.

In Nigeria, the struggle was between the East and the West on the one hand, that is for posts, and economic advantages, and on the other hand between the East and the North for political power. On another level, it was between the South (East and West) and the North. Then there was friction between the Hausa-Fulani and the Ibo, and between the Ibo and the Yoruba.

If as Adebisi (1989:333) has argued, 'the original ethnic community is dead' and has given way to 'a "community" of

antagonistic social classes', why then does class analyses of national conflict in Nigeria tend toward the ethnic conflict model? It is the contention of this essay that class crystallisation is dysfunctional in a non-rational and culturally plural system, where individuated material interests are not predominant in determining social and political action, or in ordering social and political relations.

Social Rationality, Class Formation and Conflict Relations

For Marxian theory, the emergence of the bourgeoisie not only represents a modern and advanced stage of social development but presupposes the termination of primordial relations. Just as Marx and Engels (1967:102) emphasised the vanishing of 'national differences and antagonisms between peoples', because of the 'development of the bourgeoisie', in the African context, this phenomenon has led to the destruction of the 'old community... as a socially monolithic unit' (Adebisi 1989:331-2). Abner Cohen (1974b:xxii) has charted the mechanism of 'detribalization' and class identification for a multi-ethnic environment:

> The poor from one ethnic group will cooperate with the poor from the other ethnic group against the wealthy from both ethnic groups, who will, on their part, also cooperate in the course of the struggle to maintain their privileges.

Such theoretical optimism is not borne out by empirical studies. In spite of the existence of what appear to be class relationships, non-class relations are still prominent. Just as Hannerz (1974:37) realized that in a multi-ethnic setting, 'a Yoruba is a Yoruba regardless of whether he is a politician or a streetsweeper', and Crawford Young (1976:40) observed the 'persistent failure' of poor whites and poor blacks in the United States to form class alliances.

Gordon's (1978:136) derivation of the ethclass gives even more insight into defining the arena for the proper and effective operation of class relations. Using the criteria of cultural behaviour and 'sense of

peoplehood', he sees the only possible group to occupy the intersect as 'people of the same ethnic group and same social class'. In drawing attention to the critical nature of the conflict sourced in race, language or culture, Geertz (1963:111) confined the effective operation of loyalties and relations based on 'ties to class, party, business, union, profession' to a 'terminal community'. Lijphart (1977:144) further clarifies the relationship by limiting class societies to 'the essentially homogenous societies of the West, in which social class is the major source of political identification...'

What these suggest is that social class distinctions do not 'effectively transcend ethnic barriers' (Ojo 1981:56), and have prominence only in a mono-ethnic environment; and that two different types of intercourse underpin non-class and class societies: affective and rational, respectively. The theory of social rationality presents a class society as that in which affective relations are less prominent than material exchange relations, where social relations are rationally determined, i.e., determined by the material needs of individuals.

The class society is a socially rational unit and the ideal definition of the capitalist society. This is a basic assumption of Marx and Engels (1967:82).

The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitifully torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his 'natural superiors', and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous 'cash payment'. It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egotistical calculation.

Capitalism not only destroyed 'ideology, religion, morality', and 'the natural character, ... with regard to labour, and resolved all natural relations into money relations', but also 'the peculiar features of the

various nationalities' (Marx and Engels 1976:81-2). The emergence of the bourgeoisie meant the death of the old society and of community. It 'built upon its ruins the capitalist order of society, the kingdom of free competition, of personal liberty, of the equality before the law...' (Engels 1947:324). Under such a rational regime and such 'estrangement' (Marx and Engels 1967:54), social identity is built around the different positions occupied in the process of material production and exchange.

The assumption of the bourgeois-proletarian dichotomy considered as 'a fixed framework' has been confined to categorical theory, implying that the classes do not exhaust the classes under capitalism (Connell 1977:4). It must be stressed, however, that the Marxian dyad represents the logical classes of ideal capitalism, of a socially rational society. In spite of the historicity claimed for the classes and their conflict, the analysis of capitalism by Marx is logical and theoretical.

Even the perception of a negative correlation between revolutionary Marxism and western capitalist industrialism (Lipset 1983:468) does not undermine the validity of this model. In an ideal capitalist setting, defined as capitalism unregulated by the state, and determined respectively by the interests and needs of the owners of capital and labour, only two logically antagonistic classes are possible: bourgeoisie and proletariat, and this in spite of the possibility of intermediate and transitional classes (McLennan 1989:103). Where only rational material relations exists, the conflict of these classes is inevitable. It is a different question altogether whether such unregulated and unmediated capitalism has historical correlates.

Conclusion

Nigeria certainly does not have the kind of rational capitalist society suggested by theoretical Marxism. It is not difficult to observe the importance of place of origin, language and religion in determining

social, political and even economic relations. Of course, Nigeria is 'capitalist' and presumably has classes and class relations. But from the perspective of national conflict in Nigeria, what factor was crucial in defining identity? Individual relationship to the production process or ethno-regionalism? In fact, national conflict in Nigeria is defined in terms of the ethno-regional struggle for the control of the state, the associated heightening of ethnic and regional identities, a high expectation or actual incidence of inter-ethnic violence and the emergence or strengthening of the consciousness of territorial separation or autonomy.

Classes, in spite of their inchoate state of development, are more crystallized within ethnic and regional enclaves. Even then, patterns of relations within these enclaves are more rooted in language and patron-client ties, and tradition. The class factor is weakest at the national level because of the strength of ethnic and regional competition for the control of the state and its resources. The error of interpreting national conflict in Nigeria as an intra-bourgeois conflict derives from the structure of this competition.

Insistence on the regional factionalisation of the bourgeoisie has ignored the fact that the historic standard-bearer of socialist revolution, the working class, is equally factionalised along ethnic and regional lines. Sil (1993:371) has observed that Nigerian workers do not have 'a deep-rooted feeling of antagonism against the managerial or entrepreneurial classes'.

Class analysis has been treated as a formula, the details of which have been worked out theoretically. The formula only need be applied, whatever the level of material development, national configuration and the predominant basis of social relations. However, the ultimate question is not the theoretical one of whether all conflicts in a capitalist society are class-motivated, but the empirical and historical one of whether national conflicts in Nigeria have been class conflicts.

References

Adebisi, B.O., 1989. 'Federal Character and Social Class', pp. 325-344 in Ekeh P. and Osaghae E. E., ed., *Federal Character and Federalism in Nigeria*, Ibadan, HEB.

African Leadership Forum, 1991. *Poverty and Democracy*. Dialogue 18.

Agbese, P.O., 1990, 'The Impending Demise of Nigeria's Forthcoming Third Republic', *Africa Today*, 27(3), pp. 23-44.

Ake, C., 1991, 'How Politics Underdevelops Africa', in A. Adedeji, O.Teriba and P. Bugembe, ed., *The Challenge of African Economic Recovery and Development*. London: Frank Cass, pp. 316-329.

Alokan, O.O., 1994, 'Democratization, the State and Industrialization: An Analysis of Growth Politics in Nigeria', in L.A. Thompson, ed., Democracy, *Democratization and Africa*. Ibadan: Africa-Link Books, pp. 219-236.

Aristotle, 1962, *The Politics*, T.A. Sinclair, trans. Harmondsworth, Penguin.

Bamishaiye, A., 1976, 'Ethnic Politics as an Instrument of Unequal Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria's First Republic', in A.O. Sanda, ed., *Ethnic Relations in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects*, Ibadan, The Department of Sociology, University of Ibadan, pp. 71-91.

Boulding, K.E., 1963, *Conflict and Defense, A General Theory*, New York, Harper and Row.

Bozzoli, B., 1981, 'The Political Nature of a Ruling Class: Capital and Ideology in South Africa, 1890-1993', London, Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Bretton, H.L., 1962, *Power and Stability in Nigeria: The Politics of Decolonization*, New York, Frederick A. Praeger.

Carment, D., 1993. 'The International Dimensions of Ethnic Conflict, Concepts, Indicators, and Theory', *Journal of Peace Research*, 30(2), pp. 137-150.

Cohen, A., 1974a, *Two-Dimensional Man: An Essay on the Anthropology of Power and Symbolism in Complex Society*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Cohen, A., 1974b, 'The Lesson of Ethnicity', in idem, ed., *Urban Ethnicity*, London, Tavistock, pp. ix-xxiv.

Connell, R.W., 1977, *Ruling Class, Ruling Culture: Studies of Conflict*, Power and Hegemony in Australian Life, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Dibua, J.I., 1988, 'Conflict Among the Nigerian Bourgeoisie and the Demise of the Second Republic', *Africa Development*, xiii(4), pp. 75-87.

Dudley, B.J., 1978, *Instability and Political Order: Politics and Crisis in Nigeria*, Ibadan, Ibadan University Press.

Ekweke, E., 1986, *Class and State in Nigeria*, Essex, Longman.

Engels, F., 1947, *Anti-Duhring: Herr Eugen Duhring's Revolution in Science*, Moscow, Progress.

Falola, T. and Ihonvbere J., 1985, *The Rise and Fall of Nigeria's Second Republic, 1979-84*, London: Zed.

Geertz, C.,1963, 'The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States', in idem, ed., *Old Societies and New States:The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa*, Glencoe, The Free Press, pp.105-157.

Gordon, M.M., 1978, *Human Nature, Class, and Ethnicity*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Hannerz, U., 1974, 'Ethnicity and Opportunity in Urban America', in A. Cohen, ed., *Urban Ethnicity*, London: Tavistock, pp. 37-76.

Haruna, Y., 1994, 'Class, Ethnicity and Religion in the Politics of Democratic Transition to Nigeria's Third Republic: A Reconsideration of Current Perspective and Practices', in O. Omoruyi, et al., ed., *Democratization in Africa: Nigerian Perspectives*, Abuja, Centre for Democratic Studies, pp. 68-86.

Herring, P., 1962, 'The Future of Democracy in Nigeria', in R.O. Tilman and T. Cole, ed., *The Nigerian Political Scene*, Durham, N.C., Duke University Press, pp.241-270.

Hettne, B., 1990, *Development Theory and the Three Worlds*, Essex: Longman.

Huntington, S.P., 1991, 'Democracy's Third Wave', *Journal of Democracy*, 2(2), pp. 12-34.

Huntington, S.P., 1996, 'Democracy for the Long Haul', *Journal of Democracy*, 7(2), pp. 3-13.

Ihonvbere, J.O. and Shaw T. M., 1988, *Towards a Political Economy of Nigeria: Petroleum and Politics at the (Semi) Periphery*, Aldershot: Avebury.

IBRD, 1990, World Development Report: Poverty, Washington DC., The World Bank and OUP.

Kieh, Jr., G.K. and P.O. Agbese, 1993, 'From Politics to the Barracks in Nigeria: A Theoretical Exploration', *Journal of Peace Research*, 30(4), pp. 409-426.

Kitching, G., 1980, *Class and Economic Change in Kenya: The Making of an African Petite-Bourgeoisie, 1905-1970*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Kuper, L., 1971, 'Plural Societies: Perspectives and Problems', in L. Kuper and M.G. Smith, ed., *Pluralism in Africa. Berkeley*, L.A.: University of California Press, pp.7-26.

Lawal, J., 1972, 'Nigeria-Class Struggle and the National Question', in J. Okpaku, ed., *Nigeria: Dilemma of Nationhood. Westport*, Co., Greenwood Press, pp. 258-286.

Lijphart, A., 1977, *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Lipset, S.M., 1983, *Political Man, The Social Bases of Politics*, second edition, London, HEB.

Lubeck, P.M., 1987, 'The African Bourgeoisie: Debates, Methods, and Units of Analysis', in idem, ed., *The African Bourgeoisie: Capitalist,* Development in Nigeria, Kenya, and the Ivory Coast,. Boulder, Col., Lynne Rienner, pp. 3-26.

Marx, K. and Engels F., 1967, The Communist Manifesto, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Marx, K. and Engels F., 1976, *The German Ideology,* Moscow: Progress.

McLennan, G., 1989, *Marxism, Pluralism and Beyond: Classic Debates and New Departures,* Cambridge, Polity Press.

Nnoli, O., 1978, *Ethnic Politics in Nigeria,* Enugu: Fourth Dimension.

Nnoli, O., 1989, *Ethnic Politics in Africa,* Ibadan: Vantage.

Nnoli, O., 1981, 'A Short History of Nigerian Underdevelopment', in idem, ed., *Path to Nigerian Development,* Dakar: CODESRIA, pp. 94-136.

Nnoli, O., 1995, *Ethnicity and Development in Nigeria,* Aldershot: Avebury.

Nwala, U., 1981, 'The Poverty of Ideology in Nigerian Development', in O. Nnoli, ed., *Path to Nigerian Development,* Dakar, CODESRIA, pp. 151-165.

Nwankwo, A., 1987, The Military Option to Democracy: Class, Power and Violence in *Nigerian Politics. Enugu,* Fourth Dimension.

Nzimiro, I., 1985, *The Green Revolution in Nigeria or Modernization of Hunger,* Oguta: Zim.

Ojo, O.J.B., 1981, 'The Impact of Personality and Ethnicity on the Nigerian Elections of 1979', *Africa Today,* 28(1), pp. 47-58.

O'Kane, R.H., 1993, 'Coups d'Etat in Africa: A Political Economy Approach', *Journal of Peace Research,* 30(3), pp. 251-270.

Onimode, B., 1981a, 'Imperialism and Nigerian Development', in O. Nnoli, ed., *Path to Nigerian Development,* Dakar: CODESRIA, pp. 76-93.

Onimode, B., 1981b, 'Class Struggle as a Reality of Nigerian Development', in O. Nnoli, ed., *Path to Nigerian Development,* Dakar, CODESRIA, pp. 166-191.

Onimode, B., 1983, *Imperialism and Underdevelopment in Nigeria: The Dialectics of Mass Poverty,* London and Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Owolabi, K.A., 1994, 'If Democracy is the Answer, What is the Problem? Demystifying Liberal Democracy for Development', in L.A. Thompson, ed., *Democracy, Democratization and Africa.,* Ibadan, Africa-Link Books, pp. 111-127.

Post, K. and Vickers M., 1973, *Structure and Conflict in Nigeria,* 1960-1966, London, HEB.

Randall, V. and Theobald R., 1985, *Political Change and Underdevelopment: A Critical Introduction to Third World Politics,* London, Macmillan.

Sanggmpam, S.N., 1995, 'Social Theory and Challenges of Africa's Future', *Africa Today,* 42(3), pp. 39-66.

Sil, N. P., 1993, 'Nigerian Intellectuals and Socialism: Retrospect and Prospect', *Journal of Modern African Studies,* 31(3), pp. 36-385.

Skinner, E .P., 1969, 'Competition within Ethnic Systems in Africa', in F. Barth, ed., *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Differences,* Bergen-Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, pp. 131-157.

Sklar, R. L., 1971, 'Nigerian Politics in Perspective', in R. Melson and H. Wolpe, ed., *Nigeria: Modernization and the Politics of Communalism,* East Lansing, Michigan State University Press, pp. 43-68.

Sklar, R. L., 1976, 'Ethnic Relations and Social Class', in A.O. Sanda, ed., *Ethnic Relations in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects,* Ibadan, Department of Sociology, University of Ibadan, pp. 146-157.

Sklar, R. L., 1991, 'The Nature of Class Domination in Africa', pp. 205-224 in R.L. Sklar and C.S. Whitaker, *African Politics and Problems in Development,* Boulder, Col.: Lynne Rienner.

Taylor, A.B., 1989, 'The Debt Problem of Sub-Saharan Africa,' *The European Journal of Development Research,* 1(2), pp. 10-31.

Therborn, G., 1980, *What Does the Ruling Class Do When It Rules?* London, Verso.

Turner, T. and P. Badru, 1985. 'Oil and Instability: Class Contradictions and the 1983 Coup in Nigeria', *Journal of Africa Marxists,* Issue 7, pp. 4-21.

Williams, G. and T. Turner, 1978, 'Nigeria', in J. Dunn, ed., West African States: Failure and Promise, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 132-172.

Young, C., 1976, *The Politics of Cultural Pluralism,* Madison, Wisconsin, The University of Wisconsin Press.

Urban Violence in Kenya's Transition to Pluralist Politics, 1982-1992

Godwin Rapando Murunga*

Résumé: Dans plusieurs parties de l'Afrique on note une escalade de la violence urbaine. Les études théoriques à ce sujet n'abordent principalement que les manifestations de violence dans les quartiers pauvres, et la criminalité urbaine avec ses actes de violence. Il y a un besoin urgent de focaliser l'attention sur les causes historiques de la violence urbaine en rapport avec la gestion des affaires publiques. Ce document examine les causes et la manifestation de la violence urbaine dans le cadre de la transition vers une politique pluraliste au Kenya entre 1982 et 1992. La violence survient entre deux réalités liées: l'évolution de la nature de l'Etat et les dures réalités économiques nées de la mauvaise gestion économique interne et des conditions économiques externes liées aux Programme d'ajustement structurel. Ce processus a entraîné une répression qui a provoqué un mécontentement au sein des masses urbaines. Selon toute vraissemblance, la détérioration de la situation économique des citadins a jeté de l'huile sur le feu. Au cours de cette période, les manifestations d'une violence urbaine se lisaient déjà dans la demande accrue de pluralisme politique au Kenya.

Introduction

This paper examines the origins and occurrence of urban violence in the context of Kenya's transition to pluralist politics between 1982-1992. It examines the causes of urban violence and its impact on democratisation in Kenya, using case illustrations from Nairobi, Nakuru and Kisumu. The question of management implied in the term governance also calls for an analysis of the occurrence of violence during the period of transition in Kenya. Governance is generally understood as the art of managing public affairs, and politics is central to this. Politics involves the mediation and arbitration of diverse and

* Department of History, Jomo Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya.

divergent opinions about the running of public affairs. In a word, politics is conceptualised as the art of negotiating conflicts related to the exercise of power (Ibrahim 1997:57).

In Kenya, the urban mass constituted a particularly highly politicised category of the populace. Its political activity was heavily influenced by its socio-economic situation. The people in this category ranged from the rich and active participants in policy formulation and decision-making to the lowly placed petty traders, the unemployed and unemployable. It is to the latter category of people that most attention is given in this discussion, although their reactions were heavily influenced by other categories. They suffered further from the acute class juxtaposition evident in most towns in Kenya. This aspect of urbanisation might have had a decisive influence on the occurrence of violence. The class dichotomies were so acute in most urban centres that stingingly rich people lived in extreme opulence, while the extremely poor lived in very great wretchedness. They constituted a very vulnerable and malleable group, often dismissed in criminal jargon as malcontents. This dismissal is inadequate if the issue of violence is to be properly understood. Their malleability ought to be set in their socio-economic situation, the nature of the state and their needs and aspirations as a politically informed constituency.

It has to be emphasised in this introduction that urban centres have historically been hotbeds of political activity and dissent. Politics is at the centre of urban life. Urban centres are crucibles of decision-making and social policy formulation. They constitute diverse strands of interests and needs that require harmonising. They can also be centres of moral decay, cultural dislocation and insensitivity (Albert 1994:14-15). Urban centres present contradictions and paradoxes in Africa as in the rest of the world. What is inescapable is that violence is notoriously common in political history while urban areas are the locus

of political power. In the context of political transition, urban centres constitute very volatile areas.

In the late 1980s, Kenya presented a mix of political authoritarianism and economic backlash. The World Bank/ International Monetary Fund (IMF)-inspired Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) were at the heart of this scenario as was internal economic mismanagement. As economic prophylactic, the SAPs had both economic and political conditionalities. Some neo-liberal doctrines had extremely impoverishing effects on the urban masses. In particular the arguments of Michael Lipton and later Robert Bates concerning the rural/urban dichotomy were at the root of rationalising this impoverishment. This study will therefore locate urban violence in Kenya between the nature of the state and the emerging vagaries of SAPs. This will enable us to examine the initiatives the urban masses took to adjust to the autocracy of the state and to the poverty resulting from repressive economic policies and mismanagement. It is contended that the two had a brutalising impact on the urban masses which consequently conditioned their reactions to authoritarian tendencies. This, it is argued, sparked off sporadic instances of urban violence. These lacked sufficient force to lead to a dangerously high level of mass conflict. The paper will examine how the state worked to reduce the impact of this violence.

Background to Pluralist Politics, to 1988

1992 was not an exclusive instance of the demand for political pluralism in Kenya. Pluralist politics date back to the colonial era when, in the negotiations for independence, the colonial government recognised both Kenya African National Union (KANU) and Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) as political parties. The approach to decolonisation saw competitive multi-party politics in which various interests were fought out and resolved. The colonial government showed bias in promoting the federalist interests of KADU as opposed

to KANU. KANU was seen by the colonial government as radical and anti-white settler. Kenyatta, KANU's leader, was thought of as a leader unto darkness, given the colonial assumption that he was the leader of Mau Mau. He was in the category of western educated Africans, described by Lugard as socially displaced persons and thereby degenerates, who by being detribalised, were liable to challenge violently existing European forms of control.

Mau Mau in the colonial government's eyes was the epitome of brutal primitive savagery. The colonialists loathed Mau Mau for its embrace of extreme violence. It was accused of fronting for both anarchy and anomie. Its leaders were seen as bloodthirsty hoodlums, not fit for decent living and treatment. They were initially bundled into detention, and when that did not end Mau Mau and related urban violence, they were allowed to engage in guided party politics in anticipation of independence. Guided participation, because liberal colonial wisdom assumed that Africans were practically at the genesis of civilisation and needed time and discipline to gain the strength of character to develop their better instincts. KANU emerged as the initiator, organiser and dispenser of violence in colonial Kenya. Since KANU was dominated by large communities in Kenya, especially the Kikuyu and Luo, the colonial government supported KADU, which fought to sustain the interests of minority communities through federalist oriented politics.

The rural-urban dichotomy in the approach to independence was first initiated through institutionalised racism by the colonial order. There were 100 ordinances passed by 1956 in colonial Kenya differentiating between people because of race (Werlin 1974:45). These determined access to land, education, transport etc. In rural areas, the customary law of the chief was applied, guided by the institutionalised legal frame of the constitution. Racism justified neglect of urban Africans. It was assumed that the presence of Africans

in urban areas was merely temporary. Having left their families in rural areas, they would periodically return and eventually retire there (Ibid.). These laws left the urban-based 'native' in a juridical limbo (Mamdani 1996:19).

But many Africans did not respond to the alleged stimulus of being treated, through tax and other means, as migrant labour. Some remained in urban centres, whether in employment or not. They were not strictly a proletariat in the sense of having nothing but their labour power to sell (Ake 1981:14). They would occasionally receive food from friends, relatives and immediate family members who came visiting. They had small pockets of land at home and a few head of cattle to rely on. The colonial government blundered in not supplying such Africans with the necessary facilities for life, because they embraced the militant nationalist doctrines of their respective parties as a response to the colonial policy of neglect.

Members of KANU communities allegedly dispensed violence in rural areas of Central Kenya and Rift Valley. Sporadic instances of violence were also witnessed at the Coast and in Nyanza. The Western Province of Kenya was, with the exception of Dini Ya Msambwa activities, conspicuous for its aversion to violence. This could be because the planning of violence had little impact there. The colonial government also did its best to prevent such violence filtering into remote areas. The impact of violence was felt in Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu and Nakuru, because of the relatively high levels of rural-urban mobility and interaction.

In the urban areas, violence against the colonial government took on a sporadic nature and was aimed at immobilising the system. It could not be sustained because of the presence of the administrative security networks. The urban areas were also very divergent because of racial and ethnic differences, which also implied economic and political differences. The African population was largely semi-proletarianised in

nature, while the Indian and other races lived with relative economic advantage, though below the European level. Europeans were better endowed, having been selectively allowed into the country on condition that the poorest of them must live above the level of the richest African (Dudder 1993). Such sharp racial distinctions were backed by repressive colonial laws that legalised the urban social structure.

