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**Opening Remarks: 23rd Annual Spring Symposium of the Center for African Studies
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
March 29, 1996**

Paul:

On behalf of the Center for African Studies, I would like to warmly welcome you all to the 23rd Annual Spring Symposium, although we don't seem to be having much of a spring. This symposium, like the others before it, has been organized by individual core faculty of the Center working in conjunction with the staff from the Center. It is appropriate for me at this juncture, therefore, to introduce the people who conceived and organized the symposium. Besides myself, the other two are Professors Merle Bowen and Ezekiel Kalipeni.

Merle Bowen.....

Ezekiel Kalipeni.....

After long deliberations and carefully looking at past symposia, we decided on this year's theme: *Space, Culture and Society in Africa*. The theme arose out of our conviction that the rapid and complex changes that Africa is undergoing cannot be adequately explained by the conventional and narrowly-focused disciplinary perspectives and approaches. The case for devising more complex and integrated inter-disciplinary paradigms becomes more compelling by the day.

Using the strategic concept of space as physical place, historical process, social construction, and imaginative landscape we sought to design a conference that brings together scholars from different disciplines whose work on African societies, cultures, and political economies is often unconnected. Among the social scientists the tendency has been to focus on the political economy of land ownership, production and struggle. In fact, in the past the Center has organized conferences on questions of African agrarian systems and land tenure, whose subsequent publications, such as Crummey and Stewart's, *Modes of Production in Africa: The Precolonial Era*, and Bassett's and Crummey's *Laud in African Agrarian Systems*, have become influential texts in their respective fields.

Kalipeni:

In organizing this symposium we wanted to build on the theoretical insights and empirical findings of previous symposia, and to engage the emerging analytical perspectives in African studies, in this case, the use of conceptions of spatiality as constructions and processes, as contexts and states of social existence, being developed among cultural geographers, social historians, political ecologists, literary theorists and anthropologists, among others.

These attempts to understand African social phenomena using new theoretical tools reflect growing dissatisfaction with the conventional paradigms in each of our respective disciplines, and the increasingly apparent inability of positivist social science, often imported from elsewhere and uncritically imposed on Africa, as a whole to adequately explain the nature and dynamics of African societies and cultures. But progress has been hampered by the limited intellectual interactions and conversations among us.

Our aim, therefore, has been to bring together streams of analysis, research and debate that

focus on the spatial contexts of society and culture which have remained largely separated from each other, to cross disciplinary boundaries, as part of what must be an ongoing effort to develop research methodologies and theoretical frameworks that are better equipped to comprehend African historical and contemporary realities. The four panels, out of the many that could have been chosen, were selected to highlight some of the emerging approaches that employ the overarching concept of spatiality, and could fruitfully promote intellectual cross-fertilization.

The first panel deals with the morphology of urban space. In this panel there are four papers that seek to reconceptualize African cities, their sustainability and development, and interrogate especially the impact of economic crisis and structural adjustment programs on the organization and reproduction of urban life, including the social ecologies of gender and disease. In the second panel we also have four papers that examine in various ways the constructions of therapeutic and ritual places, cultural and medical geographies, and ecological knowledge, and the spatial dynamics of colonial and post-colonial discourses on sexuality and gender. The four papers in the third panel explore the question of spatiality and artistic production, specifically relations between texts and contexts, autobiography and space, narrative and nation. Finally, discussed in the last four papers of panel four are questions of territoriality as manifested in land struggles in Southern Africa, at regional, national, local and domestic levels and the complex and shifting inscriptions of race, ethnicity, gender and class that mark them.

This symposium, we hope, offers a singular opportunity for all of us to shed some of the analytical blinkers of our respective disciplines and to engage each other, so that we can begin to collectively see the African world in all its splendid complexity.

Paul:

While the deliberations in this room and along the corridors are expected to nourish our minds, we hope the events organized for the evenings will bring other joys. We would like to thank, in particular, the African and African Related Women's Association for the dinner we will have tonight. And tomorrow night we can shake any intellectual fatigue that may have accumulated by then to the rhythms of a Ghanaian band from Chicago, Ghanatta.

This symposium would not have taken place without the financial support we received from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, International Studies and Programs, headed by Professor Roger Kanet, who graciously accepted to open the symposium this morning, the McArthur Foundation, and the Federal Department of Education. To them all our deepest thanks.

If you may allow me, I would also like to thank, on all our behalf, the Center staff - Sue Swisher, Mrs Gladys Robinson and Eric Custar - and all the graduate student volunteers, for all the work they have done in making this symposium possible.

Ezekiel

Finally, on behalf of my fellow organizers, I would like to thank our colleagues who accepted to chair or act as discussants for the four panels. And our heartfelt thanks go to all the participants who accepted the invitation to present papers at this symposium, and took time from busy schedules to submit the papers, sometimes with a little nudging, which we will be discussing in the next two days.

Thank you.