When KANU emerged as the victor from the decolonisation process, the white population in Central Kenya, Rift Valley and all those dotted across the Kenyan urban centres were alarmed. Many returned home, fearing massacres by KANU and Mau Mau 'hoodlums'. The sharp racial distinctions in urban centres were a cause of alarm too. In colonial days, the line between production and the welfare of African workers was clear (Cooper 1983:22; Van Zwanenberg n.d.:14). The colonial state and employers were concerned mainly with production. Their care for the African worker applied only at the work place. Any other needs of the worker were not their concern. Urban centres therefore emerged as a hotchpotch of contradictions emanating from contradictory colonial racial and economic arrangements.

In the absence of food, shelter and adequate remuneration, sexual immorality, alcoholism and poor sanitation took root in urban centres, which were the only places where African workers could refresh themselves for work the following day (Cooper 1983). In Nairobi, for instance, housing, education and health were provided through racial quotas. Prof. Simpson had laid down the need for sanitation on a segregated basis. Housing was also denied to Africans, so that many lived in the corridors of houses. In 1941, about 6,000 Africans (40 per cent) of those seeking housing in Nairobi had no accommodation. Overcrowding became an issue, as a house with a permitted occupancy of 171 was illicitly sheltering 481 persons. By 1953, there was an estimated shortage of 20,000 bed spaces in Nairobi (Werlin 1974:50). The question of legality in urban areas was better left to gather dust on

the shelves because space for leisure was generally illegal. The colonial urban setting produced a mushrooming of slums and an urban mass that was impoverished but socially enlightened (Van Zwanenberg n.d.:18). This mass occasionally became very significant in planning and executing violence both in the rural and urban areas.

The independent Kenyan government inherited this legacy from the colonialists. Van Zwanenberg associates colonial urban policy with the spread of urban poverty, squatting and unemployment, with related incidents of violent crime, all of which reached endemic proportions in the post-colonial period. The urban mass was, therefore, an important category in independent Kenya (Holmquist and Ford 1992:98). It had witnessed colonial exploitation and repression, its sharp class and racial differences and above all disparities in wealth. It expected a lot from the independent state and voted overwhelmingly for KANU (Anyang' Nyong'o 1989:236), hoping that KANU would address these disparities. Kenyan urban dwellers emerged out of colonialism with great expectations from the new Kenyan state.

The Changing Nature of the State

Kenya attained independence in 1963 as a multi-party state. Certain rights necessary for democratic governance were guaranteed in the independence constitution. Human and civic rights relating to segregation, shelter, food, freedom of speech, movement and expression were new acquisitions celebrated at independence. It was then believed that pluralist politics were necessary, though not sufficient to guarantee these rights. The government, when put on its mettle over transparency and accountability, would not turn autocratic or corrupt. The role of KADU in independent Kenya was tied to this prudent premise. Class considerations did not then enter into the politics of the state, given that independence leaders came to power essentially as ethnic bosses (Aseka 1989). KADU seems to have concerned itself more with safety for the ethnic minorities than with

national considerations. This provided Jomo Kenyatta with the leeway to institute the presidential authoritarianism that came to characterise his reign (Anyang' Ngong'o 1989).

In Kenyatta's tenure, thirteen constitutional amendments were passed, some of which are central to the current quest for pluralist politics that has led to urban violence. New rules that concentrated power in the executive presidency, stifled free and competitive electioneering, constricted civil rights and generally reduced the democratic space were instituted (Anyang Nyong'o 1988; Ochieng' 1995). It is foolhardy to fix the traces of the authoritarian history in independent Kenya in Moi's era, as Barkan (1992) has done. Under the sometimes welcome pressures of the Cold War, Kenyatta's powers grew enormously, with the backing of William Attwood, the American Ambassador to Kenya.

> Pursuing a 'firm', frank, friendly, and fast foreign policy in Kenya, Ambassador Attwood developed a diplomatic strategy aimed at bolstering Kenyatta and curbing the influence of militant nationalists who were critical of Western domination in the country (Nasong'o 1997:9).

These people, labelled as communists, were to be purged from the centre of power. Jimmy Carter, a former US President admitted this in May 1977 when he said 'we are now free of that inordinate fear of communism which once led us to embrace any dictator who joined us in our fear' (Makinda 1996:563). Between 1965 and 1966, Pio Gama Pinto was assassinated while Oginga Odinga was ejected from KANU at a stage-managed American and British sponsored convention known as the Limuru Conference in 1966. It ought to be remembered that in 1964, Kenyatta had expressed enthusiasm about making Kenya a one party state in the hope that Kenyans would thenceforth speak with one voice (*Daily Nation* 24 March 1964). One voice was to turn out to be one man's directive: Kenyatta's directive. It is no wonder that Kenya became a de facto one party state at the end of 1964 when KADU members joined KANU.

These developments went a long way into strengthening Kenyatta's personal rule (Ochieng' 1995:106). On the economic front, Kariuki J. M., self-styled as a man of the people, gave a succinct summary of developments:

> A small but powerful group of greedy, self seeking elite in the form of politicians, civil servants and businessmen has steadily but surely monopolised the fruits of independence to the exclusion of the majority of the people. We do not want a Kenya of ten millionaires and ten million beggars (quoted in Ochieng' 1995:103).

It was Kariuki's honest belief, together with that of other leaders like Seroney J. M., Martin Shikuku and George Anyona, that KANU and its leaders had `failed to meet the challenge given by the people when they rallied behind it in 1963 (Ibid.).

Personal rule had been initiated and political activity was always stage managed while freedom of expression, movement and speech were being slowly constricted. Economic monopoly had slipped into the hands of multinational companies in league with a small comprador class (Leys 1975). The Africanisation policy implied deracialisation without decolonisation and detribalisation, a process which encouraged tribal bosses, who promoted and relied on patron-client networks of political control. Economic power was evidently skewed in a tribal and class manner.

Daniel Arap Moi was schooled in Kenyatta's politics and mode of governance. As his Vice President for 12 years, Moi had learned a lot from Kenyatta about Kenyan politics. It was wrong for anybody to underestimate his ability as a leader. For justice to be done in assessing urban violence, the Kenyatta pedigree of Moi's reign must be understood. Indeed, when Moi took over in 1978, he arrived with the philosophy of *Nyayo* which insisted on following the footsteps of his predecessor. It was a philosophy of continuity with limited change. And this continuity was clear in the political and economic realms. Only the actors were different from Kenyatta's.

President Moi was, however, gradual in implementing policies central to his *Nyayo* philosophy. Up until the early 1980s, political observers and analysts lauded his rule as reconciliatory, peaceful and developmental (Jackson and Rosberg 1986:54). Moi gave his foes of the Kenyatta reign time to make their own mistakes (*Sunday Nation* 28 December 1997). Many who belonged to the Kikuyu community did indeed make their mistakes, and these were epitomised in the attempted coup of August 1982. Slowly, most of these people were ejected from the centres of power, allowing Moi to centralise his control and to institute one-party rule (Khapoya 1988:57-59). In May 1982, Kenya became a de jure single party state and all those supporting political pluralism were arrested. Thus George Anyona was detained without trial while Oginga Odinga was put under house arrest.

The 1980s witnessed growing coercive centralising of power by Moi. This was done by curtailing freedom of speech and the press. There was also the criminalisation and persecution of opposition groups after Kenya had become a de jure one party state. The freedom of the judiciary was reduced, and the electioneering process was closely controlled (Ross 1992; Sabar-Friedman 1997:27). It became taboo in the 1980s to mention the name of the President in certain contexts, given the heavy network of special branch spying (Khapoya 1988:62; *Africa Watch* 1991:25). The irony was that as Moi intensified his autocracy, the US aid to Kenya increased (Makinda 1996:563).

Moi's grip on electioneering first relied on a law instituted during Kenyatta's reign, which put the Electoral Commission under the Executive President. The President selected the Chairman and Commissioners and thereby curtailed their free running of elections. With the institution of the detention without trial law in 1966 under Kenyatta, those people that were not liked could not be accepted as election nominees. KANU also became more dictatorial, using the unpopular KANU Disciplinary Committee to purge members. Given

that KANU was the only party and that no one could hope for election without party sponsorship, people expelled from KANU could no longer aspire to positions of leadership in Parliament. Such people were effectively locked out of leadership and had only one avenue left: to develop a constituency outside KANU and outside Parliament. The urban mass came in handy.

The 1988 elections compounded this scenario of isolation by KANU. The polls were widely rigged and led to the most unpopular Parliament in Kenya's history. They witnessed intimidation and corruption, which ensured that party faithful went to Parliament. The queue-voting method employed in these polls proved more susceptible to rigging than the secret ballot (*Africa Watch* 1991:21). The voters were threatened and cajoled into the 'politically correct' lines of people. The longest lines lost while the short ones won. The implication was that popular candidates, who enjoyed wide respect and following, 'lost'. They began to develop constituencies outside Parliament, with followers who spread over more than a single constituency and indeed across the nation. Inevitably, they based their agitation in urban centres, especially Nairobi and Kisumu. It takes such a disaffected group of leaders with wide support to create violence against the state.

The Urban Processes

The urban context provided structures through which state legitimacy was to be questioned. At independence, the Kenyan government took over leadership structures which, it was hoped, would address racial disparities in infrastructural facilities and their accessibility to Africans. Employment rates, it was hoped, would increase and housing would improve. When the law against rural-urban migration was repealed, the rate of rural-urban mobility far outweighed the reverse flow. Urban overpopulation became obvious, with extreme poverty, crime, slum development, and an increase in unemployment. Urban infrastructure

was stretched to its limits and could not accommodate the increasing urban sprawl (Van Zwanenberg n.d.; Macharia 1992).

Petty crime and violence fed on slum development and unemployment, all these being products of growing poverty (Obudho and Aduwo 1989). Crimes relating to pick-pocketing and shoplifting turned into bank robberies with extreme violence. The police force in Kenya failed to control this situation, since its manpower was poorly remunerated and apathetic. Its energy was also diverted to the political concerns of the state. It was easier for the state to use the police force to deter Kenyans from holding unlicensed political rallies than it was to deploy them in strategic places for security reasons. Consequently most urban areas in Kenya remained enclaves of despondency, insecurity and fear. The state's ability to check urban crime declined, as it became easy to rob a bank, shop or any enterprise in town (Karimi and Ochieng' 1980).

Following the attempted 1982 coup, demobilised soldiers and police also entered the labour market, without any possibility of future gainful employment. Many of these soldiers were highly qualified and could not be reduced to a life of misery for long. In some city estates in Nairobi, such as Eastleigh it became easy in the late 1980s to acquire cheaply guns that were much more sophisticated than those of the police force. There was speculation that some police or army personnel, with their low pay, shared in the proceeds of such robberies. Suggestions of complicity between the police force and robbers added to the growing culture of corruption in Kenya. Among the youth, there developed a culture of celebrating wanted criminals as heroes who suffered under state repression.

A concomitant development in urban areas was the increased number of 'parking boys' and street children, whose history goes back as far as 1969 in Kenya. These are to be mainly found in Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu and Nakuru. Recent research shows that the number

of street children is lower in towns with rural connections. Thus the bigger towns in Kenya have more of them. Nairobi has become the street child capital in Kenya (Ngau 1996:1). Street children (some are in fact adults) are those who live, roam and work full time in the streets and have little or no contact with their parents, as well as those who live and work on the streets by day but return to their homes and families at night — mostly to the sprawling slums of the city (Ngau 1996:1). Some may be orphans. Those with families may not be staying with them and may even have lost touch with them. They live in extremely poor conditions on the streets, begging, pick-pocketing or forcibly snatching valuables from tourists or other Kenyans and in turn selling them at cheap prices. Some may even be employed as pick-pockets, giving what they snatch to their `employers' to sell. Street children also engage in scavenging for food, and thus the dirty streets of Nairobi and Nakuru in particular, with their dumped garbage, are good places for them.

There can be no gainsaying that street children contribute to the increased criminal activities and violence in many Kenyan towns especially, Nairobi and Nakuru. The contagion factor between these two towns is higher because of greater accessibility between them. Many of the so-called street children grow into adults very quickly. They engage in illicit behaviour ranging from sniffing glue (mixed with petrol) to taking drugs and from prostitution to petty thefts. Some even traffic in firearms (Ngau 1996:2) These activities harden them to the realities of life. Street children, too, experience regular `visits' to prison, where they meet hard-core criminals and learn about criminal activity from them. Jails in Kenya, rather than rehabilitating, become training centres for hard-core criminals.

Research among street children indicates that although many can be rehabilitated, some cannot and prefer street life to any rehabilitation centre. Such people are highly malleable and form good subjects for political dissent and violence. They too support parties and popular

leaders. Many of these children, adults and the urban unemployed suffered from the impact of government repression and later the unpopular SAPs. Those who stayed in slums were particularly targeted in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Macharia 1992). The unemployed people blamed government policies and corruption, while the unemployable thought those living in extreme opulence to be their oppressors. The logic of haves and have-nots cannot be denied.

The class juxtaposition was therefore perpetuated in independent Kenya. The classes spanned ethnic boundaries. Patron-client relations promoted very few to positions of advantage. It always remained in the interest of a particular patron to keep his clients (tribal or otherwise) in subservience, in order to manipulate them further. A network of patrons emerged who identified their interest in political and economic privilege. Under Moi, these people had continually to sing Moi's song and celebrate the banality of his alleged wisdom at political rallies. With Moi's increasing intolerance of criticism, this class of leaders were expected without question to follow Moi's footprints (Nyayo). A widely quoted phrase illustrates this:

> I call on all ministers, assistant ministers and every other person to sing like parrots. During Mzee Kenyatta's period, I persistently sang the Kenyatta tune until some people said: 'This fellow has nothing to say except to sing for Kenyatta. Therefore you ought to sing the song I sing. If I put a full stop, you should put a full stop (See *Daily Nation* 14 September 1984; *Weekly Review* 21 September 1984; Anyang Nyong'o 1995:29).

In this way, the interests of this class of leaders were protected against those of the urban poor, unemployed, unemployable and poorly remunerated working class.

Towards 1990, the have-nots became tired of a system that encouraged opulence amidst wretchedness. Their experience showed them to have nothing but their misery to lose in case of violence or death. Some had grown beyond the human values of decency. For example, street children in Nairobi occasionally used human waste to

threaten people to part with their valuables in streets or to defend themselves against mob justice which had become common in Nairobi. These people have been brutalised in life and can easily externalise this to their perceived enemies. The governmental allocation of resources constituted part of their problem.

SAPs, Political Pluralism and Urban Violence in Kenya, 1988-1990

The combination of forces at the time of the general elections of 1992 included external forces — the end of the Cold War and the enforcement of SAPs — besides the growing disillusion in the country with the political repression that characterised the Kenyan state. The economic recession generated a lot of political pressure which manifested itself from the late 1980s in continued agitation for political pluralism. Pluralism may have been wrongly equated with democracy, without any consideration of what ensures sustainable democracy.

The SAPs draw their wisdom from the theoretical school of New Political Economy (Aseka 1997; Leys 1996:82). This entails neo-liberal perspectives adopted by the World Bank and IMF and borrows extensively from analysis by Africanists of the economic and political situation in Africa. There is evidence that these Africanists, mainly based in Euro-American Universities and institutions, misread the African situation, and analyse Africa from outside the African context. Thus, the economically punitive policies of SAPs and their attendant political conditions have contributed to a violent urban backlash (Mkandawire 1995:83). SAPs provided a framework for state control to be reduced both in the economic realm and also in terms of governance.

In particular, SAPs demanded the rolling back of the state from economic activities. The Bank vouched for a free market economy in which people would be free to make choices. It argued that this was

necessary given the failure of the independent African state. The state was described in this neo-liberal discourse as corrupt and inefficient and as promoting policies biased towards the town and against agriculture. It was therefore held necessary for economic activity to be liberalised and even privatised. This would enable the rational citizen to make choices and maximise his opportunities.

What is faulty in this formulation is the description of these adjustments as people-oriented in their approach to rational choice. Intellectual legitimacy for this new hegemonic economic agenda abounded in the works of scholars associated with the University of California series on Social Choice and Political Economy and the Emory University, Governance in Africa Programme at the Carter Centre. These programmes were to generate interesting research, some of which formed the basis of the 1989 World Bank report on 'Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth'. It should be noted that the World Development Report of 1986, devoted to agricultural policy, relied heavily on the work of Robert Bates (1981).

Robert Bates had been influenced by Michael Lipton (1977) in his analysis of the urban-biased policies of the Third World states. The two scholars, adopting a rational choice approach, were in agreement that biased policies, which benefited the small interest groups (of which the urban coalition was identified as a part) were central to poverty in the Third World. African governments were presented by both these scholars and by the World Bank as having fallen captive to urban coalitions, which led them to advance unproductive, parasitic and consumer urban interests at the expense of rural interests (Obi 1997:7). The effective way to delegitimise resistance to SAPs was to dismiss the interest groups opposed to SAPs as narrow self-interested coalitions.

> The Bank seeks to undermine the legitimacy of the opposition by belittling, discrediting, and ignoring it. The 'vested interests' are pitted against rural poverty. The dichotomies distort and obscure the

nature of the social and political conflicts precipitated by SAP (Beckman 1991:67).

One cannot deny Beckman's (1991:69) conclusion that:

> It is resistance to SAP, not SAP itself, that breeds democratic forces. SAP can be credited with having contributed to this development, not because of its liberalism but because of its authoritarianism.

The political conditionality associated with SAPs was narrowly designed. Rather than promoting democracy and justice, it was authoritarian and the elements of justice in it were inconsequential. It equated justice with multi-partism, freedom of expression, speech and movement, but it failed to consider such fundamental human rights as the right to decent living, shelter and food. The urban coalition, identified above, fought to defend these rights. It was wrong to assume, as the Bank did, that there was a homogeneous urban coalition with common interests, which received equal rewards from the state by the fact of being urban. It is important in assessing resistance to SAPs (to which urban violence is partly due) to differentiate between the various categories constituting the urban mass in Kenya.

Various social cleavages emerged in response to the growing economic repression of SAPs. The urban community, in its diversity, did not accept the argument that SAPs needed sacrifices in the short-term to produce benefits in the long-term (Obi 1997:9). The urban community was badly hit by SAPs given its reliance, directly or indirectly, on wages and on imports. To some of the urban youths, SAPs entailed a complete loss of their means of livelihood, thereby shattering their hopes for the future. As Jean-Marc Ela has argued (1997:8) urban violence can be seen as 'an expression of the disarray lived by social groups which have been made fragile in front of a world which is being structured without and against them'. The crisis generated by the World Bank and IMF adjustment programmes has sacrificed the future of youths whose prospects have probably been shattered or darkened for ever (Ibid.). Urban violence consequently emerges as an expression of the realisation that street life is a misery in which death is neither loss

nor gain. People who are deprived have nothing but their misery to lose by death from crime and violence.

The Informal Urban Economy

Some social groups in Kenyan urban areas sought new survival methods, using the informal economy to engage in trade or crime, so as to insure their lives against harsh economic realities. The proliferation of street hawking, petty trade in kiosks, the selling of roast maize and potatoes on the streets, shoe shining and repairs on corridors, newspaper vendors, the increase in the number of *matatu* (local name for private public transport vehicles) conductors were all aspects of the growth of the subterranean economy. According to one author, this originally emerged as small enterprise activities in response to the problems of survival in developing countries associated with rapid urbanisation and unemployment (Anonymous, n.d:1).

The informal economy, of which the subterranean one became a part, grew out of increasing unemployment, poor sanitary conditions, the retrenchment of workers and infrastructural breakdown in cities, which also saw increased transport costs for workers. Slum development became a pressing problem, as people who initially lived in better housing moved to lower level housing estates, because of increased rents in their former places of residence. Many participants in subterranean economic activities therefore lived in slums such as the former Muoroto and Kibagare (Macharia 1992). However, these informal activities were judicially defined as illegal, because the participant neither paid taxes nor operated in locations that had been zoned for their establishment (Ibid.). The informal economy was thus criminalised, despite its potential for Kenya's development.

Given the legal position, the informal economy, good as it was as a strategy of survival in the urban areas, was open to political manipulation. Criminals, especially in Nairobi, took advantage of this

environment to rob banks and loot shops, but at times also to engage in political talk, which in the late 1980s and early 1990s, was defined by the Kenyan state as subversive. The opponents of the state, and activists for reform and political pluralism targeted this economy to direct popular revolt against the state. An adamant government, as the Kenyan one then was, refused to listen to the language of dialogue or persuasion. The slum dwellings of those engaged in the informal economy became vulnerable to political repression in the form of slum demolition. The demolition of Muoroto and Kibagare in May 1990 is a case in point (Macharia 1992). This hardened popular opposition to the state, seen in this case as an agent of political and economic repression. The World Bank and IMF SAPs were unknown to this category of urban dwellers.

Urban Violence in Nairobi, Nakuru and Kisumu

Slum demolition was just but one cause of urban violence in Kenya. Nairobi and Nakuru were two cities that experienced demolition of slums, resulting in the death of unknown numbers of people. For instance, on 25 May 1990, the Nairobi City Commission (NCC) guards and workers arrived at the Muoroto slum, which was located near the country bus station, popularly called 'Machakos airport'. They came with bulldozers to raze the shanty village of Muoroto and the illegal kiosks that were dotted around it. According to the NCC official in charge of the operation, the structures that were constructed in Muoroto were 'illegal and the kiosks therein unlicensed' (*Weekly Review* 1 June 1990:30). The Muoroto area was also described correctly as 'a nest of petty thieves and pickpockets who prowl daily at the country bus station on Landhies road' (Ibid.). This was alleged to justify the demolition of the shanty village, to open the way for the construction of a shopping complex and an extension of the bus station (*Daily Nation* 26 May 1990:1).

Apparently, the procedure for planning the slum demolition and eviction exercise was fraught with bureaucratic confusion. The Director of City Inspectorate, Hassan Keitany, planned and executed the demolition without adequately informing the other departments concerned. Little did Keitany and his deputy, John Wahome, realise that the slum dwellers, hawkers and kiosk owners would resist their eviction with a passion not previously witnessed. The slum dwellers' determination was expressed in the words of one squatter who vowed to fight the city askaris (police) to the end (*Weekly Review* 1 June 1990). Barely a week after the demolition, the slum dwellers rebuilt the makeshift slum buildings that had been razed. By 1 June, 'much of the shanty town was back again on its feet' (*Weekly Review* 1 June 1990).

There was public outrage, not so much over the demolition itself, but because of the brutality and violence that was employed in the process. The NCC used bulldozers that indiscriminately razed what little these dwellers had. No adequate warning of the demolition was given. The earlier eviction notice seems to have reached only a few people, though it is true that it might have been ignored by many, even if it had reached them (*Weekly Review* 8 June 1990:5). As the demolition began, groups of youth, hawkers, bus station conductors and kiosk owners all ganged up to fight the city askaris (guards). They wielded stones, knives and all sorts of weapons that were hurled indiscriminately at the NCC staff. As the Director of the City Inspectorate had underestimated the strength and resolve of their target, the slum dwellers overpowered the NCC staff, until police reinforcements were despatched from the nearby Kamukunji police station.

What was intriguing about this event, apart from the violence employed by the NCC staff and Kenya Police was its political outcome. This emerged first from the way the violence began and its subsequent politicisation. According to Keitany, the target for demolition was not

Muoroto but a neighbouring 25 acre plot belonging to the Commission's Savings and Credit Society. When the NCC askaris began to evict the hawkers who had built in the plot, the Muoroto villagers panicked and started engaging the NCC staff in stone throwing. General chaos and disarray led to violence spreading far and wide. These violent confrontations were further fuelled by the police who beat people indiscriminately, including bystanders from the neighbouring Muthurwa railway quarters. It was also observed that it was not so much the dwellers of Muoroto but the `hawkers and idlers who proliferate the area who were battling it out with the commission contingent'. `These people', it was further argued, `have their own bone to pick with the commission over what they claim is unnecessary harassment and arrests' (The *Weekly Review* 1 June 1990).

The areas affected as the violence intensified were the bus station and Gikomba open air market. Bus conductors and stage boys, kiosk operators and street hawkers, idlers and street boys all joined in the battle. Eventually, Kariokor, Kamukunji, and parts of River Road and Tom Mboya streets were affected (*Daily Nation* 26 May 1990). Seven people were rumoured dead, although this was never explicitly confirmed from any quarter. However, approximately 40 people were injured, some so seriously as to require hospitalisation. While this kind of violence was deplorable and was condemned by the President, the Minister in charge and by all well-meaning Kenyans, it was not lost to objective analysis that evictions were normal, as the NCC attempted to rid the city of illegal structures and dwellings. Thus, it was only the violence which caused a stir, leading to the sacking of the area Member of Parliament, Maina Wanjigi, from his Cabinet post as Minister of Agriculture.

The Muoroto demolition led to the loss of property and dealt a psychological blow to the evicted. The inhumanity and brutality evidenced was a sign of a decadent society that privileged the rich few

at the expense of the downtrodden. Maina Wanjigi equated it to the 'Operation Anvil' that the colonial government unleashed in 1952 (*Daily Nation* 31 May 1990). As he further observed, 'the incident was hooliganistic and ... was designed to drive a wedge between the people and the government'. Both the Director of City Inspectorate and the deputy were interdicted while the area Member of Parliament lost his cabinet job. About 1,300 hawkers and residents temporarily lost their dwellings though their spirit and hope remained unbroken. Muoroto continued as a beehive of activity as residents rebuilt their shattered dwellings and business premises (*Weekly Review* June 8, 1990:17). This was evidence of the dwellers' resolve to continue unhindered with their lives. The event, however, revealed the government's inability to manage the informal economy. The political consequences of this resonated in the quest for political pluralism.

The government response to the Muoroto eviction was a poor approach to the problems of urban poverty and unemployment. These were the root causes of the misery that left those concerned open to political manipulation, especially with a rising tide of demands for political pluralism. The Kenyan government was aware of this. In his Madaraka Day speech, President Daniel Arap Moi blamed the violence on the Deputy Director of City Inspectorate, John Wahome, whom he accused of having gone to the slum area in advance to warn the dwellers to prepare for a fight. Although Moi did not give any evidence to support this claim, the political implication is clear.

President Moi knew that the Muoroto violence could contribute to mass chaos and the subversion of the government. Although the tide of demands for pluralism did not concentrate on the problems of poverty, shelter and unemployment to rally support, the level of discontent in Nairobi and Nakuru was such that a consensus existed that political change was desirable and necessary. Proponents of reform and multi-partism attacked the state and led the urban crowd to believe that

the cause of their misery was the corrupt and repressive government. Many stood on an ethnic pedestal to appeal to their listeners. Economic problems were thus left on one side, as the more immediate political issues relating to freedom of speech, expression and movement took centre stage. Just as the World Bank did, the Kenyan political elites left the fundamentals of shelter, food and decent living to the penumbra of political discourse. They preferred to exploit the situation to gain political capital, and still they appealed to the urban crowd.

Moi's worries were not unfounded. Prior to the Muoroto incidence, the death of Robert Ouko, Kenya's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, on the night of 12-13 February 1990 had led to such violence that state legitimacy was threatened. His charred remains were found on 16 February, six kilometres away from his home. He had a bullet hole in his skull and broken limbs. Foul play was immediately suspected, especially when a government statement suggested suicide (*Weekly Review* 23 February 1990). It was asked, following this statement, how someone could burn himself so efficiently, and at the same time shoot himself in the head before smashing his legs (*Weekly Review* 23 February 1990:4).

There being no space for independent expression, spontaneous demonstrations broke out in Nairobi, Nakuru, Eldoret and Kisumu. In Nairobi, Nakuru and Eldoret, university students demonstrated to urge the government to reveal who killed Ouko. In Nakuru, students from Egerton University, Njoro barricaded roads and caused mayhem, as did Moi University students in Eldoret. In Nairobi, students of both the University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University (where the author was a student then) joined the demonstrations. These were peaceful, and the administration of the University of Nairobi emerged as capable of managing a peaceful demonstration (*Weekly Review* 2 March 1990). However, violence erupted at the Kikuyu campus of University of Nairobi, where vehicles were stoned and a female student was killed in

a motor vehicle accident. The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Phillip Mbithi, described this demonstration as an expression of the students' grief. He urged the students to mourn peacefully.

The student demonstrations continued for a number of days. The long period of peaceful demonstrations was correctly attributed to the students being allowed to express their grief and anger, without molestation, especially from the Kenya police. However, students were alleged to have pelted the Nyayo monument at Uhuru park with stones and other missiles. University authorities blamed this on a mob that had 'hijacked' the student demonstrations. Emphasising the peaceful nature of the student demonstrations, the university authorities blamed isolated incidents of violence on infiltrators, probably non-students. Some students confirmed this. The fact that police were absent from these peaceful demonstrations indicates that the presence of police can contribute to the eruption of violence at demonstrations.

At the funeral service held at Pentecostal Church, Valley Road, violent confrontations erupted when the crowd was denied a chance to view the body of Ouko.

> The cordon of riot policemen that had ringed the church tried to push the crowd back. When this failed, the police panicked and began throwing canisters of teargas into the swirling mass of people, which then retaliated by throwing stones and other missiles at the police (*Weekly Review* 2 March 1990:18).

The violence spread as the dreaded General Service Unit police personnel moved in. Trouble extended to the city centre, and a lot of property was destroyed. Shops were looted. By late afternoon, the City Centre streets were a deserted battle field (Ibid.). At least six shops were destroyed, while a bank and a Kenya Airways sales office extensively damaged.

On 23 February, when the remains of Ouko arrived in Kisumu, more violence erupted. Kisumu was Ouko's home area, which he had represented as a Member of Parliament since 1988. This was the area

where Oginga Odinga and Tom Mboya also hailed from. With the death of Ouko, the Luo community, from which all three came, felt betrayed for the third time in Kenya's history. After the government's suicide theory, and the apparent attempt to conceal information relating to Ouko's death, violence seemed an easy way to show concern and grief. As one reporter observed, 'violence was caused by spontaneous anger at the nature of Ouko's death and the lack of information from the government on this matter' (*Weekly Review* 2 March 1990:20).

Ouko's body arrived in Kisumu at 1.30 p.m., a time when the otherwise busy streets of the town were virtually empty. Many people had gone to Moi stadium in Kisumu to welcome Ouko on his final journey. Unfortunately, many were locked out of the stadium and there was a heavy presence of the dreaded General Service Unit personnel, the Kenya Police and National Youth Service men. When the body arrived, those who had been locked out moved into the stadium by force. The armed personnel retaliated by throwing teargas canisters and charging at the crowd with batons, sticks, dogs and horses. In response, the crowd went wild, and responded with all manner of missiles.

In the other parts of Kisumu, rioting mobs barricaded the two main roads leading to Kisumu town, i.e. the Kisumu-Nairobi and Kisumu-Kakamega roads. Motorists could not enter or leave Kisumu. Three residential estates in Kisumu were affected, Manyatta, Nyalenda and Kondele. At Nyalenda, a mob attacked the police with stones, sticks and other weapons. Telephone booths and poles, bus stands, road signs, billboards and dislodged boulders were uprooted and used to barricade the roads. Eventually, a lot of property was destroyed, including vehicles and a petrol station which was partly burnt. Battles were observed in poor residential areas where anger and grief were exploited by all manner of mischief makers (Ibid.). It was not until the next day that the police retreated, 'leaving behind a trail of destruction as the aftermath of the pitched battles with rioters' (Ibid.).

Between the Ouko saga and the Muoroto eviction, the rumour mills went into top gear as the role of the government was seriously questioned. President Moi himself said that rumours were in the air from disgruntled rich individuals who sought to take advantage of the national tragedy for their own selfish interests (*Weekly Review* 9 March 1990:9). What worried Moi was not so much the rumours as the connection with the quest for political pluralism. Proponents of political pluralism and their disgruntled supporters would soon take advantage of these two incidents to intensify their campaign. It was because of this that the KANU Review Committee began in June 1990 to address some of the issues in the campaign for multi-partism (Muigai 1993: 27).

The Review Committee must have started work too late because the calls for reform intensified and culminated in the Saba Saba riots. Earlier on 3 May 1990, Kenneth Matiba and Charles Rubia, both former members of KANU who had been expelled in 1989, had issued a statement calling for an end of one party rule in Kenya (*Weekly Review* 11 May 1990). This was supported by the U.S. Ambassador to Kenya, Smith Hempstone. In the midst of these developments, the government intensified its criminalisation of political dissent, banning a rally at the Kamukunji grounds that would have been held to explain the rationale for political pluralism in Kenya. Matiba and Rubia's intention to apply for a licence for 7 July was rejected, even before they had submitted the application (Muigai 1993:27). Matiba and Rubia insisted that the rally would go on as scheduled, with or without government approval.

The stakes before the 7 July rally, popularly called 'Saba Saba', were as follows. KANU equated multi-partism with anarchy. They argued that multi-partism would engineer ethnic strife because Kenya was a multi-ethnic society. They vowed to maintain law and order, arguing in a Presidential statement that it was the prime duty of the government to maintain security.

> The most fundamental duty of any government is to maintain law
> and order. A state of law and order, which protects not only the lives
> and property of all citizens but their rights under the constitution,
> cannot be maintained without security of the state (*Weekly Review* 6
> July 1990:9).

Thus, the President maintained that neither the issue of security nor the
maintenance of law and order was negotiable. He promised to deal with
the utmost severity with any overt attempt to undermine law and order
(*Daily Nation* 4 July 1990, *Weekly Review* 6 July 1990).

President Moi took an opportunity to defend the record of the
police who were seen in Kenya as enemies of the people. He insisted
that those

> who carry out acts of violence or hooliganism against any citizen,
> no matter what his/her station in life or stance on public affairs, will
> be dealt with by the full might of the law. The constitution of this
> country gives wide ranging powers to the police for precisely that
> reason (Ibid.).

Moi included in his warning those bent on perpetrating criminal
activity. Destruction of other people's property, he warned, would not
be tolerated. He claimed KANU at that moment to be synonymous with
peace and the opposition groups to be the equivalent of violence.

On the other hand, proponents of pluralism knew that violence was
the only way for them to get back to the mainstream of political activity.
The pressure on Moi was great and support in the towns for pluralism
was assured. The Public Order Act, which Moi invoked in his warning,
was an archaic law in a new global political dispensation. The
proponents of pluralism realised the advantage that disobeying the law
could bring them. Violent repression by the government would
internationalise the agenda of pluralism, to the disadvantage of the
government.

At this point, the informal economy began to serve as a medium of
disseminating information on political pluralism and the expected
'Saba Saba' meeting (*Weekly Review* 6 July 1990). There was a quick

rise in the sale of music cassettes in Nairobi's River Road that contained political messages mainly in the Kikuyu language. (River Road is in a low class business area characterised by clandestine, illegal and criminal dealings.) Such music commented on political issues including the death of Ouko, the Muoroto evictions and the tribulations of Matiba, and implored Kenyans to pray for their country. The music vendors did booming business as some of the tapes sold over a thousand copies in a week. This activity, however, went on in a clandestine and unauthorised manner and it was soon declared illegal. The authorities declared the cassettes to be seditious and inciting! However, the matatus in Nairobi and Nakuru continued to play the songs in the city and its environs, thereby making the 'Saba Saba' message clear and popular to Kikuyu speakers.

In a crack down on what the authorities said was seditious music, police impounded not only the cassettes but also the recorders and dubbing machines. This further infuriated the vendors against the government. Some were annoyed because the impounded facilities were their only means of livelihood. Those cassettes already in the market were banned to no avail. The rise in the number of cassettes of Mzee Jomo Kenyatta's speeches, issued to inspire this crusade, escaped the machinery of the state, since his speeches were assumed to be in the national interest. By the time 7 July approached, the tension was evident. The fact that the government chose to detain such people as Matiba and Rubia added to the people's disposition to violence (*Daily Nation* 5 July 1990).

When Matiba and Rubia were picked up by police on the night of 5 July, their wives issued a statement that encapsulated the rationale behind the potential Saba Saba violence. They said any gathering 'would be due to people's reaction to repression and denial of licence (to their husbands) to hold a meeting' (*Daily Nation* 6 July 1990). Saba Saba became a day of riots because it was the culmination of the

people's hatred of repression, silence and manipulation. It revealed that the informal political space was going to be exploited to challenge the repressive laws. Despite the stern government warning for Kenyans to avoid the Saba Saba rally, people came to Kamukunji in large numbers ready for any eventuality. Violence appeared inevitable as the logical consequence of the KANU habits of canalising political talk in a particular mould and of criminalising dissent. Kenyans were tired of singing the banality of the government's alleged peace, love and unity (this being the Nyayo philosophy of Moi). Violence erupted and continued for three days.

The many people who went to Kamukunji on 7 July waved green tree branches symbolising the need for peace (Muigai 1993:27). A heavy presence of GSU and Kenya Police personnel was intended to intimidate the crowd. The worst violence in Kenya began and continued until Monday 9 July. With all the chaos and violence that followed, it is difficult to place responsibility on any category of people. A combination of origins for the violence in Nairobi can be found.

A section of the crowd in Kamukunji was largely peaceful until the police intervened. This sparked off violent running battles between the police and the demonstrators, not only at Kamukunji but in nearby markets and estates, including Gikomba, Kariokor and along Landhies Road. In other places, the crowds turned violent without provocation, barricading roads, stoning innocent motorists who refused to flash the two-finger multi-party salute, and generally engaging in lawlessness. Some bystanders were forced to flash the two finger salute and were then told to part with their wallets (*Weekly Review* 13 July 1990). I don't think there is any relationship between political pluralism and a wallet other than sheer criminality.

It is noteworthy that violence was marked in 'low-income and heavily populated residential areas', prone to violence and other social ills. The Saba Saba riots provided an opportunity for drug addicts and

criminals to cause fear and despondency (Ibid.). In estates like Dandora, Kangemi, Kawangware and Uthiru, most of the violence had no clear relation to politics. People just engaged in 'mindless acts of violence' (Ibid:6). Perhaps the only relationship between that violence and the demand for political pluralism was that the stalemate diverted police attention to the riots, leaving room for looting and mindless crime (*Daily Nation* 10 July 1990).

About 15 people were reported dead while 63 were injured (*Daily Nation* 11 July 1990). Hospital sources noted the injuries were mainly related to motor vehicle accidents, mob justice and gunshot wounds (*Daily Nation* 9 July 1990). The riots continued until Monday, 9 July, and left Nairobi a ghost city. Violence spread to Nakuru, Murang'a, Thika and Nyeri. Other parts of the country remained relatively quiet as the toll of violence was assessed in Nairobi. There is no doubt that this violence impelled the government to reconsider its restrictions on freedom of expression, press and assembly. The KANU establishment was forced to review its policy on disciplinary actions, on elections and on the party's policies in general at a special KANU Delegates Conference on 4 December 1990. These were the ideas behind the June 1990 KANU Review Committee.

Between July 1990 and the 3 December 1991, when the government conceded political pluralism, KANU started to reduce its monopoly of the legal political space and slowly accepted the reality of the times. KANU was bombarded both by internal pressure and external conditionalities. The pre-1991 violence showed the government that the undercurrent of political discontent was irresistible. It is the contention of this paper that urban violence was one of the main ways in which the state was made to realise its misdeeds. Deplorable as this violence was, especially when criminals hijacked the agenda, the state seemed ready to respond only to violence. Indeed, one reason why the freeze on external aid to Kenya forced Moi to concede

was not the act of freezing aid in itself, but the internal political consequences of the freeze. These were particularly dangerous in urban areas where people relied on imported items and on daily or monthly wages. It is, therefore, a distortion of reality to put undue emphasis on the aid freeze.

Conclusion

The process of transition to pluralist politics in Kenya witnessed three main episodes of violence: the violence following Ouko's death, the Muoroto eviction violence and the Saba Saba riots. These incidents were a product of growing poverty and unemployment in towns, the criminalisation of personal and private initiatives for survival and the increasing state repression. This paper, using a historical perspective, contextualises the origins of violence in the growing transformation of global realities and internal socio-economic processes. It argues that several factors impacted on the urban masses and disposed them to violent activity.

In particular, the stalemate between the government anti-reform stance and the opposing pro-reform groups provided the tension which encouraged open confrontation. The Kenya Police were as much an encouragement to violence as were criminal elements in Nairobi, Nakuru and Kisumu. The state was also an accomplice to igniting violence given its record of criminalising dissent and free expression. Indeed, the state encouraged undercurrents of political discontent by its repressive policies and brutal instincts. It is worth concluding with the suggestion that more research is needed to understand how and why the instances of urban violence failed to burst into more intense conflict engulfing a majority of Kenyans. This might indicate how violence and conflict can be minimised in the African continent.

References

Africa Watch Report, 1991, 'Kenya: Taking Liberties', July.

Albert, O.I., 1994, 'Kenya, The Road to Democracy', in *Review of African Political Economy,* No. 53.

Ajulu A., 1992, 'Kenya: The Road to Democracy' in *Review of African Political Economy* , No. 3.

Ake, C., 1981, *A Political Economy of Africa,* London, Longman.

Anyang Nyong'o, P., 1989, 'State and Society in Kenya: The Disintegration of the Nationalist Coalitions and the Rise of Presidential Authoritarianism, 1963-78', in *African Affairs,* Vol. 88, No. 1, pp.229-51.

Aseka, E.M., 1989, 'A Political Economy of Buluyia, 1900-1964' Ph.D Thesis, Kenyatta University.

Aseka, E.M., 1990, 'Urbanization', in W.R. Ochieng', (ed.) *Themes in Kenyan History,* Nairobi, East African Educational Publishers.

Aseka, E.M., 1997, 'The Political Economy of Panopticon: Interrogating the Neo-Liberal Discourses in the Globalization Process', in *Chem Chemi:* A Journal of the Faculty of Arts, Kenyatta University.

Barkan, J.D., 1992, 'The Rise and Fall of a Governance Realm in Kenya', in G. Hyden and M. Bratton, (eds.) *Governance and Politics in Africa,* London, Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Bates, R.H., 1981, *Markets and States in Tropical Africa,* Berkeley, University of California Press.

Aseka, E.M, 1993, 'Kenya: Lessons From a Flawed Election', in *Journal of Democracy,* Vol.4, No. 3.

Beckman, B., 1991, 'Empowerment or Repression? The World Bank and the Politics of African Adjustment', in *Africa Development,* Vol. XVI No. 1.

Cooper, F., 1983, 'Urban Space, Industrial Time, and Wage Labour in Africa', in F. Cooper, (ed.), *The Struggle for the City: Migrant Labor, Capital, and the State in Urban Africa,* London, Sage Publications.

Daily Nation, [Several Issues].

Dudder, C.J., 1993, 'Men of the Officer Class: The Participants in the 1919 Soldier Settlement Scheme in Kenya' in *African Affairs,* Vol. 92.

Ela, J.M., 1997, 'Conflict in Everyday Life', Guideline paper prepared for the Laureates of the CODESRIA Democratic Governance Institute.

Holmquist, F. and Ford, M., 1992, 'Kenya: Slouching Towards Democracy', in *African Today,* 3rd Quarter.

Ibrahim, J., 1997, 'The Military and the Programme of Transition to Democratic Rule', in J. Ibrahim, (ed.), *Expanding Democratic Space in Nigeria,* Dakar, CODESRIA, pp.57-75.

Jackson, R. and Rosberg, C., 1986, 'The Marginality of African States', in G.M. Carter and P. O'Meara (eds.), *African Independence: The First Twenty-Five Years*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press.

Karimi, J. and Ochieng', P., 1980, *The Kenyatta Succession*, Nairobi, Transafrica Book Distributors.

Khapoya, V., 1988, 'Moi and Beyond: Towards Peaceful Succession in Kenya?' in *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 10, No. 1.

Leys, C., 1975, *Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism, 1964-1971*, Nairobi, East African Educational Publishers.

Leys C, 1996, *The Rise and Fall of Development Theory*, Nairobi, East African Educational Publishers.

Lipton, M., 1977, *Why Poor People Stay Poor: Urban Bias in World Development*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press.

Macharia, K., 1992, 'Slum Clearance and the Informal Economy in Nairobi', In *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp.221-36.

Makinda, S.M., 1996, Democracy and Multi-Party Politics in Africa" in *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 4.

Mamdani, M., 1996, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press.

Mkandawire, T., 1995, 'Adjustment, Political Conditionality and Democratisation in Africa', in E. Chole, and J. Ibrahim (eds.), *Democratization Processes in Africa: Problems and Prospects*, Dakar, CODESRIA Books.

Matende F. W., 1997, ' Factors that Lead to the Influx of Street Children in Urban Areas: A Case of Kakamega Town', M. Ed. Thesis, Kenyatta University.

Muigai, G., 1993, 'Kenya's Opposition and the Crisis of Governance', in *Issue: A Journal of Opinion*, Vol. 24, Nos. 1-2.

Nasong'o, S.W., 1997, 'Democratisation and Human Rights Issues in Kenya: The Role of American Ambassadors William Attwood and Smith Hempstone'. A Paper presented at the 6th Regional Conference on American Studies in Eastern Africa, 8-12th July 1997.

Ngau, Mgr., 1996, 'Monitoring and Evaluation of Five Street Child Rehabilitation Projects in Nairobi', Report submitted to GTZ Kenya.

Obi, C.I., 1997, 'Structural Adjustment, Oil and Popular Struggles: The Deepening Crisis of State Legitimacy in Nigeria', CODESRIA Monograph Series 1/97.

Obudho, R.A. and Aduwo, G.O., 1989, 'Slum and Squatter Settlements in urban Areas of Kenya: Towards a Planning Strategy', in *Journal of History and Environmental Research*, Vol. 4, No. 1.

Ochieng', W.R., 1995, 'Structural and Political Changes', in Ogot B.A. and Ochieng' W. R., (eds.) *Decolonization and Independence in Kenya, 1940-1993*, Nairobi, East African Educational Publishers.

Ogot B. A., 1995, 'Transition from Single-Party to MultiParty Political System 1989-93', in Ogot B.A. and Ochieng W. R.' (Eds), *op cit.*

Ross, S.D., 1992, 'The Rule of Law and Lawyers in Kenya', in *Journal of Modern African Studies,* Vol. 30, No. 3., pp.421-42.

Sabar-Friedman, G., 1997, 'Church and State in Kenya, 1986-1992: The Churches Involvement in the "Game of Change"' in *African Affairs,* Vol. 96.

Sunday Nation.[Several Issues].

Van Zwanenberg, R. (n.d.), 'History and Theory of Urban Poverty in Nairobi: The Problem of Slum Development', IDS, Discussion Paper, No. 139.

Weekly Review, (Several Issues).

Werlin, H.H., 1974, *Governing An African City: A Study of Nairobi,* New York, Africana Publishing company.

Democratic Transition and Political Violence in Nigeria

Ebenezer Obadare

Résumé: Des temps coloniaux à nos jours, l'activité politique a toujours été accompagnée d'un certain niveau de violence au Nigeria. Les deux tentatives d'instauration de la démocratie civile durant la première et seconde républiques se sont soldées par un échec en raison de l'anarchie sociale. Une fois de plus, le pays est en plein à une convulsion sociale, en témoigne une avalanche d'attentats à la bombe et d'assassinats dans tout le pays. Le présent article soutient que la violence politique actuelle au Nigeria est le résultat du processus de transition politique raté, et en l'occurrence, l'interruption brutale du processus de transition qui était supposé introduire la Troisième République. Par ailleurs, l'article affirme que la violence, dans sa nature, est totalement différente de la violence politique que connaissait le Nigeria. avant, constituant ainsi une génération nouvelle du phénomène. La conclusion qu'il est possible de tirer provisoirement est que la violence politique peut avoir un impact négatif sur le dernier programme de transition du Nigeria, étant donné surtout le penchant bien connu des militaires à user du prétexte d'instabilité pour perpétuer leur règne.

Introduction

Nigeria faces a debilitating crisis, spawned by the shocking annulment of the 12 June 1993 elections. The consequent resurgence of political violence throughout the country is the concern of this paper. A spate of bombings has convulsed Lagos and other parts of the country. People perceived to be critical of the Nigerian military junta have been assassinated[1].

---

* Department of International Relations, Obafemy A. University, Ile Ife, Nigeria.

1. Cases in point here are the unresolved murders of Chief Alfred Rewane, a benefactor of the opposition National Democratic Coalition, NADECO, and Alhaja Kudirat Abiola, wife of Chief M.K.O. Abiola, the presumed winner of the annulled 1993 presidential elections.

Politics and violence are like Siamese twins in Nigeria. Political activity has always featured a notable degree of violence, in both the colonial and post-colonial phases of the country's chequered existence. Arthur Nwankwo's (1987:71-72) comment on the place of violence in the colonial social order is apt:

> The colonial strategy was despotic. Inevitably, Nigeria was administered with the most unspeakable cruelties, and with unbounded forces of annihilation which rendered mass murder an administrative technique of the colonial regime. *The obvious outcome was that pre-colonial societies were smashed into pieces through raw violence* defined in colonial literature as 'punitive expeditions', 'patrols' or 'pacification' (emphases mine).

The seeming kinship between political activity and violence has not changed significantly since independence. A retrospective survey of the First Republic (1960-1966), for example, would show how the social fabric gradually unraveled until the fateful military intervention of 15 January 1966 (Anifowose 1982). Again, the threat of possible collapse into complete anarchy triggered the putsch of 31 December 1983, which effectively interred the Second Republic (Adamolekun, 1985; Ayeni and Soremekun 1988).

Contemporary political violence in Nigeria is different in two ways from what happened in the past, and this deserves close scrutiny. The bomb explosions, all apparently directed at military targets, add a new and worrying dimension. This paper holds that the current wave of political violence springs from political disaffection occasioned by the sudden termination of the democratic transition process, when it was virtually at the point of crystallisation.

This paper will consider the connection between the legitimacy of the regime and political violence, something that the literature tends to take for granted (Leiden and Schmitt 1968; Ninsin 1992; Nwokedi 1994), and the implications of political violence for Nigeria's democratisation project, especially given the readiness of Nigerian

military leaders to use the bogey of political instability to justify military rule *ad infinitum*.

Situating the Study/Context of Analysis

We proceed from the hypothesis that it is impossible to understand in isolation either the process of democratic transition in Nigeria, or the phenomenon of politically related violence. A full understanding requires them to be considered together.

Democratic transition in Nigeria is better understood within the larger canvas of Africa as a whole. In most African countries undergoing the slow but painful transition from authoritarianism to a semblance of civil governance, the nexus of international and domestic forces in propelling the process of transition is all-important. The international forces include the termination of the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet behemoth, the attendant unpopularity of the communist worldview, and the consolidation of the democratic ethos by the apparently victorious liberal societies of the Western bloc (Fukuyama 1992). We should not dismiss, however, the importance of the domestic challenges to decades of dictatorship in many African States. These included the collapse of social infrastructures, economic stasis, the continued marginalisation of unfavoured minority groups in mostly heterogeneous societies and the virtual reduction of governance itself to unbridled accumulation and crass opportunism on the part of a largely short-sighted political elite (Ake 1996; Ndongko 1997; Amuwo 1992).

Any reference to the role played by domestic forces in the shaping of opposition to continued dictatorship must dwell on the resurgence of civil society from the mid-1980s. This was a phenomenon throughout Africa, where one regrettable concomitant of the domination of the social space by *status quo* forces had been the emasculation of civil society. As if taking a cue from international dynamics, groups in civil

society began to shake off their lethargy from the mid-1980s (Wiseman 1990, 1995), the quality of their activities increased. Abutudu (1992:7) captures this movement as follows:

> Since the late 1980s, ...the activities of the various groups in confrontation with the authoritarian state have become more focused, systematic and organised. There is increasing co-ordination among different groups and democracy defined in fundamental human rights, and multi-party elections have become specific goals. *No doubt, the international climate has played a remarkable role in these developments.*

Nigeria benefited from this continent-wide process of increased civil consciousness. A reliable symbol of the qualitative rise in public awareness was the proliferation of human rights groups, starting with the Civil Liberties Organisation (CLO), in 1987. Coalescing under the ambit of the Campaign for Democracy (CD), these groups (in the face of official harassment and incarceration of their leadership) mobilised civil disobedience against the annulment of the 12 June 1993 elections (Abutudu 1995; Sesay and Ukeje 1997).

The process of transition in a large majority of African states has been accompanied by widespread instability. Why has democratisation in Africa left such a legacy of bloodletting? Scholars differ profoundly in their rationalisations. One school attributes the social disequilibrium which followed democratic transitions in Africa to the absence of necessary structures, given that 'political changes had occurred mainly through military coups d'etat' (Omitoogun and Onigu-Otite 1996:1). An opposing school, however finds congenital problems in transitional processes themselves. As Rene Lemarchand (1992:181) has argued, in his avowedly pessimistic assessment of transitions in Africa: 'transitional processes ... tend to unleash rising social demands, thereby sharpening political competitiveness among ethno-regional entities ...'

The social cost of transition in Africa has been prohibitive in terms of the number of human lives lost, as Nwokedi's (1994:49-50) grim statistics show :

> ... both the protest against authoritarianism and the resistance to this democratisation were particularly violent in some states with scores killed in Cameroon, Niger, Gabon, Burkina Faso and Nigeria while hundreds were massacred in Mali and Kenya and thousands in Togo and Zaire for example.

In the particular case of Nigeria, the immediate concern of the present study, the persistent manipulations and tactical somersaults of the military leader, General Ibrahim Babangida, had arguably prepared the ground for violence. Thus, with the unexpected abrogation on 23 June of the 12 June presidential elections, a particularly tortuous programme of transition was brought to a fitting anti-climax. One commentator characterised the Babangida transition programme as 'the most protracted and open-ended transition ever undertaken in Africa because the agenda (was) endlessly being amended and some of the items already completed (were) changed day after day' (Eghosa Osaghae 1991:103) The study examines the Babangida transition programme with particular emphasis on the ingredients which pre-disposed it to violence.

Conceptual Framework

We need to remove some of the ambiguities surrounding the two basic concepts around which the analysis in this paper revolves. These are 'transitions' and 'political violence'. An attempt will be made to examine the extent to which an organic linkage exists between the two.

Violence is inherent in every social formation regardless of the nature of its political forces and levels of development. Generally known as the 'problem of order' or the 'Hobbesian problem', violence continues to enjoy a high degree of attention in social thought (Arendt 1972; Zimmerman 1983; Fanon 1965; Galtung 1981; Giddens 1987; Salmi 1993; Miller 1984; Apter 1996). This has, however, generated

more intellectual confusion than clarity, particularly over the meaning, causes, nature, possibilities and social utility of violence. Nonetheless, there is a fair consensus that violence emanates from a conflict of interests in social life, itself an inescapable aspect of the human condition (Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff 1981).

Three distinct sub-themes are relevant to this study: the causes, the character, and the utility of violence. No doubt, violence springs from a variety of causes, each of which may be useful to explain varying political realities. Ivo K. Feierabend, *et al* (1972) have contended that political turmoil is usually the consequence of social discontent. In this light, one possible cause of violence could be aggression arising from frustration, a theory popularised by Gurr (1970). Political violence could also break out as a result of malfunctioning within a social structure (the systematic hypothesis), or a fallout of clashes among dominant groups in a society (group conflict hypothesis).

As we argue below, political violence in contemporary Nigeria is best understood within the frustration — aggression — violence mode. The source of frustration was clearly the annulment of the 12 June 1993 elections, capping a litany of political malfeasance by the Babangida regime. Gurr's theory is also useful to the extent to which it can explain why initial reaction to news of the annulment was more truculent in the Western part of the country. Gurr perceives a relationship between the perception of frustration/ deprivation and the intensity of reaction. As he states, 'mild deprivation will push more across the threshold, very intense deprivation is likely to galvanise large segments of a political community into action' (1970:9). In Nigeria the sense of deprivation (the annulment) was arguably more intense among the Yoruba, the dominant ethnic group in Western Nigeria, from where Moshood Abiola, the presumed winner of the elections came from.

Yet, the violence which followed the annulment is also illustrative of a much deeper malaise in the Nigerian polity. We speak here of the

inveterate intolerance of dissent manifested in the contraction of the space for popular participation, the exclusion of unfavoured groups from the conduct of governance, and the blocking of traditional channels for ventilating social grievances. According to Nwokedi (1994:8) '...the use of violence by the elements in civil society expresses the absence of institutionalised modes of interest articulation in the states where this occurs'. The eight-year long regime of General Ibrahim Babangida (1985-1993), a military dictatorship *par excellence*, was distinguished by its suffocation of critical organs of civil society (Ibrahim 1997). These organs capitalised on the annulment to break out (Okoroji 1993).

Beyond the problem of cause(s), another difficulty revolves around the definition of violence itself. Salmi (1993) captured this problem very well when he noted that 'most people think of violence in a narrow context, equating it with images of war, murders or riots'. Yet,

> ... violence comes in many more forms. The range of phenomena that could be induced under this label is quite extensive. If one accepts the notions that any act that threatens a person's physical or psychological integrity is a form of violence, then one needs to consider that occurrences as diverse as racism, pollution or poverty can be symptoms of violent situation (p. 16).

To adopt this expanded definition of violence would produce an illuminatingly different understanding of the Babangida transition programme. It is arguable that the entire transition programme took place under an atmosphere of 'repressive violence' (Salmi 1993:20), especially as certain critical social forces were effectively excluded from it. (Lewis 1984; Agbese 1991). In fact, Salmi's (1994) definition of repressive violence could be taken as a theoretical rendering of the political habits of the Babangida regime. According to Salmi,

> Repressive violence corresponds to the deprivation of basic rights other than the right to survival and protection from injury ...Repressive violence relates to three groups of fundamental rights: civil, political and social rights ...Political rights refer to the degree to which citizens can participate democratically in the political life

of their region or country (right to vote, holding of elections, freedom to meet and to form associations or parties, freedom of speech and opinion, and freedom of the press). **With respect to social rights, one of the most usual forms of repressive violence is that which prevents people from creating or belonging to a trade union, or from going on strike** (pp. 20-21).

As stated earlier, the Babangida programme became remarkable for its clampdown on the press, trade unions and the so-called 'old breed' politicians, who were routinely banned and unbanned. Why did the Babangida regime suspect the activities of such popular forces and deal with them with such undisguised asperity? The answer is perhaps to be found in its nature as a military regime with a commandist pedigree and a boasted reliance on the use and efficacy of violence.

Our understanding of violence in the present context must necessarily go beyond demonstration, bombings and assassinations. We need to include, for example, the very act of the annulment itself as an act of political violence, especially as the military used the coercive powers of the state to stifle popular will and jeopardise the rule of law. This fits Nwokedi's (1994:12) characterisation of political violence as, partly, the 'use of force by ... the power incumbents to defend the *status quo* at all cost'. In this characterisation, the annulment was a last ditch act of violence intended to keep the Babangida junta in power.

Our final consideration in this section involves the theoretical relationship between transition processes and violence. To get to the heart of the matter: Are transitions necessarily violent processes? At the moment, the African experience predisposes one to answer in the affirmative, since most African countries have experienced comprehensive social convulsions as the direct or indirect fallout of democratic transitions. The handiest examples in this regard, apart from Nigeria, are Burundi, Cameroon, Niger, Gabon, Togo, Zaire, Burkina Faso and Mali (Omoruyi 1997; Lemarchand 1994). In Algeria, over 100,000 people are believed to have been consumed by the violence precipitated by the annulment, of general elections in 1992 (El-Kenz

1997; Stone 1997). In most of the states listed above, both governments, by virtue of their monopoly of the instruments of violence, and groups in civil society, partly out of frustration and partly in reaction to the repressive measures of the political authorities, have participated in an orgy of violence (Nwokedi 1994:15). Again, it is clear that in all the cases identified, violence broke out where the transition from authoritarianism followed the top-bottom model (Linz & Stepan 1978; Huntington 1991; Breytenbach 1996). This model refers to a situation in which 'the previous undemocratic regime remains in control of the agenda for reforms' (Brytenbach 1996:24), a control usually exercised to the detriment of opposition groups.

Yet despite the evidence above, transitions, are not necessarily violent in nature. In fact, violence has tended to be 'most prominent (only) in states where democracy has been subverted, has collapsed, or is non-existent'. (Nwokedi 1994:60). The Babangida transition programme which ended in the abrupt termination of an electoral process, falls squarely within this description. In the next section, we examine this transition programme focusing specifically on its violent dimensions and why its abrupt termination provoked even greater violence.

The Babangida Transition: The Road to Chaos

The Babangida transition programme has been accorded an extensive treatment in the literature (Okoroji 1993; Oyediran 1995; Aziegbe 1992; Obi 1997; Olagunju *et al*, 1993). Here, we intend to restrict ourselves mainly to those elements which nurtured socio-political instability and placed the country on the verge of another civil war.

We need to underline the irony that the entire transition process unfolded under a climate of authoritarianism, which only deepened scepticism among many who rightly perceived a serious conflict between the despotic means employed to reach a democratic promised

land. The persistent resort to totalitarian methods increasingly discredited the entire programme (Olukoshi and Agbu 1996).

However, it is misleading to view Babangida's avid manipulation of the transition programme as merely the manifestation of a single individual's caprice. True, President Babangida displayed outstanding dexterity in managing several knotty political matters, an ability which earned him the sobriquet 'Maradona'. Nevertheless, his entire attitude to the process of democratic transition and the transfer of power to civilians should be seen in a broader perspective. The argument here is that the Babangida regime was essentially neo-patrimonial. A key aspect of neo-patrimonial authority, according to Emelifeonwu (1995:47)

> ...is the low tolerance for other rival centers of authority outside the orbit of the state as well as the emergence of other key players or groups not sanctioned by the state. Understandably, for the neo-patrimonial authority to do otherwise is to undercut its authority and power base.

Consequently, to perpetuate themselves and hang on to their privileges, neo-patrimonial leaders naturally employ a variety of strategies involving 'a variable mix of carrot and sticks' (Lemarchand 1992:181). It is to be expected that neo-patrimonial leaders should be resistant to liberalisation or pluralism, which invariably leads them to clash with democratic social forces and precipitate social turmoil (ibid).

It is not difficult to locate the Babangida regime within the above paradigm. What needs to be added is that Babangida was assisted in his assiduous juggling of rival forces within the Nigerian federation, by revenues from oil, Nigeria's prime foreign exchange earner. This helped him shore up his authoritarian base (Soremekun 1995). Where the carrot of inducement appeared not to work, Babangida duly fell back on the unreformed machinery of the state, primed since the colonial times to repress its perceived antagonists (Ihonvbere 1995; Ake 1996).

The entire transition programme thus turned into a virtual charade, characterised by persistent state intervention and/or disruption. As Abutudu (1995) has observed,

> ... authoritarian means of constructing a democratic order have been the hallmark of the Babangida administration's transition to civil rule programme. It was reflected in the way the main elements of the Political Bureau were rejected. It was reflected in the composition of the Constituent Assembly in 1988 in which a substantial portion of the membership was handpicked by the presidency; the authority of the Constituent Assembly was highly circumscribed by the military's imposition of `no-go' areas.

He continues,

> Thus, the Constituent Assembly was told not to address issues pertaining to federalism, state creation, the presidential system, fundamental human rights, etc,... Furthermore, the National Electoral Commission, NEC, was directly responsible to the government The fact that NEC was hardly autonomous from the administration turned it into an instrument whose reports the government used in rationalising many of those steps that marked its authoritarian attempt to construct a democratic order (pp.19-20).

It is no surprise, then, that by October 1992, the Babangida 'transition to Civil Rule' programme had been amended 62 times (Babatope 1995:32). Such amendments included the extension, thrice, of the life span of the regime in 1990, 1992 and 1993 (Nwokedi 1994:40), the disqualification of gubernatorial aspirants by NEC two weeks before the December 1991 intra-party primaries (Babatope 1995:31), and the banning and unbanning by decree of `discredited' `old-breed' politicians in August 1987, December 1991, October 1992 and June 1993 (ibid).

It appears only natural that the perverse logic of the whole programme should have led in the dramatic annulment of the 12 June presidential elections, the successful conclusion of which would have ushered in Nigeria's democratic Third Republic. As writer Chinua Achebe (1993) puts it, 'It was significant that he (Babangida) should end his rule by installing the ultimate element of instability on our

political process; the ability of an incumbent to veto at will the election of his successor' (quoted in ibid: 39).

Predictably, the annulment threw the whole nation into a spasm of political violence.

Annulment and the Outbreak of Violence

Why was the 12 June 1993 presidential election annulled? It is our view that an adequate answer to this poser will go a long way towards our understanding the nature and topography of political violence in the post-annulment era.

There are contending explanations for the annulment both from official and unofficial sources. In his 23 June 1993 broadcast, General Babangida had alleged, *inter alia* that the two parties subverted the electoral process by bribing voters, and that there was an expected 'conflict of interest' between the personal businesses of the two presidential aspirants (Moshood Abiola for the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and Bashir Tofa for the National Republican Convention (NRC)). He also charged that none of the presidential candidates would have 'enjoyed the loyalty, respect and cooperation of the Armed Forces' (Sesay and Ukeje 1997:31; Okoroji 1993:128-12). Taken together, these explanations would indict the entire transition programme, and they appear preposterous and unfounded (Sesay and Ukeje 1997) A more convincing explanation must be sought elsewhere.

This paper favours the argument which attributes the annulment to the realisation of what the Abiola victory and possible presidency represented for the balance of power in Nigeria's wobbly federalism. Thus, beyond Babangida's self-perpetuation project, it was clear that the Abiola victory represented a significant departure, as it signalled a shift of power from its traditional axis in the North to the South of the country (Soyinka 1996:62-64). It also represented a shift of power from

the armed forces to civilians. In our opinion, this threatened two-fold shift made the annulment of the elections inevitable..

The foregoing analyses need to be situated within the context of the nagging national question in Nigeria and the crisis which its non-resolution has generated among the constituent units of the Nigerian state most especially the three dominant minorities: Igbo, Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba (Dudley 1982; Joseph 1985) To briefly summarise, the national question in Nigeria revolves around the equitable sharing of political power, bureaucratic opportunities and economic resources among several mutually suspicious ethnic groups. Over the years, two critical developments have made the clamour for the 'answering' of this 'question' more strident and persistent: the perceived monopoly of political power by northern based interests, a monopoly strongly resented by power elites from other sections of the country[2]; and the increasing importance of oil in the nation's political and economic situation.

As the central government became more and more reliant on oil revenues, oil itself became 'an explosive element in majority-minority nationality relations in Nigeria' (Obi 1997:25; Soremekun and Obi 1993). Thus, even as it garnered more revenues from oil, the central government (dominated for twenty-seven out of thirty years by the northern dominated armed forces) became increasingly unaccountable, spawning calls for a democratisation of politics and a restructuring of the country's apparently dysfunctional federalism. These calls for socio-political re-ordering were largely ignored by the ruling elite who used an array of stratagems to cow opposition, ranging from financial inducement to cajolery and in a few cases to plain murder (the hanging on 10 November 1995 of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni

---

2. In what clearly constitutes one of the unsettling paradoxes of Nigerian politics, members of this self-same elite regularly collude with their northern counterparts, thus apparently contributing to the further reification of the northern hegemony.

activists following a fatally flawed pseudo-judicial process is an ample illustration of this latter point). Successive (mostly military) leaders have stubbornly held on to their accustomed privileges and power, and have thus deepened the crisis of legitimacy of the state in Nigeria (Obi 1997; Kwarteng 1993).

Thus, to return to our earlier submission, the Babangida transition programme took place within a worsening regime and a state legitimacy crisis and more vociferous agitation for a resolution of the national question. As Adebayo Olukoshi and Osita Agbu (1996:89) rightly put it,

> ... by the time the 12 June 1993 presidential elections were taking place, Nigeria was confronted by the resurgence of the National Question with all of the contradiction by which it manifests itself, including a deepening social crisis.

Likewise, it follows as a matter of elementary logic that:

> ...the 12 June presidential elections and their subsequent annulment by the military government of General Babangida contained elements of most of the major contradictions that underly the manifestation of the National Question in post-colonial Nigeria (ibid: 79).

It thus appears foolhardy to separate the reaction that greeted the annulment of the elections from the crisis of nationhood and general antipathy to perceived military/northern domination of the political space (Nnoli 1995). It becomes easy to understand why the annulment was rationalised in many quarters as the last ditch act of a military junta determined to ensure the continued location of the locus of power in the northern part of the country. Naturally therefore, greater outrage appeared to have been provoked in the southern and more particularly in the Western part of the country where Chief Abiola hails from. Thus, for several days, Lagos and other urban centres in the south became scenes of civil disobedience orchestrated by the pro-democracy groups under the umbrella of the then nascent Campaign for Democracy (CD). The West was once again enveloped by uncertainty and insecurity.

Perceived government agents were assaulted and their houses burnt, government offices were closed down, and the transportation system halted as a sea of pedestrians took over the major highways.

That the annulment was viewed by a large majority in the South as essentially pro-North was underlined by the fact that civil disturbances were confined to Lagos and other parts of southern Nigeria. As Omitoogun and Onigu-Otite (1996:21-22) argued:

> The northern elite were circumscribed in their behaviour. They were concerned that the activities of the pro-democracy groups would stir up critical questions about the nature of the revenue allocation formula and other issues detrimental to their interests ... The passive attitude of such elements appeared to have ethnicised the political crisis arising from the annulment.

One final point which deserves to be underscored relates to the manner in which political violence in the aftermath of the annulment fed on the realities of social life, especially in Lagos and perhaps other urban centres in the country. Urban centres in Nigeria usually contain a mix of the rich and the poor, with the latter always in a clear majority (Adisa 1995). This was not helped in Lagos or indeed other parts of the country, where the implementation of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) from the mid-1980s led to decreasing incomes and increasing unemployment, thus adding to the ranks of the urban poor (Olashore 1993; Okonkwo 1993). According to a report on the economic situation of Lagos State, '91 per cent of the urban population and 90 per cent of rural dwellers in Lagos State are living below poverty line' (Sanni 1997). With such social tensions, it is usually easy for things to get out of hand. In the period after annulment, the angst of existence readily meshed with the pain of electoral deprivation to kindle a social conflagration in Lagos and other Southern cities.

Conclusions

My fears are that true democracy may be delayed longer than any of us expects, and that if that happens, people will in their frustration start to

act in irrational ways... The bombings could be an expression of frustration when you start having that sort of thing — it represents a kind of frustration (Carrington 1997).

This essay has adopted an expanded definition of violence, to include not only traditional physical indices like riots and demonstrations, but also 'any act that threatens a person's physical or psychological integrity' (Salmi 1993:16). This conceptualisation helps us to understand the transition process in a new way, as something taking place in an atmosphere of 'repressive violence' (ibid, p.20), and containing several elements which easily predisposed it to more violence. In this sense, it was perhaps most fitting that the entire process should have been terminated by the single stroke of an annulment, which was itself an act of violence, as the military leader, Ibrahim Babangida used the coercive powers of the state to stifle the popular will and to trample on the rule of law.

Political violence in Nigeria has since metamorphosed from open demonstrations to faceless bomb explosions and assassinations, arguably a new generation of political violence in Nigeria[3]. As at the time of writing (December 1997) there have been 17 such blasts, beginning with the bomb which exploded at the Ilorin stadium in 1995 where the Kwara Chapter of the Family Support Programme was being launched (Abugu 1997.[4] This situation has not been helped by the severity of the ruling military in violently suppressing open protests and in restricting the ventilation of social grievances by constantly and

3. To these new forms of political violence must be added the hijacking on October 25 1993 of a Nigeria Airways Airbus A130 from Lagos to Abuja by four men representing the unknown Movement for the Advancement of Democracy (MAD). The men reportedly demanded the installation of the winner of the annulled election, Chief M.K.O. Abiola, within 72 hours. For more on this incident, the second of its kind in the country, see Dapo Olorunyomi, 'The Godfather', pp.20-23 and Yinka Tella, 'A Mad Hijack', pp.24-26 *The News*, Lagos, 8 November 1993. See also Alex Kabba, 'The Story of a Skyjack', *TEMPO*, Lagos, 4 November 1993, pp. 3-5 and 12.

openly harassing independent media houses (CLO 1997). A climate of terror prevails in Nigeria today.

What are the implications of continuing political violence for the democratic project in Nigeria? It is hard to give a straightforward answer at present. If the submission of Bangura (1994) is anything to go by, the implications of political violence in Nigeria may be harder to anticipate than is supposed. Bangura cautions,

> One of the dilemmas of social life is that even though violence seems to negate the human condition, it does sometimes kindle hope for a new and better beginning, and can play a key role in shaping identities, building bonds of solidarity and establishing group boundaries and a sense of self-confidence among groups in conflict (p. 22).

To what extent political violence is likely to produce this kind of situation in Nigeria remains unclear. For the moment, however, two things can be confidently asserted. The first is that the spate of bombings, all apparently aimed at military targets, has induced greater cohesion and enhanced esprit de corps among the military. Secondly, the military in Nigeria seems disposed to use the pretext of political instability to prolong the transition programme and to delay handing over to civilians[5]. Neither of these bodes well for the future of democracy in Nigeria.

---

4. Since then, there have been two blasts in Kaduna, one at the Aminu Kano International Airport, Kano, eight in Lagos, one in Ondo, one in Zaria and the latest in Abuja.

5. This is already happening. In an interview with the *Washington Times* of 30 January 1997 and widely reported by the Nigerian media, General Sani Abacha claimed that the local council polls hitherto slated for December 1996 had been postponed because of the bombing incidents in Lagos.

References

Abutudu, Musa I.M., 1995, *The State, Civil Society and the Democratisation Process in Nigeria,* CODESRIA Monograph Series 1/95.

Abugu, Felix, 1997, 'Many blasts, few clues', *The Guardian.* Lagos, Wednesday, December 17, p. 19.

Adamolekun, Ladipo, 1985, *The Fall of the Second Republic,* Ibadan, Spectrum Books.

Adisa, Jinmi, 1995, 'Urban Violence in Nigeria', *Crime and Conflict,* 2, Winter, Indicator Press, Durban.

Agbese, Pita O., 'The Impending Demise of Nigeria's Forthcoming Third Republic' *Africa Today* 37/3, pp. 23-44.

Ake, Claude, 1996, *Democracy and Development in Africa,* New York, The Brookings Institutions.

Amuwo, Kunle, 1992, 'The International (and Domestic) Context of Democratic Transition in Africa: Roadblocks to Democracy' in B. Caron, A. Gboyega and E. Osaghae (eds.), *Democratic Transition in Africa,* Proceedings of the Symposium on Democratic Transition in Africa (Ibadan, June 16-19, 1992). Ibadan, CREDU.

Anifowose, Remi, 1982, *Violence and Politics in Nigeria* The Tiv and Yoruba Experience, New York, Nok Publishers International.

Apter, David (ed.), 1996, *The Legitimation of Violence,* London, Macmillan.

Arendt, Hannah, 1972, *Crises of the Republic,* New York, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc.

Ayeni, Victor and Soremekun K., 1988, *Nigeria's Second Republic, Presidentialism, Politics and Administration in a Developing State,* Lagos, *Daily Times* Publications.

Aziegbe, Solomon Akhere, 'The Political Transition Programme and the Future of Democracy in Nigeria' in B. Caron, A. Gboyega and E. Osaghae (eds.) *Democratic Transition in Africa,* op. cit. 309-404.

Babatope, Ebenezer, 1995, *The Abacha Regime and the June 12 Crisis: A Struggle for Democracy,* Lagos, Ebino Topsy Publishers.

Bangura, Yusuf, 1994, 'The Search for Identity: Ethnicity, Religion and Political Violence', UNRISD Occasional paper no.6, World Summit for Social Development, Geneva, November.

Breytenbach, Willie, 1996, *Democratisation in Sub-Saharan Africa: Transitions, Elections and Prospects for Consolidation* (Africa Institute of South Africa, September.

Carrington, Walter, 1997, 'I Fear for Nigeria's Future', *TELL,* September 22, p. 23.

Civil Liberties Organisation, 1996, *Annual Report on the State of Human Rights in Nigeria,* 1994, 1995, 1996.

Dougherty, James E., Pflatzgraff Jr. and Robert L., 1981, *Contending Theories of International Relations: A Comprehensive Survey*, Second Edition, New York, Haper and Row.

Dudley, Billy J., 1982, *An Introduction to Nigerian Government and Politics*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press.

El-Kenz, Ali,1997, 'Prometheus and Hermes' in Shinn, *et al* (eds.), *Science and Technology in a Developing World* (The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, pp.323-347).

Emelifeonwu, David C., 1995, 'The Nature of the Regime and the Collapse of Nigeria's Transition to the Third Republic' paper presented at the Conference on `The Dilemmas of Democracy in Nigeria', University of Winsconsin, Madison, USA, November 10-12.

Fanon, Frantz, 1965, *The Wretched of the Earth*, London, McGibbon and Kee.

Feierabend, Ivo K., Raslind L. Feierabend, Ted Robert Gurr, 1972, *Anger, Violence and Politics Theories and Research* (New Jersey, Prentice-Hall Inc.

Fukuyama, Francis, 1992, *The End of History and the Last Man*, New York, The Free Press.

Galtung, Johann, 1981, *Violence an Its Causes*, Paris, UNESCO.

Giddens, Anthony, 1987, *The Nation-State and Violence* Berkeley, University of California Press.

Gurr, Ted Robert, 1970, *Why Men Rebel*, Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Huntington, Samuel P., 1991, *The Third Wave: Democratisation in the Late Twentieth Century*, Oklahoma: University Press.

Ibrahim, Jibrin (ed.), 1997, *Expanding Democratic Space in Nigeria*, Dakar, CODESRIA.

Ihonvbere, Julius, 1995, 'Beyond Governance: The State and Democratisation in sub-Saharan Africa', *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, No. 50, pp.141-158.

Joseph, Richard, 1987, *Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria, The rise and Fall of the Second Republic*, New York, Cambridge University Press.

Kabba, Alex, 1993, 'The Story of a Skyjack', *TEMPO*. Lagos, 4 November, pp. 3-5 & 12.

Kwarteng, Charles Owusu, 1993, 'Nigeria's Elusive Search for Nationhood», *Africa Insight*, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 24-35.

Leiden, Carl and Schmit Karl M. (eds.), 1968, *The Politics of Violence*, Englewood Cliffs N.J., Prentice Hall Inc.

Lemarchand, René, 1992, 'African Transitions to Democracy: An Interim and Mostly Pessimistic Assessment', *Africa Insight*, vol. 22, No. 3.

Lemarchand, René, 1994, *Burundi: Ethnocide as Discourse and Practice*, Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Cambridge University Press.

Lewis, Peter M., 1994, 'Endagame in Nigeria? The Politics of a Failed Democratic Transition', *African Affairs,* 93 (313) July, p.330.

Linz, Juan and Stepan A. (eds.), 1978, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins.

Miller, David, 1984, 'The Use and Abuse of Political Violence', *Political Studies,* vol. 32.

Ndongko, Wilfred A., 1997, 'The Economic Context of Democratic Transition in Africa', *Africa Insight,* vol. 26, No. 4.

Ninsin, Kwame, 1992, 'Democratic Transition: Successes and Failures', Paper presented at the Conference on Democracy and Human Rights in Africa: The Internal and External Context, CODESRIA in conjunction with SAPES TRUST, 11-14 May, Harare Zimbabwe.

Nnoli, Okwudiba, 1995, *Ethnicity and Development in Nigeria,* (Aldershot, Aveburg.

Nwankwo, Arthur, 1987, *The Military Option to Democracy: Class, Power and Violence in Nigerian Politics,* Enugu, Fourth Dimension Publishers.

Nwokedi, Emeka, 1994, *Violence and Democratisation in Africa,* IFSH, Hesft 84 Hamburg, April.

Obi, Cyril I., 1997, *Structural Adjustment, Oil and Popular Struggles The Deepening Crisis of State Legitimacy in Nigeria,* CODESRIA, Monograph Series 1/97.

Okonkwo, Ubadigbo, 1993, 'Impact and Prospects of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria', *The Guardian,* December 31, p. 20.

Okoroji, Joseph C., 1993, 'The Nigerian Presidential Elections', *ROAPE,* November, No. 58.

Olagunju, T., Jinadu A. and Oyovbaire S., 1993, *Transition to Democracy in Nigeria (1985-1993),* Ibadan, Safari Books.

Olashore, Oladele, 1993, 'Nigeria's Experience with SAP has not been a Happy One', press statement during the African Development Bank, ADB Annual General Meeting in Abidjan, May 13, 1993, *The Guardian,* May 26, p. 17.

Olorunyomi, Dapo, 'The Godfather' *The News,* Lagos 8 November 1993, pp. 20-23.

Olukoshi, Adebayo and Agbu Osita, 1996, 'The Deepening Crisis of Nigerian Federalism and the Future of the Nation-State' in Adebayo O. Olukoshi and Liisa Laakso (eds.) *Challenges to the Nation-State in Africa,* Uppsala, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.

Omitoogun, Wuyi, and Kenneth Onigu-Otite, 1996, *The National Conference as a Model for Democratic Transition: Benin and Nigeria* IFRA Occasional Publications No. 6.

Omoruyi, Omo, 1997, 'The Secret Pact', interview, *TELL Magazine,* Lagos, September 29.

Osaghae, Eghosa, E., 1991, 'Babangida's Unique Transition Process in Nigeria and the Prospects' *Revue Juridique Africaine*, 2 & 3.

Oyediran, Oyeleye, 1995, 'Transitions Without End: From Hope to Despair' paper presented at the Conference on `The Dilemmas of Democracy in Nigeria', University of Wisconsin, Madison, U.S.A., November 10-12.

Salmi, Jamil, 1993, *Violence and Democratic Society: New Approaches to Human Rights,* London: Zed Books.

Sanni, Lekan, 1997, 'Report Shows Increased Poverty Rate in Lagos', *The Guardian*, Lagos, Wednesday, December 17, p.64.

Sesay, Amadu and Charles Ugochukwu Ukeje, 1997, 'The Military, the West and Nigerian Politics in the 1990s', *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, vol. 11, Number 1, Fall.

Soremekun, Kayode and Obi Cyril, 1993, 'Oil and the National Question' in F. Onah (ed.), *The National Question and Economic Development in Nigeria*, Selected papers of the 1993 Annual Conference, Ibadan, The Nigerian Economic Society, pp. 209-231.

Soremekun, Kayode, 1995, 'Oil and the Democratic Imperative in Nigeria', in Dele Olowu, *et al* (eds.) *Governance and Democratisation in Nigeria*, Ibadan, Spectrum Books, 97-109.

Soyinka, Wole, 1996, *The Open Sore of a Continent: A Personal Narrative of the Nigerian Crisis,* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Stone, Martin, 1997, *The Agony of Algeria,* UK, Hurst & Co.

Tella, Yinka 'A MAD Hijack', 1993, *The News,* 8 November, pp. 24-26.

Wiseman, John A., 1990, *Democracy in Black Africa: Survival and Revival,* New York, Paragon House Publishers.

Wiseman, John A. (ed.),1995, *Democracy and Political Change in Sub-Saharan Africa,* London and New York: Routledge.

Zimmerman, Ekkart, 1983, *Political Violence, Crises and Reflections: Theories and Research,* Cambridge, Schenkman Publishing Co.

Policing for Democracy? The Case of the Public Order Police Unit in Durban

Monique Marks*

Résumé: Cet article analyse les rapports entre le maintien de l'ordre et la démocratie. L'article soutien que c'est un domaine de recherche sous exploité dans son contexte africain et avance quelques unes des raisons possibles qui expliquent ce fait. Pour l'auteur les tentatives de démocratisation sont extrêmement difficiles en l'absence d'une bonne réglementation sociale et par le fait que les sociétés sont marquées par de fortes conflits internes. Le maintien de l'ordre par l'Etat est fondamentale pour les tentatives de réglementation et la résolution des conflits. Comme le montre le cas sud africain, la démocratisation de l'Etat doit être accompagnée de la démocratisation de la police d'Etat. Toutefois, pendant que beaucoup associent une telle démocratisation à un maintien de l'ordre moins «musclé», ou ce que certains ont appelé maintien de l'ordre «communautaire», il serait plus approprié de s'investir dans des approches plus profondes des politiques de maintien de la paix. Comme le montre l'article en se référent au cas sud africain encore, le recours aux forces paramilitaires peut être une solution pour asseoir l'autorité de l'Etat, et en créant un équilibre entre la sécurité collective et la liberté individuelle.

Introduction

The literature on Africa since the 1980s has tended to focus on the inability of states to govern and to deliver, as well as on growing social conflict, including unabated political and criminal violence (Chazan *et al*, 1988; Klein 1992; Ake 1991). Indeed, according to Laasko and Olukoshi (1996), increased violence and social conflict in Africa is a sign of deepening social inequality, weak states, and a lack of 'social glue'. Consequently, 'democracy' (which generally includes representative, elected government), freedom of association, state accountability and delivery, besides public participation, have become the

* Department of Sociology, University of Natal, Durban, South Africa.

supposed answers to this crisis (Monga 1995; Sadiq 1995; Koulibaly 1997). For some, South Africa has provided the inspiration for democratisation processes in Africa (Laakso and Olukoshi 1996). This has led to a virtual amnesia as to the South African state's repressive, exclusive and illegitimate history, to the extent that Mamdani has remarked that 'for many intellectuals, South Africa is not Africa' (1995:1).

If one is to take a considered approach to South Africa, it is evident that if the new democratic state is unable to deliver, it too will face a crisis of authority and legitimacy, as is the case with most other states in Africa at present. Furthermore, despite the current euphoric nationalism in South Africa, the 'social glue' is already unstuck, manifesting itself in gross levels of social conflict, in particular criminal and political violence. Consequently, as part of its democratisation and developmental programme, the South African state has stressed the need for national security and social order. A key player in this regard is the state police.

Mark Shaw, (currently one of the key consultants to the Ministry of Safety and Security) anticipated this sentiment in stating that

> few issues are more central to the future of the country's attempt at democratic compromise than the maintenance of public order... Restoring civil order and personal security for all South Africans is thus very important to a successful transition, and a credible, competent and accountable police force, enjoying broad public legitimacy, is a prerequisite for a durable democracy' (1994:1).

In fact, for both the South African state and its citizens, eliminating crime and social violence is the 'number one' priority. A new reformed and 'democratic' police force is viewed as key to this project. However, while the primary role of the state police is that of 'social ordering' through the reduction of crime and conflict (Bayley 1996), this is not easily achieved given both the history of the South African Police, and the paradoxical nature of policing in general.

The issue of policing though is not one isolated to South Africa. Indeed, it seems, policing has become a public concern for most African countries. An article in *Le Monde Diplomatique* (2 August 1997) lamented that 'Black Africa' is characterised by ineffective and repressive police forces (often referred to as bandits), who are unable to deal with increasing crime and social disorder. Nonetheless, there has been no real intellectual account of the role of the police in a (hopefully) changing order in Africa, despite the acknowledgement that 'law and order are legitimate, and indeed essential, aspects of democracy which only states that are both strong and responsive can assure' (Hutchful 1995:5).

This paper tries to understand this absence through examining the history and current notions of the state police in Africa. It will then examine the potential role of the police in attaining democracy through the use of the South African case. Finally, this paper will give an account of the perceptions of the state police in KwaZulu Natal (a province in South Africa infamous for 'political' violence and an alarming crime rate) as to their role and potentiality in a changing social and political order.

A bit on Method

Robert Reiner states that 'an understanding of how police officers see the social world and their role in it — 'cop culture' — is crucial to an analysis of what they do, and their broad political function' (1992:107). While there is currently much academic interest in the police, particularly in Western democratic countries, one cannot 'read off' from the literature or legislation how this subculture operates, nor its implications. While most police organisations share some key subcultural features such as machismo, conservatism, cynicism, and prejudice, there are peculiarities related to local socio-political conditions and organisational form (Reiner 1992; Shearing 1981). For

all these reasons, it is important to engage directly with police workers to understand their consciousness and behaviour.

Police organisations, owing to strong internal solidarity, and the sometimes 'subterranean' nature of their work, often appear to be impenetrable, and therefore difficult to research. But, as is the case with researching any other social grouping, these difficulties can be overcome. The starting point for doing this is spending time with the police on their turf, understanding their work environment, and listening to their world views. Strangely, because the police are often so isolated from other social formations, they welcome the opportunity to put across their own experiences, aspirations and frustrations. However, research involving the police has to be done from the starting point of understanding police organisations, and with an approach that is sympathetic, though not uncritical. Michael Keith in his book *Race, Riots and Policing* makes an important point about doing research on the police. He states that:

> By its very nature, ethnographic work demands a basic level of empathy and the author was regularly surprised by the enormous variations in police attitudes and behaviour, from the very impressive to the less than admirable. Yet the nature of the police organisation and the particular antagonisms and real hatreds that are the day-to-day reality of violent confrontations raise many questions about such work. Ethnography demands that the individual researcher position her/himself as 'member', yet at the same time sustain critical distance: the oxymoron at the heart of the term at the heart of the term 'participant observation' (1993:123).

In countries like South Africa, research on the police has been made feasible owing to the current stress on accountable and transparent policing, including opening up to both researchers and the press to allow for public scrutiny. This does not mean, however, that the police will necessarily understand nor value the process or outcome of research.

When researching the police, the goal of research as well as its potential use to the police and those they serve, needs to be made very clear. The process of the research should also be upfront given the very busy and unpredictable nature of police work. On the flip side, the convenience of doing research with the police is that they are more often than not punctual, and for the most part reliable given that they are often instructed by higher authorities to participate in research programmes.

This paper, in the final section, concentrates on the views of police officers in the Public Order Police Unit in Durban (As will be seen later in this paper, this unit is in fact the para military wing of the police organisation). Before conducting any interviews with the police themselves, it was important to spend time in the unit understanding what the current activities of the unit were, what priorities had been established, and what new plans were being implemented. The police themselves also required time to find out what research I was intending to do, whether the research was for public (in particular press) consumption, and what my relationship with the South African Police Service is.

My independence as an academic appeared to be central to the police members' support of the research project, and they were intrigued by my longer standing interest in the South African Police Service more broadly. Without doubt, my being a woman seemed unthreatening to the police. However, without an understanding of the police organisation, the research project would not have been taken seriously.

Much time was spent at the unit's base learning about their training programme, where members came from, their personal histories and stories, and also reading documents pertaining to rules and legislation in public order policing in South Africa. The police were also interested to engage with me as to what I thought of policing initiatives and

performance, as well as my views on improving police productivity and legitimacy. In doing research with the police, researchers have to prove themselves as both resilient, yet interested.

Separate interviews were conducted with members of the unit from all ranks. A fixed time was set to each interview so that police members did not feel anxious about the duties they had to complete. Interviews were structured as discussions were held in which the police were able to express their views about their organisation, social dynamics and conflict, and policing in general. It was important to be able to engage with interviewees about the activities their unit had been involved in at the time of the interview or just prior to that. The atmosphere of the interview was informal, with allowances for disturbances and disruptions.

Finally, it should be noted that the relationship with this unit did not end when the research processes was completed. It was agreed that I would participate in one of the lectures in the training programme pertaining to debates around public order policing. Also, a presentation and discussion around the research findings will be conducted at some point in the near future. The unit commander has also requested that I be engaged in further research evaluating the implementation of new policies and strategies in the unit. The relationship established is one of experts or professionals sharing their knowledge and skills. It is also ongoing.

Some Notes on Policing in Africa

It is hardly surprising that there is so little focus from writers on Africa about the role of the state police in the democratisation process. Three key reasons could be suggested for this absence. Firstly, the history of policing in Africa, both colonial and post-colonial, raises serious questions as to any potentially 'positive' role the police could play. Secondly, the dominating presence of the military in Africa has led on

the one hand to a conflation in understanding the role and function of the police and the military, and on the other hand, to a preoccupation with the role of the military in changing states (Hutchful 1995; Honwana 1997). Finally, there is a concern that attention to the police as a change agent represents a 'statist' (even modernist) approach to developing a new social order (Mbaku and Kimenyi 1995), or that such an approach is one which assumes a narrow and limited conception of security (Obi 1997a).

The police in Africa during the colonial period were without doubt the antithesis to the 'ideal type' of policing conceived of in, for example, Britain in the 1820s, in which the state police were to operate on a basis of consensus, were civilianised, and were to use minimal force (Pike 1989; Emsley 1990). Without exception, the colonial police operated extremely violently so as to provide a social order stable and secure enough to achieve the political and economic objectives of the colonies. Indeed, as Anderson and Killingray state, the police were the 'most visible public symbol of colonial rule, in daily contact with population and enforcing codes of law that upheld colonial authority, the colonial policeman — be he European officer or a local native recruit — stood at the cutting edge of colonial rule' (1991:2).

While the colonial police forces throughout Africa differed significantly owing to local conditions and imperatives, there are a number of shared features. Given the lack of legitimacy of the colonial state in the eyes of the colonised, police were often recruited from outside the colony or from other regions within the country. So in Southern Sudan in the early colonial period, police officers were usually recruited from Egypt, or from amongst Muslims in the North of Sudan (Johnson 1991). In Kenya, officers were transferred from other colonies, particularly Southern Africa (Anderson 1991). And in South Africa, in the Boer dominated Transvaal, most officers were from the British 'underclass' (Grundlingh 1991). These 'strangers' were seen to

be more reliable and trustworthy; they were poorly trained, under-resourced, and many had formerly been 'military men'. They could best be described as corrupt, coercive, inefficient, and malleable to colonial desire and design. Furthermore, they were unfamiliar with the needs and dynamics of the communities they policed.

A second common feature was that the early colonial police officers were often ex-military officers, or were seconded from the police in the empires; given their training in the use of maximum force, they used excessive violence in ensuring both physical and human resources for the colonial authorities and settlers. The police in The Gambia were until 1981 (by British design) the command body of the military under the direction of the Inspector of Police — a remnant of the Royal West African Frontier Force. This was a paramilitary force whose key goal was to suppress internal aggression against the state (Sall and Sallah 1995). In French and German colonies, such as Algeria and Cameroon, colonial police used coercion to secure both land and labour for the colonies. Instead of providing security and combating crime for all, the police in these countries helped in seizing of land, and thereafter 'provided the force needed to enforce the property rights of new owners' (Mbaku and Kimenyi 1995:286).

The British colonies were much the same — the police played a central role in defining and creating exclusive territorial rights for the British settlers. As Obi (1997b) writes of the Nigerian case, the colonial police force perceived their loyalty as lying with the British crown and were alienated from the daily needs and struggles of the Nigerian population. In South Africa, forced labour would not have been possible if the colonial police had not played an active role in forcing Africans off the land, enforcing labour contracts which if broken would have been subject to criminal prosecution, and violently suppressing any resistance to low wages and poor working conditions (Mbaku and Kimenyi 1995). As a result, paramilitary police were intensely disliked

and perceived as unaccountable representatives of an alien colonial power, imposing a range of new laws and measures of social control, which lacked any semblance of public consent.

Thirdly, while police forces in Europe from the 1920s were being equipped and trained as effective 'crime busters', in the colonies themselves police seldom engaged in crime combating activities. When they did, this generally pertained to 'minor offences' such as dealing with Africans who were in urban areas without permission, failure to pay hut and poll taxes, containment of liquor ordinances, and vagrancy (Anderson 1991). 'Real policing', where it existed, was isolated to areas occupied by 'Europeans' who demanded protection of persons and property. In most colonies, parallel systems of policing emerged: rural policing controlled by appointed chiefs, and formal state policing in the urban areas (Killingray 1991). This is another expression of what Mamdani (1995) refers to as the colonial creation of bifurcated states.

Of course, the colonial authorities were aware that they ultimately had to recruit local people. There were two key reasons for this. Firstly, there was a need for manpower within these police forces which could not adequately be met by outsiders. Secondly, the colonial authorities believed that such a recruitment strategy would improve the legitimacy of policing bodies. However, during the colonial period (and even beyond) colonised peoples were generally unwilling to participate in these formations, and ultimately those who did were perceived as outcastes by their communities, were often bandits, and were generally poorly educated. And, to be sure, policing did not improve with the inclusion of locals, who were often recruitable only because there were no other employment opportunities in times of rapid urbanisation.

As a result, even post colonialism, police forces throughout Africa continued to be much the same as previously apart from some changes in personnel. A recent Amnesty International report notes that in Malawi, the police standing orders have remained unchanged since

independence in 1964. In The Gambia, at the time of the military coup in 1994, the police were characterised as heavily armed and were a remnant of the Royal West African Frontier Police, unable to ensure public safety (Sall and Sallah 1995). In South Africa, in the 1950s, despite the large numbers of African members of the South African Police, local residents on the West Rand began to develop self-policing structures known as Civic Guards, and 'even officials of Johannesburg's Non European Affairs Department in 1957 admitted in private that there was almost a 'State of War' between Africans and the police and that the latter's impact on crime was negligible' (Goodhew 1993:459). More recently, despite the democratic change in government, and much talk and policy reformation aimed at transforming the police in South Africa, the actual police men and women who constitute the force have remained essentially unchanged. This brings with it many questions around real transformation in the police and brings to the fore Weber's old concerns with the unchanging nature of modern bureaucracies.

After Tanganyika attained independence in 1961, the new Tanzanian state attempted to reform its criminal justice system, and seems not only to have perpetuated its colonial heritage, but also introduced new forms of authoritarianism and social repression. The new state refused to accommodate any opposition to its policies, and anybody who dissented was arrested, and criminally charged. This severity of the implementation of law and order was said by Nyerere to be in the 'national interest' of a newly emerging independent state (Shaidi 1989:254).

But, the problem of policing in Tanzania does not end here. The state encouraged the formation of other paramilitary formations, some like the National Service, made up of officers from both the police and the military. There is also a continuation of the people's militia, or a people's self defence force, which despite not being a constituted police

force, has been given the same rights to arrest and search as a police officer — all this to 'protect the sovereignty of the United Republic' (Shaidi 257). Despite their lack of police training, these paramilitary units are said to have more of a patrolling presence than the state police in Tanzania, and are known for harassing people, and using excessive violence. The state police, in their activities to defend the status quo of the state, have been variously accused of carrying out procedures without regard for due process, of corruption and abuse of power, as well as torture and the use of maximum force against 'offenders'.

The Tanzanian case is unfortunately not exceptional. Weak states throughout Africa, lacking legitimacy, mechanisms for delivery, and consensual means of social control, have given excessive powers to the security services. Furthermore, the police and the military have become almost indistinguishable from each another, raising serious concerns about the use of force and the lack of a civilian-based security body (Honwana 1995; Hutchful 1995). Concurrently, there has been an increase in private security, both in the form of corporate organisations, and self-arming by civilians throughout Africa, all adding to increasing militarism and spiralling violence. It is perhaps no exaggeration to state that states in Africa have 'never had the real monopoly of violence as do states of the West, and are fragile in the face of processes of self-defence' (*Le Monde Diplomatique*, 2 August 1997). Policing in Africa at present can therefore be described as chaotic, diffuse, excessively repressive, and 'free' from any oversight bodies.

The State Police as an 'Ideal Type'

It should come as no surprise that despite the problems of social disorder and conflict in Africa, the police are seldom posited as part of the solution. But, there is an acknowledgement of a growing need for some form of social control which has to be assisted by the armed forces. Hutchful states in this regard, that '...national security in the true sense...and the assurance of law and order are legitimate and indeed

essential aspects of democracy which only states that are both strong and responsive can assure' (1995:5). Unfortunately, however, like many others, Hutchful, while acknowledging that states need to exercise effective policing, tends to be more concerned with transforming civil-military relations in achieving 'national security' so vital to establishing democracy.

Sadiq also notes the need for security if progress and development are to occur in Africa, whose states he believes are corrupt and have a 'near absence of democratic structures, popular accountability and transparency' (1995:180). He goes on to state that:

> ...serious efforts need to be made by African countries to put conflicts to an end, and to achieve greater political stability, peace and social integration...A primary human development goal in Africa ought to be the preservation of human lives and limbs intact, which is right now a number one human concern of a large section of the African people (1995:188).

This assertion is entirely accurate, yet he provides no real solutions as to how this may be brought about; no mention once more of the possible role of the state police.

Van der Hoek and Bossuyt (1993) go a bit further in stating that one should not overlook the need to bring the armed forces on board if lasting change is to be achieved. However, they too do not go further in stating how this would operate. Indeed, there seems to be no theorisation of the state police in the African context.

It is therefore necessary to take a serious look at the role that the state police should play, as the primary state institution responsible for internal security. In order to do this, some conceptualisation of state policing must occur. In this regard, reference has to be made to the literature about police in the West as an ideal type. This, however, needs to be done with circumspection.

Typically, the state police are characterised as that body which is responsible for creating public safety, arguably the key function of the state. This is done through the prevention and combating of crime, enforcing law and order (as defined by the state), and generally creating a climate of security and public order. Consequently, the role of the police always has been, and continues to be political, and not simply in the general interest, as the police would often like us to believe. As Cawthra states, writing of the South African police, '...public confidence in the police is dependent on public support for the government which controls them, a condition which can only be satisfied through political transformation' (1993:162). And, where there are democratic governments, there are some fundamental shared sentiments of state and civil society with regard to the social order that the police uphold and maintain. The police are able to do this due to the fact that they, unlike any other civilian state body, have access and recourse to the use of force. The state police are indispensable in ensuring social order in the contemporary world. 'The police are needed to deal with conflicts, disorders and problems of coordination which are necessarily generated by any complex and materially advanced social order' (Reiner 1992:40). This, however, does not render the state police uncontroversial. Their role is inherently political, given that the social order they are meant to defend is that which complies with dominant conceptions of social order.

This is best put by Bayley who states that crime prevention and social ordering is a matter of political values:

> order is not the only objective of government, especially not in democratic societies. Freedom is also important. Putting police in charge of crime prevention would surely tilt the policy in the direction of constraint rather than amelioration. The police stand at the fulcrum between liberty and order but they tend to lean to the right (1996:123).

By its very nature then, state policing is highly contested, given that it always operates in the interest of particular social groupings (usually

the political elites), and that it has the ability to remove freedoms through the legislated power to arrest and make use of legitimate force.

However, even the most hardened Marxists would agree that there is no simple correlation between political and economic dominant interest groups, and the activities of the police. As Hall *et al.* recognise, the police (like the law which gives them principle guidance) do have some relative autonomy from the state, and consequently occasionally 'intervenes against the overt interest of a particular ruling class fraction' (1978:206). But, there can be no doubt that the police are always the enforcers of an unjust social order. Hence, 'given the contradictory, conflict-ridden nature of society, policing by consent can only ever be a half-truth, and has never been more than a partial historical reality; it is in large part a powerful myth' (1993:221). Reiner goes as far as to state that 'the police are inherently a 'dirty work' occupation' (1992:269). The service they offer is controversial, and 'their business is the inevitably messy and intractable one of regulating social conflict' (Reiner 1992:269). But, it is a necessary 'business' in modern societies where social order and governance are inextricably bound. 'Welcome or unwelcome, protectors, pigs or pariahs, the police are an inevitable part of modern life' (Reiner 1992:11). They help create the foundation which makes governance (desirable or not) possible, unless one is to take the view that societies are preferable when self-regulated.

South African criminologists Smit and Botha have tried to grapple with the role of the police in the democratisation process. They state that it is imperative for policing for democracy to be effective since 'a democracy is heavily dependent upon its police to maintain that degree of order that makes a free society possible. It looks to society to facilitate those aspects vital to a democratic way of life, to provide a sense of security, to resolve conflicts, and to protect free elections, freedom of association, and free movement' (1990:36). Yet, they describe democracy and policing as paradoxical; the police have to

ensure both individual liberty and collective security. Consequently, the police may have to curtail the freedom of some, to ensure the freedom of others.

The nature and role of state policing is the most apparent public manifestation of the state itself. What is vexing in the African case, though, is which comes first — social ordering or the democratisation of the state? Does social conflict and crime need to be repressed before states can deliver, or should states first reform/transform, and once assured of their representativity and legitimacy, impose through the police the upholding of law and order? While many African citizens would prefer not to live under a social order defined by Moi, Abacha, and possibly even Kabila, it is unlikely that they wish to live in constant threat of loss of life and limb.

There are no simple answers to these questions, except to say that these dilemmas should not be isolated to the African case. Asia, South America and Eastern Europe are also grappling with authoritarian, exclusive state histories, combined with massive social conflict and repression. This paper argues that the two are inextricably linked; states need urgently to reform and develop institutional strength, and the police need to be reformed and empowered in this process. But first, why is policing so central to changing states?

State Change and Policing

There are few if any institutions that are as central to state functioning as the police. In many ways, the police not only reflect the nature of the state, but are also responsible for the prevention or promotion of state change. There are few if any institutions that are as central to state functioning as the police. In many ways, the police not only reflect the nature of the state, but are also responsible for the prevention or promotion of state change.

Marenin (1996) argues that the police are 'major actors' in changing societies. They are involved in crucial activities such as the combating of crime, the protection of citizens and change agents, and the curtailing of threats to the functioning of society. The police themselves are very aware of this fact. As Superintendent De Beer, head of community policing in KwaZulu Natal[1] states:

> Police are necessary in society since they have a direct impact on the quality of life of people. They have the capacity of changing certain things. This is because they have a contact situation with the public, and they know what is happening at all levels of society (Interview conducted in June 1996).

It is this very 'contact with the public' that sets the police at the centre stage in changing societies. Marenin continues that, as the entire world moves toward democracy, there is a quest for policing to become more democratic. So, for example, he states that

> as the European Community moves falteringly toward political integration, questions of law and policing have come to the forefront. The police themselves are advocating specific policies, powers and institutions to deal with such problems as immigration, drugs, terrorism, and fraud... (1996:4).

Della Porta, in writing about public order policing in Italy makes the point very clearly. She states that :

> indeed... the police represent the very face of state power. Direct interventions by the police to restore public order, moreover, put the police on the front pages of the press, and increase the likelihood of public criticism. It is likely, then, that because of this particular delicacy, the strategies of the police concerning the question of public order are multiple and ever changing (Della Porta 1995:1).

Changing police related to changing states is common not only to South Africa and the European context. Attempts to democratise the police as an institution is a contemporary phenomenon stretching from Latin America, to Eastern Europe, to Asia, and also the North Americas. This

---

1. KwaZulu Natal is a province in South Africa known for its high levels of political violence, as well as police corruption and misconduct.

reflects attempts by states to become increasingly accountable to their citizens, and the concurrent acknowledgement that this cannot be done without the support of the police as both objects and agents of change. So Chevigny (1996), writing about policing in Brazil, refers to attempts being made to transform the police from a military organisation to one concerned with the maintenance of human rights. This has essentially been the case since the fall of the military dictatorship in 1987, but is far from a fait accompli. Similarly Stanley (1996), in exploring the police in El Salvador, proposes that as there is a move from military to civilian rule, there should be a shift in conceptions of policing from one of 'national security', which he claims is a negation of individual rights, to one of 'internal security', which accepts the rights of citizens in a liberal democracy (1996:43).

If the military-like nature of the state led to necessary changes in policing, with the civilianisation of all aspects of society in Latin America, then military war appears to have been an impetus for changes in the police service in the Gulf areas. According to Ross (1996), these areas recognised a dire need to develop a more professional police service detached from the military, in order to achieve acceptance from citizens. Similarly, Shelley (1996) speaks of post-Soviet policing. In making use of Weberian explanations, Shelley believes that changes have been slow because of the lack of administrative changes. He further states that 'while it may be premature to expect a major restructuring of law enforcement, this failure to address one of the more important authoritarian legacies of the Soviet period inhibits these countries' ability to democratise' (1996:217).

Change in these police forces is also impeded by police corruption, ethnic conflict, and the lack of the physical resources which are fundamental to proper policing. These problems, of course, resonate in all African states, particularly in the South African case, where police are confronted with intense social conflict, are under-resourced and

have been labelled the most corrupt police force in the world (*Mercury*, 13 September 1997). Police officers in KwaZulu Natal stated the following in this regard:

> In Natal changing the police has been difficult on the ground due to the violence that is still taking place between the African National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). For proper community policing, there needs to be stability and political intolerance disturbs community policing (Interview with an Inspector of the Umlazi division of Public Order Policing, June 1996).
>
> It is just difficult to change the police when working conditions are so bad. As a policeman, you are just dumped and expected to use your own resources. This is unrealistic. You do not have facilities, but are expected to provide a high standard work. You may, for example be in a god forsaken area with no communication where there is conflict between groups of people in the same area. So, police themselves get involved in crime and become corrupt, or they join private security companies (Interview with Captain who heads Operations in Provincial Public Order Policing, June 1996).

While there are multiple problems with the state police in Africa, this cannot preclude an examination of their role in restoring order and containing conflict in these societies. This poses difficult but riveting challenges to African states who make claims to democratisation processes. As Shearing argues, the study of policing in South Africa, as elsewhere, is fascinating since 'developments in policing contributes to an understanding of the evolution of governance' (1994:1). So, for Shearing, one needs to locate an understanding of the policing within shifts in what he calls 'mentalities of governance'. The lack of any non-partisan or effective policing in Africa says much of the inability and unwillingness of African states to provide effective and equitable services to its populations.

Changing Police and Community Policing

Global shifts in state policing toward increasing democratisation, civilianisation, an acknowledgement of broader privatisation, and increased technological and communicative sophistication have given

rise to a revisiting of both the style and the role of state policing. This has led to elevated civilian participation and control in policing, as well as a reduction in the legitimacy of the use of force. As a response, policing, particularly protest policing, has had to become more 'co-operative'. And debates rage on in the police organisation, states, political parties, and academics as to how democratic and civilianised the state police should be. This is of crucial importance in African states where civilian participation has the potential to divide communities further.

An international desire to conceptualise new styles of policing has emerged along with global and national state change. In this regard, 'community policing' has become the catch phrase to express this shift. Moir and Moir capture the popularity of this terminology adeptly when they state that 'one could be forgiven for thinking that the principles of community policing were delivered to us from on high, writ large on tables of stone. Such is the zeal with which community policing has been proselytised' (1992:211).

After an extensive review of competing conceptions of community policing, Moir and Moir choose the following definition:

> ...community policing is a strategy adopted by police services to enable them to achieve the objectives of police in a liberal democratic society by successfully engaging the public, through various communities...to undertake lawful activities with or on behalf of the police who are organised in such ways as to maximise the achievement of those objectives through this process (1992:222).

Moir and Moir (1992), make the point that state police ultimately need to be in control of policing; citizen involvement, while crucial to effective and efficient policing, must be done with the consent and oversight of the state police. The police, like the state, need to be at the centre of democratisation processes.

Braithwaite who examines the police in Australia, states the following of a 'good police service':

> It prioritises crimes that pose the greatest threat to the dominion of citizens. It seeks to provide a cost-efficient service of taxpayers... It is right respecting. It investigates complaints of racial prejudice or any other form of bias in its practices and seeks to put remedies in place to protect against recurrence. Police training and socialisation emphasise these values... The good police service recognises that authoritarianism is a constant risk in a service that has special coercive powers. So, it seeks to be responsive to its community... Rather than joining in crushing the dominion of the oppressed, it enhances the dominion of the oppressed by active empowerment strategies (1992:15).

Such definitions of 'good' policing, while useful, raise many questions in the African context. Can we use concepts and practices ultimately developed for liberal democratic states? What 'community' are we referring to in deeply divided societies? Whose law are we deferring to? What exactly is community empowerment where basic service delivery seems not to be the priority of states in constant economic, social and political crisis? These are all serious questions. What the international context provides us with is a 'model' of where policing should be directed. And in broad terms, the move toward community or 'good' policing directs us at the most basic level to the idea that proper policing requires dependable knowledge from the community within which police operate, as well as good relations between the community and the police. Policing then remains state centred, but is accountable and community need defined. This conception at the very least gives those of us in Africa a yardstick by which to measure police effectiveness, as well as commitment to values of individual liberty and collective security. This may go some way in beginning to provide the much needed 'social glue' in African states.

The state police have a key role to play in providing an environment which is safe and secure for all citizens. While the nature of the state will largely determine the form that policing takes, the state police

should be encouraged to develop some degree of autonomy in carrying out their functions. This means that the police have to make use of their discretionary abilities to decide when it is appropriate to enforce the law, and when to encourage social order as defined by communities which does not infringe on the rights of others. Real social order is only sustainable if communities and individuals have an interest in it. The alternative is highly repressive policing and undesirable in democratising states (This is not to deny that more forceful policing is at times not only acceptable, but even preferable, as we shall see later in the paper).

While the South African state should not be idealised in this regard, the policy decisions made on policing, and police responses to these could go some way in providing an example of what could be done.

Policing in KwaZulu Natal

The acknowledgement that transition to democracy could not be successful without substantial changes within the South African Police came both from the African National Congress, and from the apartheid state itself. In fact, the roots of community policing in South Africa began almost as soon as De Klerk unbanned political organisations on 2 February 1990. De Klerk, speaking to police students at the police college later that year, stated that the police role should be one of combating crime, and should be removed from the 'political battlefield'. In November 1991, the Strategic Plan of the South African Police endorsed the concept of community policing. In so doing, police management recognised the need for a representative police force which forged alliances with the community, did away with a military ranking system, depoliticised the police, and became service oriented. The apartheid state agreed in general with the ANC that what was needed was the restoration of public confidence and involvement in policing, so that genuine partnerships could emerge between the police

and communities, and the basis of policing be consensus rather than coercion.

It was recognised early on in the negotiation process that despite the South African Police's racist, violent and unaccountable past, fundamental transformation of this structure would not be possible. At best, what had to be looked at was the transformation of the existing force. As Penuel Maduna, an ANC representative at a conference in May 1992 on prospects for democratising policing stated:

> The political and economic reality confronting us is that there is no question of the apartheid oriented, non representative South African Police force, which is rooted in the gross denial of human rights to the oppressed black masses, being dismantled and replaced with a new force. At the same time, we cannot take the SAP over as it is, with its wrong orientation, tendencies and value systems... Trapped as we are between Scylla and Charybidis, as it were, we are constrained to talk about the need to transform the existing forces and instruments of the law... and infuse them with new, humane and democratic values and personnel... The alternative of us throwing them out lock, stock and barrel is just not feasible[2] (cited in Cawthra 1993:167).

So began practical steps to ensure joint partnerships between police and structures of civil society, as well as oversight bodies of the South African Police. This was implemented initially through the National Peace Accord established in 1991. The Accord, through the peace secretariats it set in place, provided a forum for the police, together with local government, political parties and business, to ensure that trust and reconciliation were created between all parties; that rules were set for

2. This was the case for a number of reasons. Firstly, the ANC prior to the unbannings had focused on the transformation of the military and not the police, and hence there were no real trained cadres to move into the police institution. Secondly, there was a widely held belief that the forced expulsion of members of the SAP would lead to potential right wing backlash. Thirdly, it was posited that a disruption of the police service could be threatening to national internal security, and crime prevention. The wisdom of this choice has been questioned at length subsequently, and many are skeptical as to the extent of change that can be expected from long serving members of the South African Police.

conflict resolution, and where complaints against the police would be investigated. Ultimately, the aim of the police was to transform itself into a community-oriented service which worked cooperatively with communities, and was accountable to those it served. In the early days of conceptualisation many questions relating to the viability of community policing in the South African context were raised, most of which are relevant to the rest of Africa today. As Etiene Marais, one of the early proponents of community policing in South Africa, asked:

> Is community policing practical, indeed possible in the present South African context, characterised by deep divisions and a militarised policing philosophy? Is community policing such a good idea considering its inherent sophistication as a means of social control, in the absence of a representative state, or of a negotiated social accord? Can community policing be pursued, indeed promoted separate from a concern for and reality of the absence of real community empowerment in South Africa? (1992:6).

These questions remain important today in South Africa, four years after the change to democratic state rule. The internal cultural and organisational change required for a democratised police service is extremely difficult to achieve, and is still in the painful process of trial and implementation. And, communities are still uncertain about allowing the police to have greater involvement in their everyday lives as is the case with community policing. Furthermore, community policing may not always be the solution to all forms of social disorder; there are times when 'harder' policing styles may be more appropriate, but undoubtedly more contentious. But, changes toward community oriented policing have been legislated in a number of Acts which have come into effect since the national democratic elections in South Africa in April 1994. Of central importance is the Police Act of 1995. This Act 'provides for the establishment, organisation, regulation and control of the South African Police Service'. The Act states the following in its preamble:

> • ... there is a need to provide a police service throughout national territory to:

- ensure the safety and security of all persons in the national territory;
- uphold and safeguard the fundamental rights of every person as guaranteed by Chapter 3 of the Constitution;
- ensure cooperation between the Service and the communities it serves in combating crime;
- reflect respect for victims of crime and an understanding of their needs; and
- ensure effective civilian supervision over the Service.

The Act is historic in that it breaks with past Acts which focused on the Police Force as ensuring law and order, as well as in its quest for civilian oversight. This is in tandem with the most basic premises of community policing by any definition. The Act has major implications for a reformed and restructured police service in line with the implementation of a new and democratic government. This is crucial given the previous role the police have played in South Africa, and their resultant lack of legitimacy.

At a more practical level, since the 1994 elections, the Minister of Safety and Security, together with the National Commissioner, has set in motion a series of internal changes in the police service in line with new democratic governance. This involves increased civilianisation, transparency, accountability and representativity. The changes have included the appointment and promotion of black officers, relaxed legislation with regard to police unionisation, the removal of the military ranking system, attempts to root out corruption, and the creation of a single united police service.

While community policing represents a commitment to localised, accountable, and greater consensual practices, this does not preclude the need for more forceful policing. As was noted earlier, what distinguishes the police from other state agencies is their actual or threatened use of maximum force when necessary for public order. The notion that all policing should be consensual is simply not possible

where there is an unjust social order, and therefore continual potential for public disorder and protest. The only possible lasting solution to this is a complete and radical transformation of the social, political and economic order. This, however, is unlikely, particularly given the pervasive and global nature of capitalism. In the short and medium term, the only way to ensure public order may be through the use of 'harder' forms of policing, concurrently with what is seen to be the 'softer' version of community policing which is ultimately preferential.

Internationally, there has been a trend toward an increase in paramilitary policing (Kraska and Kapelar 1997). This has become the source of much debate within the policing literature, particularly given that police forces the world over are being restructured toward community or partnership policing (Moir and Moir 1992). The aim of community policing is to increase public participation, re-establish the legitimacy of the police, and develop more effective means of crime prevention and combat. This would include the mobilisation of public; consultation; problem solving as opposed to reactive policing; and adaptation to local conditions (Bayley 1996). The idea here is that the presence of the police itself as well as developing familiarity between police and the communities they serve, will lead to decreased crime. If this is the case, the need for forceful styles of policing is minimised, and police effectiveness is assured through their legitimacy, and supposed consensual activity. A complete reliance on community policing, however, assumes consenting and relatively harmonious communities.

In reality, particularly in Western democracies, there has been since the seventies, a decline in both state legitimacy, and also in public order (Jefferson 1990; Hall *et al.* 1978). In Africa, the problem is even more evident where many states lack any form of legitimacy and hegemonic practice, and where social conflict and public disorder are the prevailing conditions. This has serious consequences for appropriate, or effective styles of policing.

Across the world, increased inequality and social division has led to a decline in public confidence in the state as well as an upward turn in public protest, and in some instances, rioting (Reiner 1992; Keith 1993). Most countries, as a result have opted for some form of specialised police units to deal with public disorder, regardless of cause. So, police have concurrently had to deal with increasing their legitimacy and public esteem, while at the same time developing a tougher order enforcement approach. While community policing became mainstream, paramilitary or public order policing[3] was introduced and enhanced as a specialised form of policing. While to many this may appear contradictory in the light of other policing trends, Lord Scarman (one of the most influential police policy informants in the eighties), asserts that the relationship between these different forms of policing is not unproblematic or simple. He states that there is not a straightforward dichotomy between 'hard' and 'soft' policing. Instead, 'the crucial question is not the existence of 'hard' or 'militaristic' police strategy, but how the mix is decided, and by whom' (Reiner 1992).

But, it is important to highlight the key debate surrounding the usefulness and necessity of paramilitary or public order policing. Jefferson (1990), taking a Marxist approach, believes that paramilitary policing is the antithesis to more community oriented policing. He makes the point that paramilitary policing has the effect of creating more violence and antagonism between the police and communities. The use of force, he states, gives rise to collective violence rather than preventing or containing it. Secondly, the problem of contemporary societies need to be solved through programmes aimed at social justice,

---

3. Paramilitary police units are highly trained in the use of sophisticated weaponry, are subject to heirachical and militaristic command structures, and they operate in squadrons. These units are 'organised outside the conventional pattern of police and community controls, and with an emphasis on preparedness, swiftness and mobility, their behaviour had something of the military style and philosophy about it. Like an army unit, they were often armed; unlike the military they possessed the traditional power of the police arrest' (Reiner 1978:47).

not repression. Waddington (1991), on the other hand, believes that paramilitary policing should be welcomed. Such units, he proposes, prevent further violence and injury since they are trained specifically to deal swiftly and effectively with public disorder and social conflict, unlike the mainstream police who are neither adequately trained, nor equipped. Waddington asserts that so long as there is potential for public disorder in society, there is a need for paramilitary policing. Furthermore, he states, there is no real contradiction between the two forms of policing, since paramilitary policing has the potential to lay the foundation for real community policing which requires some degree of social order. These debates and choices have not escaped South Africa, and are pertinent to the rest of Africa facing crisis of rising crime, and social disorder. South Africa, it seems has followed the less 'politically correct' Waddington approach.

New legislation and new programmes for change are key indicators of the South African state's commitment to the development of a new and more accountable crime prevention police service. However, whether or not this mission is achievable is ultimately dependent on the members who constitute the police service itself. Perhaps the most important unit of the police to understand in this regard is the Public Order Police Unit. This unit is highly armed, extremely mobile, hierarchical, and continually trained in new technology for creating and maintaining public order (Waddington 1991; Kraska and Kappeler 1997). This unit, in many ways, is the backbone of any form of ordinary daily visible policing. Furthermore, public order units are the most visible policing units, given that they operate in squadrons, and are the 'strong arm of the law'.

In South Africa, the Public Order Police Unit (POPU) has its roots in a highly militarised structures (riot and mobile units), created after the 1976 Soweto Uprisings to crush any type of protest and state opposition. Formalised in 1992 as the Internal Stability Unit (ISU), this

police formation has been noted for its excessive use of force and unashamed abuse of any human rights. Indeed, it is this unit which has received the most attention in terms of human rights abuses throughout the process of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Subsequent to the democratic elections in 1994 in South Africa, there was much debate as to whether there should be a separate public order unit in the South African Police Service as a result of public condemnation of the ISU.

In 1995, it was decided that given the high levels of social disorder (crime and violence), such a unit was necessary but should be transformed to operate in terms of the new Constitution and Police Act. A new, highly centralised unit, the Public Order Police Unit (POPU), was hence constituted in 1995, in line with international trends with regard to public order policing (Interview with Captain Ally, Head of Public Order Police Training in KwaZulu Natal 1997). According to the Operational Commanders Course Manual for POPU, public order is defined as 'a state of security and tranquillity that is needed in society, and that should be pursued by the state in order to ensure constitutional rights and to benefit thus a harmonic development of society'. It is clear then, that public order policing has been bounded by the democratic transformations more broadly in South African society.

The Voice of the Police

Changes in legislation, public commitments to new forms of policing, and a political will for the transformation of policing are alone not adequate. The form that policing takes is ultimately dependent on those who carry out the task of social ordering, police members themselves.

The remainder of this paper will explore how members of the POPU in Durban view the transformation process, as well as their role

and potentialities in creating a secure and safe public order in South Africa at present[4].

To begin with, members of the POPU interviewed[5] were for the most part positive as to the democratic changes that have taken place, particularly with regard to their impact on the process of policing. The underlying assumption expressed was that the democratisation process has given rise to an increased legitimation of the police, and hence improved participation from community members with regard to preventing and combating crime, which they recognised as central to effective policing:

> We have gained a lot with democracy. We now have co-operation with the public. In particular, it is easier to get information. The community now see themselves as citizens; they can participate and have rights with regard to policing (Interview with Inspector Swart, Public Order Policing Unit, Durban, 1997).

> Policing has definitely been made easier with the new government. Every day the police are changing. We are now on a training course to reduce violent responses to the public. Policing has changed a lot. Police are less racist, and violent and the people don't fear the police as much anymore (Interview with Sergeant Govender, POPU, Durban, 1997).

In order to facilitate and ensure that public order policing in Durban is in line with the new legislation pertaining to policing, training for this unit has been reformulated. In this regard, Captain Ally, head of POPU training in KwaZulu Natal states that there is a move toward the kind of

---

4. These findings are based on interviews with 12 members of the POPU carried out in one of Durban's African townships, Umlazi, and also at the Public Order Police Training College in Chattsworth, Durban. Commentary will also be made based on participation 'in lectures, discussions, and a team building weekend away with public order police themselves during October and November 1997.

5. It should be noted that all of the members interviewed had been part of POPU and its former structures for some years. Hence, like much of the rest of the SAPS, the personnel of the POPU remains unchanged despite the transformation process in the police.

training that is internationally acceptable in public order policing.[6] While this police unit is still trained in sophisticated weapon usage, there is far more emphasis on the use of the tonfa, a baton (a martial arts weapon), and the now preferred weapon in the South African Police Service. The tonfa is a preferable weapon, since it is 'non intimidating' as compared with live ammunition previously used with little restraint by the SAP. Training now condemns the use of lethal weapons, stating that rubber bullets should be seen as the means for achieving maximum force. So in line with community based, consensual policing, there is an emphasis on minimum force, and on what is called the 'gradual police response' whereby the police response to crowd management is a gradual build up from negotiation, to the implementation of defensive methods, to the undertaking of offensive operations.

Furthermore, the new training programme is concerned with the development of 'soft skills'. In this regard, the POPU are being trained in negotiation, mediation, and facilitation skills. The aim here is to use force as an absolute last resort, and in line with democratic principles, to ensure that 'all people are able to express themselves in terms of protest. This involves a movement away from seeing protestors as a threat, and the protection of demonstrators and the people around them' (Interview with Captain Ally 1997). Captain Ally believes that this has to be viewed in the context of the police in a transforming society. He believes that the community should look to the police to bring about peace and order. The police, he asserts, are an important organisation since they are 'the only people who can enforce the constitution'.

The changes in public order policing in South Africa are reflected in 'Public Order Police Document on Crowd Management' which was made official in 1996. The document takes as its starting point the

---

6. New training programmes for public order policing has been developed together with officers from Belgium, Canada, England and the United States of America.

transformation process in South Africa, and the consequently necessary changes needed in public order policing:

> As a result of the vast socio-political changes that have occurred in South Africa over the past few years, new approaches, tactics and techniques must be developed to align the management of crowds with the democratic principles of transparency and accountability. Police actions must be reconciled with the Bill of Human Rights, and the statutory provisions pertaining to crowd management (1996:1).

In attaining this, the document asserts that the public order police should be fair and impartial, predictable and tolerant, allow all citizens to feel safe and secure in crowd situations, make clear analyses of the risks involved, operate on the basis of reliable information, ensure constant two way communication between the police and the public; and ensure that media participation is permitted and encouraged. And as the *POPU Operational Command Manual* stresses :

> The action of POP is aimed at the general wellbeing of society. POP will help make it possible to exercise the constitutional freedoms, support the harmonious relations between residents and the State, as well as the community. In order to achieve this goal, it is the purpose of all operational commanders to find the least violent solutions, and to use them to solve problems relating to the maintenance of public order' (1996:7).

All this represents a fundamental move away from a highly militarised, reactive and secretive unit, in line with general shifts to community oriented policing. These changes are based on liberal democratic models of public order policing. There has been no input from other African states in the transforming of this unit. In fact, according to Captain Ally, public order policing in South Africa is far ahead of that in other African countries which make use of the military for public order. This is because, says Ally, other African countries still see protest and demonstration as a threat.[7]

---

7. At present the SAPS are involved in training the police in Swaziland, Zimbabwe, and Botswana in crowd management.

A move towards new operational and attitudinal approaches is not simple to implement, however. This is particularly so, given that at present, almost all public order police were trained prior to the 1994 elections, and have become accustomed to the use of excessive force in creating an environment of repression and fear. Consequently, a number of police interviewed believed that increased concerns on the part of the state with ensuring fundamental human rights had created difficulties for police officers who felt compromised by the increased freedoms and protections afforded to citizens:

> The problem is that the new constitution has given the public too many rights and liberties. We are expected to treat criminals with respect. This is a problem. Before the police used to give a person one klap (slap) and they would then respect you. Now the criminal have more rights than the police (Interview with Sergeant Mbatho[8], POPU, Durban, 1997).

> At the moment the community has too much influence over what the police can and cannot do. The community tends to intervene in police functions. But it is easier to keep laws in a democratic country because you are not seen as an oppressor. If people support the government, they tend to support the police (Interview with Sergeant Hestermann, Public Order Police Unit, Durban, 1997).

These responses are hardly surprising. Police institutions are generally conservative, and are resistant to any change processes, particularly those which appear to threaten the power and autonomy of the police. According to Wisenand and Ferguson in this regard, 'the manner in which police departments have evolved has resulted in strongly supported traditional organisational structures and roles. The idea of sharing police responsibilities with citizens is difficult for many traditionalists to accept' (1973:261). Throughout the world, police organisational culture, the constant reference of police to police professionalism, and the concern with police technology and science

---

8. It is interesting to note this respondent is one of the few female police in the POPU.

are all important in understanding the real mistrust of police officers to community involvement in police activity.[9]

However, in general, hesitation with the transformation process did not prevent these police from recognising the need for a new community oriented police service, given the appalling history of the South African Police (in particular its paramilitary units[10]), and resultant poor community police relations:

> Community policing is something which we have to implement in South Africa. There is just no other way to build up trust in the police. And, there is a change in the police. Police are seeing it with community policing. In the past when we used to go out, the community would not even talk to us, partly due to intimidation from the police. So we have to enter into a partnership with the community in order for them to live in a crime free society. Community policing ensures that we are transparent in our dealings with the community. This is important because there has been so much corruption and abuse in the police (Interview with Captain in charge of operations in Provincial Public Order Policing, June 1996).

In reality, much of the support by these police is probably informed by popular 'police speak'. Apart from notions of accountability, transparency, and negotiation, there is little depth on the part of these police to what such a style and programme of policing would involve. At a more critical level, support for community oriented policing may in many instances be instrumental: police are aware that their job security and promotion is dependent on their performance in relation to new police policy. Indeed, these police are aware that the move to community oriented policing is crucial, given the previous role the

---

9. In the South African case, where levels of violent crime are said to be the highest in the world outside of countries at war, it is hardly surprising that members of the South African Police Service believe it necessary to present themselves as both forceful and independent.

10. The terms paramilitary and public order policing are used interchangeably as is the case in much of the literature concerned with these polices structures. This is not unproblematic, but will not be dealt with here.

police have played in South Africa in enforcing the social engineering of apartheid (Cawthra 1993), and the complete lack of confidence of the public in the police (Lee and Klippen 1997).

The police in KwaZulu Natal have a particularly bad track record. In this region of South Africa, more than anywhere else, the police have been accused of being partisan (particularly toward Inkatha), and even active in fuelling what many have termed a civil war in the province. As Nicholas Claude has stated, 'for over a decade the role of the old South African Police and the KwaZulu Natal Police in encouraging or fermenting political violence in KwaZulu Natal has been the subject of heated dispute and speculation — and the amalgamation of both these forces into the SAPS has not ended this debate' (1997:8).

While the police are compelled by new legislation, 'police speak', and a desperate need to change their image, it seems that there is also a genuine concern with finding appropriate ways of reducing violence in the province. Interestingly, and perhaps surprisingly, police interviewed believed that the use of force will not resolve the high levels of violent conflict in KwaZulu Natal. When asked about the most appropriate form of policing for this province, almost all believed that some type of 'community policing' was the only solution:

> Community policing is the only appropriate kind of policing in KZN. If you use force, people are aggressive. There is no solution in force. You have to speak to people, and maybe they can understand (Interview with Sergeant Mbatho, POPU, Durban, 1997).

> The way to solving problems in KZN is to know the background of the situation. Why did it happen and when did this thing start? The solution cannot be arrests and force. The police should be a communicator. They need to bring people together to sort out their problems. More forceful solutions will not help. Arrests are often useless because there are always other people behind the scenes operating (Interview with Sergeant Malimela, POPU, Durban, 1997).

Of course, the constant knowledge by communities that the police (especially the public order police) can always resort to forceful means, in itself builds compliance. For the police interviewed this interpreted itself into an understanding that the most effective mechanism of police intervention is visible police presence as opposed to raw police force. These police stressed the need for police patrols as the key to good policing. This is in tandem with most current writing on community policing (Bayley 1996). These police were well aware of the limitations of their organisation in dealing with high levels of political violence, particularly when this is sporadic and unpredictable:

> There is very little the police can do to stop violence in an area. The police can never do this since they cannot be everywhere at the same time. So, the effectiveness of the police is dependent on the information that the police have which has to come from the community. The best that the police can do is to bring together key people and leaders to speak to one another (Interview with Inspector Swart, POPU, Durban, 1997.

> The only way to reduce violence in KZN is to get people to talk to one another. POPU will not be able to stop violence on their own. So, bringing in the POPU is a temporary solution. The lasting solution is negotiation. POPU has started a process of negotiation in places like Richmond[11] since anything will not be lasting (Interview with Captain Ally, POPU, Durban, 1997).

Apart from the threat of force which the police obviously represent, police interviewed recognised that identifiable instigators of violence should be arrested to try to avoid further incidences of social disorder. As Sergeant Hestermann stated, 'criminal elements should be 'taken

---

11. Richmond is an area in the Midlands of KZN, and has been the site of continuous violence and warlordism. This area has been particularly conflictive since the ANC expelled one of its members (a notable warlord in the area) from the party in April 1997. Since then 'a total of 45 people have been killed in political violence', and there have been some concerns from residents that the security police have been involved in these killings *Daily News* (5 November 1997). The POPU presently have a permanent presence in Richmond, and there have even been calls by politicians for a state of emergency in the area.

out' by the police', as a way of preventing further problems. What is at root here is that in order to create public order and stability, the police are required at times to make use of their special powers to curtail the liberties of citizens.

The use of such powers by the police is one clear mechanism for asserting state authority, and consequently rebuilding confidence in the state. However, this has to be done where the public are convinced that the police are acting in the interest of the broader collective security and social stability. As Bayley (1996) rightly asserts, ultimately the modern police play two major roles — authoritative intervention and symbolic justice. Authoritative justice is the attempt to restore order without looking at resolving the causes for disorder. Symbolic justice on the other hand is the enforcement of law; 'its purpose is demonstrative, to show offenders and public that a regime of law exists' (1996:34).

Despite the clear advantages of using public order policing, there has been some concern internationally with the increase of paramilitary type policing. Jefferson (1990), for example, believes that such police units simply serve the purpose of creating further disorder, owing to their potential for the use of excessive force, their paramilitary training, and the lack of individual discretion because of the emphasis on squadron work. All this, according to Jefferson, means that public order policing tends to amplify the potential for violence and disorder, and flies in the face of consensual, minimum force policing (in particular community policing). However, Kraska and Kappeler argue that in fact, there are perhaps 'interconnections and possible symbiotic relationships' (1997:5) between the militarisation of the police and community policing. They argue that public order or paramilitary policing has the potential to create a social environment which allows for the practice of community policing. But they make the important point that this has to be seen in the light of the larger role of police

'nationally and internationally in wielding and maintaining state power' (1997:14).

Waddington (1991) explains why this is the case. Paramilitary units, he says, have a command which is hierarchical, and a high degree of discipline. They are highly mobile and hence more able to use force than would a local civil police unit who are enmeshed in local dynamics. Paramilitary forces hence tend almost invariably to be instruments of the central government, sent wherever they are needed to suppress disorder or revolt' (1991:127). In South Africa, too, the POPU is a centralised unit whose activities have to be agreed by the State President. And, much as one may feel discomfort with a paramilitary unit such as POPU (both given its history and its access to force), states require social order to govern effectively, though of course this means, in part, a reinforcement of social injustice.

Just as democracy needs a context of social stability, so too does localised, democratic policing require a context of relative order. Units such as POPU 'dedicated to public order duties would allow the civil police to continue to 'police by consent' in the traditional manner' (Waddington 1991:152). While Waddington writes from an essentially British experience, there is much value in his assertion that 'so long as the threat of serious disorder exists and it remains the duty of the police (as opposed to some other body) to suppress it, paramilitarism will have some value' (1991:154). This somewhat uncomfortable thought is one which should be seriously debated and considered in the African context where any form of delivery and intervention is made virtually impossible by the constant threat of or actual disorder.

Members of the Public Order Police Unit in Durban were adamant that their unit was vital in South Africa at present. This is particularly the case given the massive ineffectiveness of ordinary visible policing by the South African Police Service at present:

> Public order policing is definitely necessary. Normal stations are not equipped to deal with crime and violence and public gatherings. Station manpower is low, and public order police have greater numbers of people with greater training. Ultimately, of course, the show of force is also important (Interview with Sergeant Hestermann, POPU, Durban, 1997).

> Public order policing in South Africa can only be phased out when visible policing does what it should do. Presently the secondary function of the POPU (those outside of public order work such as crime prevention) are taking a greater proportion of our time. Policing in most local areas is not up to standard. POPU has been called in to fill the gap. We are basically a support structure which is more effective because of its manpower and equipment (Interview with Captain Ally, POPU head of training in KZN, 1997).

Highly trained, team oriented, and well equipped units such as the POPU, it seems, are used as temporary measures for all policing functions rather than police forces that are ill equipped at the local level to deal with high levels of crime and disorder. And so long as such units are bound by principles of accountability, consultation, negotiation, and the gradual police response, they could be a short term solution to crises in policing institutions.

But, what the KZN experience makes very clear is that while policing is necessary in contexts of social disorder and upheaval, such contexts make policing extremely difficult, particularly community oriented policing of any form. In KZN the continual political violence and intolerance in the province is very daunting. Police, if they are in any way to resolve conflict, are always agents between conflicting parties:

> Policing is extremely tiring in this province due to the violence. Anything the police do is used by political parties for their own gain. At every political platform, politicians make use of such opportunities (Interview with an Inspector at Umlazi Public Order Policing, June 1996).

Police officers were concerned that political parties in KZN tended to use the police as scapegoats at every turn. And indeed, the violence, as

well as accusations (true or false) of police partiality, makes any form of community consultation and participation very difficult. In this context, the show of force (even if symbolic) often appears as an easy solution, and it is consequently surprising that the public order police interviewed did not stress this more. Policing in conflict-ridden environments is extremely complex and over determined by political allegiance and identity.

In addition, police interviewed felt that ultimately they are 'objects' of the ruling party:

> We were taught that to be a true policeman, we have to be apolitical. But, in reality police have to be loyal to the government of the day. In the past we were tarnished by the laws we had to carry out. Today we have to carry out the laws of the ANC. Now, for example, we have a problem of trying to end the carrying of traditional weapons and the IFP then accuse us of being puppets of the ANC. It is very sensitive (Interview with Captain in charge of operations in Public Order Policing, 1996).

This statement needs to be seen in the context of evidence of police involvement in attacks on the UDF/ANC by Inkatha supporters in the past. Cawthra, in illustrating this point, alludes to one incident in a part of KZN:

> In Mpumalanga, where more than 1,000 homes had been devastated in 1987, Inkatha launched a devastating attack on 27 November last year, reportedly with the support of the SAP and the KwaZulu police and the special constables who had been brought into the townships some months earlier... (1993:121).

More recently, there have been allegations that the police were at best incompetent in not intervening in recent massacres of ANC supporters. For example, on Christmas day 1995, 19 people were killed, 23 injured and 80 homes destroyed at Shobashobane, an ANC stronghold, by men from an IFP settlement. Police were accused of failing to protect the community of Shobashobane, despite warnings of the attack beforehand (*Natal Witness*, 27 December 1995). Even more alarming is the fact that there was absolutely no police presence before or during

the massacre, despite the massacre being in full view of the nearby Izinglolweni police station. But of most concern is that amongst those arrested for involvement in the massacre, were four policemen (Information from an informal interview with a senior member of the Network for Independent Monitors, June 1996).

Despite the difficulties confronting any policing in this province, as Wifried Scharf states, 'communities need some form of protection from crime[12], and there has to be some agency that has the right to use legitimate force when necessary' (1994:7). The role of the state police as both peace keepers and law enforcers is particularly relevant in KZN where the numbers of people killed in politically related violence is alarmingly high, and has been so for years. The estimated deaths in KwaZulu Natal in politically related violence between 1990 and 1993 is according to Morrell (1997) approximately 10,000. According to a researcher at the Human Rights Commission in KZN, 338 people died in politically related incidents in May 1994 alone. While these numbers have dropped significantly in the past two years, the same source recorded 40 deaths of a similar nature in May 1996. The paramilitary police units in all their different forms have been called in throughout to try to create some form of public order. In recent years, this responsibility has fallen primarily on the POPU (sometimes together with the military). The police have come to be recognised as essential to the project of peace and stability of the new government.

Even strong critics of the South African Police Service in KZN agree that the state police are key role players in bringing an end to violence and disorder. Hence, with the advent of local elections on 26 June 1996, 30,000 police (mainly POPU) and 2,300 extra soldiers were deployed in the province (*Sunday Times,* 23 June 1996). And Bheki

---

12. The assumption here is that politically motivated violence, in particular murder, is in most instances criminal. In South Africa, there is often a somewhat problematic distinction posed between criminal and political violence.

Cele, the ANC's Safety and Security spokesperson in KZN, who earlier that same year proclaimed that the police were failing to secure peace in the province (*Daily News*, 3 April 1996), hailed the initiative to increase the security forces over the election period. Furthermore, he endorsed their role as central to social stability, stating on behalf of the ANC that '[they] welcomed the measures taken by the security forces, but they were a bit too late'. He stated that 'if the security forces had been there earlier we would have stabilised areas such as the Donnybrook corridor in the Midlands where people are still dying' (*Sunday Times*, 23 June 1996).

Cele's view is shared by South African historian Bill Freund, who in speaking of the destructive nature of violence in KwaZulu Natal, states that:

> For the state, even with its far more measured view of the ANC since February 1990, an agenda for the social and economic reconstruction of South Africa exists in broad outline. There is a potential advantage in making sure no African political groupings can deliver on a society alternative to the structures being forged at present. A situation of chaos in which only the police and army can intervene on behalf of the problems of ordinary people is thus not necessarily undesirable...the collapse of order itself cries out for a new political solution...which is being contested (1997:190).

In the absence of an adequately equipped and competent police service, public order policing will be called upon to act decisively in such situations to allow for a climate of relative tranquillity necessary for reform and democratisation. Community policing, concurrently with some form of paramilitary policing, at least in the short term is a necessary component of social and political reality in South Africa. Unfortunately, as elsewhere in the world, public order policing will be depended upon not only to deal with threats to public disorder in the form of protest and demonstration and collective action, but also in the more secondary function of crime combating and prevention.

Most recently in KZN, for example, the POPU was active in an operation to bring the violent and disorderly taxi industry to order. On 30 October 1997, the POPU were involved in setting up roadblocks to recover millions of rands in traffic fines owed by taxi drivers. In a telling statement related to this event, POPU spokesperson Captain Trevor Reddy stated that 'we want to send a clear message that nobody is above the law, as has been the perception of the public regarding taxis' (*Daily News* 30 October 1997). More broadly, POPU is involved in a range of other crime combating activities in South Africa that are not traditionally their function, such as drug syndicate raids, and assisting with identifying high profile crimes in local community policing forums.

But no matter how confident the police feel about their ability to combat everyday crime (and all the POPU members interviewed were), there is simply no way the police will be able to do this. Internationally there is a recognition that police in fact do worst what most people think they should be doing — crime combating and prevention (Bayley and Shearing 1996). Apart from the history and peculiarities of the South African police, the police simply cannot be everywhere all the time. More important still, the problems that give rise to criminal activity are often completely outside the control of the police. In terms of threats to public order, particularly those caused by politically related violence, the POPU members are absolutely accurate that they can best play a role through their visible presence and their theoretical monopoly of the use of state force. However, even if limited in its effects, the police do have a role as both law enforcers and peace officers. In the South African case, the POPU may, perhaps unfortunately, be best placed to carry out these functions, given their organisational capabilities and training. Their effectiveness and legitimacy, however, is entirely dependent on police accountability, consultation with communities, and institutionalised civilian oversight.

Conclusion

The concern with developing democracy in Africa has to be grounded in an attempt to ensure state delivery as well as security and stability to citizens. South Africa, exceptional as it may be in some regards, can provide a case study for how this can begin to be contemplated. Early in the transformation process in South Africa, it was recognised that the quest for democracy is rendered extremely difficult where there is social disorder and conflict. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the state to ensure peace and stability within its governing boundaries. If states are to posit that they are democratic, the fundamental human right of safety has to become a priority. The state police are a key agency for developing this, despite their controversial colonial and post-colonial history, as well as internal crises pertaining to corruption, abuse and inefficiency.

The police as the public face of the state, and ideally as servants of the public, have the potential to restore some degree of public order through an enforcement of the law, as well as through engaging in peace keeping activities. The potential use of force by the state police symbolises the authority of the state, which is hugely lacking in the African context. Of course, for the state to have authority, it must have public support and consent. There are numerous variables which determine this that are beyond the scope of this paper. But there is no doubt that state democratisation cannot become a reality without transformed, accountable police forces; the two processes are inextricable from one another, and need to take place concurrently.

The lack of real policing structures in Africa, together with high levels of social disorder and conflict mean that in the interim public order policing structures which are highly mobile, highly trained, and equipped with knowledge of sophisticated weapon usage may be a solution to the inappropriate use of the military in internal security issues. However, as in the case of KwaZulu Natal, such policing

structures must be bound by principles of accountability, consultation, minimum force, and civilian oversight, in line with democratisation moves in policing internationally. The state police, as has been shown above, cannot solve problems of conflict and crime, but they are central to this project. Their mission is one which states in Africa can no longer avoid: to help balance the concern for collective security and individual freedom. Exactly how this is to be done needs to be a point of discussion for African academics and intellectuals.

Bibliography

Ake C., 1991, 'Rethinking African Democracy' in *Journal of Democracy*, Vol 2, No 1.

Anderson D. and Killingray D., 1991, 'Consent, Coercion and Colonial Control: Policing the Empire, 1830-1940' in D. Anderson and D. Killingray (ed) *Policing the Empire: Government, Authority and Control, 1830-1940*, Great Britain.

Bayley D., 1996, *Police for the Future*, New York, Oxford University Press.

Bittner E., 1990, *Aspects of Police Work*, USA, Northeastern University Press.

Braithwaite J., 1992, 'Good and Bad Police Services and How to Pick Them' in M. Moir and H. Eijkman (ed) *Policing Australia: Old Issues, New Perspectives*, Melbourne, MacMillan Press.

Brogden M., 1996, 'The Indigenisation of Policing in South Africa' in Marenin O., *Policing Change, Changing Police*, New York, Garland Publishing.

Brown M., 1988, *Working the Street, Police Discretion and the Dilemmas of Reform*, New York, Russel Sage Foundation.

Cawthra G., 1993, *Policing South Africa: The South African Police and the Transition from Apartheid*, London, Zed Books.

Chazan N., et al (ed), 1988, *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa*, Colorado, Lynne Reiner Publishers.

Chevigny P., 1996, 'Changing Control of Police Violence in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, Brazil' in Marenin O. (ed), *Policing Change, Changing Police*, New York, Garland Publishing.

Claude N., 1997, 'The Police We Deserve' in *KwaZulu Natal Briefing*, No. 8.

Della Porta D., 1993, 'Police Operational Practice and Knowledge: A Comparative Research on the Police in Contemporary Europe', Research Report for European University Institute.

Della Porta D., 1996, 'Social Movements and the State: Thoughts on the Policing of Protest', to be published in McAdam D., McCarthy T., and Zald M., *The Dynamics of Social Movements*, Cambridge University Press.

Della Porta D., 1995, 'Police Knowledge and Public Order: Some Reflections on the Italian Case', paper prepared for presentation at the international workshop on 'The policing of mass demonstrations in contemporary democracies', Robert Schurman Centre, European University Institute.

Della Porta D., Pizzorno A., and Szakolezai A., 1992, 'Police Operational Practices and Knowledge: A Comparative Research on the Police in Contemporary Europe', Report to European University Institute.

Emsley C., 1983, *Policing and its Context 1750-1870*, London, MacMillan Press.

Fielding N., 1991, *The Police and Social Conflict*, London, Athlone Press.

Freund B., 1996, 'The Violence in Natal' in Morrell R. (ed) Political Economy and Identities in KwaZulu Natal, Natal, Indicator Press.

Goodhew D., 1993, 'The People's Police Force: Communal Policing Initiatives in the Western Areas of Johannesburg, circa 1930-1962' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol 19, No 3.

Greenhill N., 1981, 'Professionalism in the Police Service' in Pope D. and Weiner N. (eds) *Modern Policing*, London, Croom Helm.

Grundlingh A., 1991, 'Policing, Prosecution and the Law in Colonial Kenya' in D. Anderson and D. Kliingray (ed).

Honwana J., 1997, 'Civil Military Relations in the Transition to Democracy: The Case of Mozambique' paper presented at CODESRIA Governance Institute on the Political Economy of Conflicts in Africa, Dakar, August.

Hall S. *et al.*, 1978, *Policing the Crisis:Mugging, the State, and Law and Order*, London, MaMillan Press.

Hutchful E., 1995, 'Militarism and Problems of Democratic Transition' CODESRIA 8th General Assembly on 'Crises, Conflicts and Transformations: Responses and Perspectives', 26 June-2 July.

Johnson, D., 1991, 'From Miitary to Tribal Police: Policing in the Upper Nile Province of Sudan' in Anderson D. and Killigray D. (ed), *Policing the Empire*.

Keith M., 1993, *Race, Riots and Policing: Lore and Disorder in a Multi-Racist Society*, London: University of College London.

Killingray D., 1991, 'Guarding the Extending Frontier: Policing the Gold Coast, 1865-1913', in Anderson D. and Killingray D. (ed).

Klein M., 1992, 'Back to Democracy: Presidential Address to the 1991 Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association' In *African Studies Review*, Vol 35, No.3, December 1992.

Koulibaly M., 1997, 'Economic Challenges, African Conflicts, and International Relations', paper presented at CODESRIA seminar on the Political Economy of Conflict in Africa, Dakar.

Kraska P. and Kappelar V., 1997, 'Militarising American Police: The Rise and Normalisation of Paramilitary Units' in *Social Problems,* Vol. 44, No 1, February 1997.

Laasko L. and Olukoshi A., 1996, 'The Crisis of the Post-Colonial Project in Africa' in Laasko L. and Adebayo O. (ed) (1995), *Challenges to the Nation State in Africa,* Sweden, *Nordiska Afrikanstitutet.*

Lee R. and Klippen J., 1997, 'The Human Factor: Public Confidence and Crime Prevention' in *Indicator Crime and Conflict,* No. 8.

Marais E., 1992, 'Report of the Community Policing Working Group', Paper presented to the Centre for Criminal Justice conference on Policing in the New South Africa, Dubran.

Marenin O., 1996, *Policing Change, Changing Police,* New York, Garland Publishing.

Marks M., 1996, 'New Motives, New Methods: Policing in KwaZulu Natal', *Indicator Crime and Conflict,* No.6.

Mamdani M., 1995, 'Making Sense of the Political Impasse in South Africa' at Codesria General Assembly, Dakar, June 26 — July 2.

Mbaku J. and Kimenyi M., 1995, 'Rent Seeking and Policing in Africa' in The *Indian Journal of Social Science,* Vol. 8, No.3.

Mbembe A., 1992, 'The Banality of Power and the Aesthetics of Vulgarity in the Postcolony' in *Public Culture,* Vol. 4, No.2.

McConville M. and Shepherd D., 1992, *Watching Police, Watching Communities,* London, Routledge.

Mainwaring-White S., 1983, *The Policing Revolution: Police Technology, Democracy and Liberty in Britain,* Great Britain, The Harvester Press.

Moir M. and Eijkman H. (ed), 1992, *Policing Australia: Old Issues,* New Perspectives, Melbourne, MacMillan, Press.

Moir P. and Moir M., 1992, 'Community Policing and the Role of Community Consultation' in Moir M. and Eijkman H. (ed), *Policing Australia: Old Issues, New Perspectives,* Melbourne, MacMillan Press.

Monga C., 1995, 'Civil Society and Democratisation in Francophone Africa' in *Journal for Modern African Studies,* Vol. 33, No. 3.

Morrell R., 1996, 'Preface' in Morrell R. (ed), *Political Economy and Identities in KwaZulu Natal,* Natal, Indicator Press.

Morris M. and D. Hindson, 1992, 'South Africa: Political Violence, Reform and Reconstruction' in *Review of African Political Economy,* No. 53.

Nasson B., 1991, 'Bobbies to Boers: Police, People and Social Control in Cape Town' D. Anderson and D. Killingray (ed).

Obi C., 1997a, 'Oil, Environmental Conflict and National Security in Nigeria: Ramifications of the Ecology-Security Nexus for Sub-Regional Peace' Presented to the Programme in *Arms Control Disarmament, and International Security*, University of Illinois, January.

Obi C., 1997b, 'Resources, Population and Conflicts: Two African Case Studies', paper presented at CODESRIA Governance Institute on The political Economy of conflicts in Africa, Dakar, August

Perouse de Montclas M.A., 1997, 'Faut-il supprimer les polices en Afrique?' in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, 2 août.

Pike M., 1985, *The Principles of Policing*, London, MacMillan Press.

Police Act, 1995, Republic of South Africa, *Government Gazette*.

Reiner R., 1992, *The Politics of Policing*, New York, Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Pope D., and Weiner N. (eds), 1981, *Modern Policing*, London, Croom Helm.

Sadiq R., 1995, 'Rethinking Development Strategy in Africa: The Imperatives and Prospects of Human Centred Development' in *African Development Review*, December.

Sall E. and Sallah H., 1995,'The Military and the Crisis of Governance: The Gambian Case' at CODESRIA General Assembly on Conflicts and Transitions, June 26-July 2.

Scharf W., Ferndale C., and Malekane L., 1994, 'From Police Station to Community Peace Centre — A New Vision for South African Policing', Unpublished paper, Institute for Criminology, University of Cape Town.

Shaidi L., 1989, 'Crime, Justice and Politics in Contemporary Tanzania: State Power in an Underdeveloped Social Formation' in *International Journal of the Sociology of Law*, No. 17.

Shaw M., 1994, 'Point of Order: Policing the Transition' in Friedman S. and Atkinson D. (ed) *South African Review 7: The Small Miracle; South Africa's Negotiated Settlement*, Johannesburg, Raven Press.

Shaw M., 1996, 'Buying Time? Vigilante Action, Crime Control and State Responses', *Indicator Crime and Conflict*, No. 6.

Shearing S., 1981, 'Subterranean Processes in the Maintanance of Power' in *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, Vol. 18, No. 3.

Shearing S. and Brogden M., 1993, *Policing for a New South Africa*, London, Routledge.

ShearingC., 1994,'Reinventing Policing: Policing as Governance',*Imbizo*, No. 1, April.

Shearing C., 1996, 'Reinventing Policing: Policing as Governance' in Marenin O. (ed) Policing Change, Changing Police, New York, Garland Publishing.

Shelley L., 1996, 'Post-Soviet Policing: An Historical Perspective' in Marenin O. (ed) Policing Change, Changing Police, New York, Garland Publishing.

Smit B. and Botha C., 1990, 'Democracy and Policing: An Introduction to Paradox' in ACTA Criminologica, Vol. 3, No. 1.

Stanley W., 1996, 'International Tutelage and Domestic Political Will: Building a New Civilian Police Force in El Salvador' in O. Marenin (ed) *Policing Change, Changing Police,* New York, Garland Publishing.

Van Hoek F. and Bossuyt J., 1993 'Democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Search for a New Industrial Set Up' in *African Development Review,* June.

Waddington P., 1991, *The Strong Arm of the Law: Armed and Public Order Policing,* Oxford, Clarendon Press.

Whisenand P., and Ferguson F., 1973, *The Managing of Police Organisations,* California, Prentice Hall.

Zedwe B., 1993, 'The Military and Militarism in Africa: The Case of Ethiopia', Paper presented at CODESRIA Seminar on 'The Military and Miltarism in Africa', Accra, April.

Publications Received

A Current Bibliography on African Affairs, Vol. 28, No. 4, 1997.

Africa Quarterly, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, 1997, Vol. 37, Nos. 1 & 2.

Africa Quarterly, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, 1997, Vol. 37, Nos. 3 & 4.

Africa Quarterly, Vol. 38, No. 1, Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

Africa Quarterly, Vol. 38, No. 2, 1998, Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

Africa Quarterly, Vol. 38, No. 3, 1998, Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

Agriculture et Développment Rural, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1997.

Capital and Class, Summer 1998/65.

Christian Camelian, 1996, *L'Economie à la recherche du développement : Crise d'une théorie, violence d'une Pratique*, PUF, Paris.

Christine et Michel Etchepare, 1998, *Sida en Afrique : Analyse par pays*, ENDA, Dakar

Eva Evers Research, 1997, *Transforming Female Identities: Women's Organizational Forms in West Africa*, Seminar Proceedings, No. 31, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.

Global Change: JGBP Report 41: The Miambo Network: Framework for a Terrestrial Transeit Study of Land-Use and Land-Cover Change in the Miambo Econptems of Central Africa, 1997.

Global Change: JGBP Report 42: International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme: the Kalahari Transect: Research on Global Change and Sustainable Development in Southern Africa, 1997.

Gunilla Andrae and Bjorn Beckman, 1998, *Union Power in the Nigerian Textile Industry, Labour Regime and Adjustment*.

IDS, 1996, *Agriculture Sector Management Reform and Policy Analysis: The Kenyan Case*, Occasional Paper No. 63, June.

Index on Consorship 3/1997, Writers and Scholars International Ltd, Lancaster house, London.

Index on Consorship, 1st / 1998, SPIC.

Index on Consorship, 2nd/1998, 'Widow: Life after Death'.

Index on Consorship, 4/1998.

Index on Consorship, 6/97, Privacy: The Princess and us.

Index on Consorship, No. 5/98, 'The Full Cover Up'.

Jean-Claude Muller, 1998, *Jeux de miroirs : Structures Politiques du Haut plateau Nigérien*, Cahiers de l'Homme, Ethnologie, Géographie, Linguistique.

Jerker Carlsson, Gloria Somolekae and Nicolas van de Walle, 1997, *Foreign Aid in Africa. Learning from Country Experiences*, Uppsala, Nordiska, Africa Institutet.

Le Organizzazioni Interzionali Dei Paesi in Via Di Sviluppo, 1998 by Prero Pernnetla, Vol. Primo, Cacucci Editore.

Lennart Wohlgemuth, Jerker Carlson, Henock Kiple, 19998, *Institution Building and Leadership in Africa*, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala.

Les Assises Francophones de la Formation Professionnelle et Technique, 1998, Dossier documentaire, document préparé par l'Agence de la Francophonie, Mai.

Patrick O. Alila, Kabiru Kinyanjui, Gathenu Wanjohi, 1993, *Rural Landlessness in Kenya*, Institute for Development Studies, University of Nairobi, Occasional Paper, No. 57

Pekka Seppälä and Bertha Koda (ed) 1998, *The Making of a Periphery*, Nordika Afrikainstitutet

Peter M. Lewis, et al., 1998, Stabilizing, Nigeria, Sanctions Inventines and Support for Civil Society, Center for Preventive Action.

Peter Porter and Harriet Harvey Wood, (eds) 1997, Banned Poetry, Index on Consorship, No. 5, 1997.

Policy Consensus Strategy Vacuum: A Pan-African Vision for the 21st Century, Vijay S. Makhan.

POLIS: Revue camerounaise de science politique : Enjeux stratégique et gestion des crises en Afrique. Sous la direction de D. Bach et L. Sindjoun, Publication du groupe de Recherches administratives, Politiques et sociales, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1997.

Politick und Gesellshapt, International Politics and Society, 3/97.

Race & Class, 1998, Blaxploitation and the Ninepresentation of Liberation, by Cedric J. Robinson, Special Issue on Representation and Reclamation.

Revue Sénégalaise de Sociologie, 1997, Université Gaston Berger de Saint-Louis, No. 1, Janvier

Rex Honey and Stanley Okafor, 1998, Hometown Association, Indigenous Knowledge and Development in Nigeria. Studies in Indegenous Knowledge and Development.

'Russia and the Muslim World': *Bulletin of Analytical Reference Information*, No. 11, 1993.

Shamin Meer, ed., 1998, *Women Speak Reflections on our Struggle, 1982-1997*, Kwela books & Oxfam UB in association with SPEAK, 167 pages.

Shanti George, 1997, *Third World Professionals and Development*, London, New Delhi, Thousand Oak, Sage Publications.

Southern African Quarterly, Sidelines, Confessions of a Coup Plotter, 1998, Johannesburg.

Southern African Quarterly, Sidelines, Summer 1998, Rosebank, Johannesburg.

Sylvia Tamale, 1998, *When Hens Begin to Crow: Gender and Parliamentary Politics in Uganda*, Westview Press, A member of the Persens Book Group.

The *African Studies Newsletter*, 1998, Centre of African Studies, the University of Edinburg.

The Dar Graduate, Journal of the University of Dar es Salaam Convocation, Vol. 2, Special Issue 1995-1996, December.

The INASP Directory of Organisations and Networks in Rural Development: Africa, ICSU, 1998, International Network for the Availability for Scientific Publications (INASP)

Twice Humanity, edited by Amelie Berger, 1998, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala.

Index to *Africa Development*
Vol. XXIII, Nos. 1-4, 1998

Notes to Contributors

Manuscripts submitted to *Africa Development* should be typed double-spaced and in two (2) copies. A diskette (3 1/2"), preferably MS Dos compatible, along with the hard copies is required. Avoid excessive formatting of the text. Camera-ready copies of maps, charts graphs are required as well as the data used in plotting the charts and graphs. Please use the Harvard Reference System (author - date) for bibliographic referencing, e.g.:

> It is interesting to note that... the word for 'tribe' does not exist in indigenous languages of South Africa (Mafeje 1971:254).

N.B.: It is essential that the bibliography lists every work cited by you in the text.

An abstract of 150 to 200 words stating the main research problem, major findings and conclusions should be sent with the articles for translation into English or French. Articles that do not follow this format will have their processing delayed.

Authors should indicate their full name, address, their academic status and their current institutional affiliation. This should appear on a separate covering page since manuscripts will be sent out anonymously to outside readers. Manuscripts will not be returned to the authors.

Articles submitted to *Africa Development* should be original contributions and should not be under consideration by another publication at the same time. If an article is under consideration by another publication the author should inform the editor at the time of submission.

Authors are entitled, free of charge, to two copies of the issue in which their article appears and 20 off-prints of their article.

Avis aux auteurs

Les manuscrits soumis à *Afrique et Développement* devront être dactylographi,s en double interligne fournis en deux (2) exemplaires. Une disquette de 3 1/2 pouces de préférence compatible MS Dos, accompagnée du manuscrit est exigée. Eviter un formatage excessif du texte. Les cartes, diagrammes et graphiques devront être envoyés sous forme de prêt-à-photographier. Les données utilisées pour tracer les diagrammes et graphiques devront également nous parvenir. Nous vous prions d'utiliser le système de référence de Harvard (auteur - date) pour ce qui est des références bibliographiques; par exemple:

> Il est intéressant de noter que... le mot pour "tribu" n'existe pas dans les langues indigènes d'Afrique du Sud (Mafeje 1971:254).

N.B.: La bibliographie doit répertorier tous les travaux cités dans le corps du texte par l'auteur.

Un résumé de 150 à 200 mots indiquant le problème fondamental de recherche ainsi que les principaux résultats et conclusions doit accompagner les articles pour des fins de traduction en anglais ou en français. Les articles ne se conformant pas à ce format verront leur traitement rallongé.

Les auteurs doivent indiquer leur nom au complet, leur adresse, leur situation académique ainsi que leur rattachement institutionnel actuel. Ces informations doivent figurer sur une feuille à part puisque les articles seront envoyés aux arbitres à l'extérieur dans l'anonymat. Les manuscrits ne seront pas retournés aux auteurs.

Les articles soumis à *Afrique et Développement* ne doivent pas l'être à d'autres périodiques au même moment et doivent être une contribution originale. Si un article était déjà soumis à un autre périodique, l'auteur devra en informer le Rédacteur en Chef.

Les auteurs reçoivent gratuitement deux exemplaires du numéro dans lequel leur article est publié ainsi que 20 tirés-à-part de leur article.

Contents / Sommaire