RETHINKING CITIES, SUSTAINABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

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INTRODUCTION

Lusaka is tiny and charmingly fails to project an urban image. Of course it tries; there are a few high-rise (but not very high) status symbols, several pretentious banks, the usual airline offices, embassies, shopping arcades and pseudo-supermarkets (their stock reminding me of Rumania), an international airport, a few of Zambia's seventeen cinemas, an elegant residential area (mainly occupied by expatriates) and the offices of the usual plethora of UN free-loaders. But none of this, somehow, adds up to a *city*. One is much more aware of the desperately impoverished shanty towns around the edges - known, for some obscure reason, as 'compounds'. These seem to be (and are, numerically) the real Lusaka, where tens of thousands endure poverty with fortitude. But of course that poverty breeds crime and in the city-centre pickpocketing has been brought to a fine art. ... However, when one compares the lifestyles of the expatriate colony and the compounds it is hard not to see White pockets as 'legitimate economic targets'.

Dervla Murphy (1994) *The Ukimwi Road: from Kenya to Zimbabwe*, p. 250

For the moment, the city works. However, as the pressures arising from population growth, inflexible and traditional administration and planning, and economic hardship and liberalisation build up, it is becoming a little like a pressure cooker. If Harare is to continue to provide economic opportunities and a pleasant and healthy environment for its residents in future, more responsive urban administrations, implementing more realistic and innovative policies, are needed quickly.

Carole Rakodi (1995) *Harare: inheriting a settler-colonial city: change or continuity?*, p. 275

These two recent representations of Lusaka and Harare respectively, encapsulate many of the issues to be addressed in this paper and I will indulge in a little textual analysis by way of illustration. First, a little context is necessary. In 1992, Dervla Murphy, the veteran Irish travel writer, undertook a marathon bicycle journey from Nairobi to Karoi in Zimbabwe. This was evidently her first visit to east and southern Africa. The title of her book reflects the dominant concern and issue encountered en route (*ukimwi* is kiSwahili for AIDS). Her brief encounter with Lusaka came near the end of her route, shortly before she suffered a serious attack of malaria. Conversely, Carole Rakodi's judgement represents the final few sentences of a monograph which draws on several years of research and writing on land and shelter issues, in particular, in Harare (and prior to that also Lusaka). Hence we are not really comparing like with like. Nevertheless, there are several points of similarity: both authors are Caucasian, English-speaking, female, and outsiders, yet sensitive to issues of cross-cultural

comparison and the dangers of Eurocentrism.

Although both cities shared British colonial origins in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and lie in neighbouring countries, their histories and economic trajectories have long been very different. Ironically, although Lusaka was laid out as a classic colonial garden city in tropical Africa and benefited from the copper boom in the 1950s and 1960s, it has suffered severely as a result of Zambia's postcolonial decline, bound up with the prolonged copper depression, lack of economic diversification, political and economic mismanagement, and a shadow effect from Salisbury/Harare. The latter's fortunes have been far more buoyant, reflecting the more diversified and dynamic settler economy. It became the capital of the ill-fated Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in the 1950s, a crucial event which gave it supranational functions and greater attractiveness to commercial, industrial and business service investors. Sanctions during the UDI years represented a setback but after Zimbabwean independence, conditions once again became favourable, especially given that country's role as the *de facto* economic leader of the Southern African Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC) as a counterweight to South Africa. In the last few years, though, the impact of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) has affected many residents severely, creating real hardship (Tevera 1995). In aggregate population terms, the cities are comparable. Lusaka had a population of 982,000 at the 1990 census (Potts 1995), compared with just under 1.5 million in Greater Harare (including Chitungwiza) at the 1992 census (Rakodi 1995: 144).

Even thus contextualised, the quotes provide sharp contrasts. To Murphy, Lusaka barely merits the label *city*, despite being the capital and having such a large population. For her, the various components fail to hang together, to offer an integrated whole. She conceives of the low-income 'compounds' as separate(d) in every sense, even to the point of apparently excluding them from her sense of the city. Poverty and crime, reflecting both reputation and her own experience, are widespread, making an urban landscape of contrasting iconographies: poverty-wracked compounds and well protected expatriate 'colonies' (itself an evocative term suggesting that, even today, they remain alien implants) represent different and grossly unequal lifeworlds. The principal interaction between them occurs and finds expression in a crime-ridden CBD, with pampered international aid and development staff the prime targets.

By contrast, Rakodi - in very carefully chosen and dispassionate terms - depicts Harare as a well functioning city, albeit one in which the combined effects of growth, economic

hardship and inappropriate urban policies will soon precipitate serious problems in the absence of change. As the rest of her book demonstrates, she is clearly well aware of the substantial inequalities and contrasts which characterise Harare, and indeed virtually all African cities regardless of whether indigenous or colonial in origin (Simon 1992).

Implicit in both quotations is the urgency of substantive change in the nature of African cities and urbanism. In particular, it is imperative to address the grave inequalities which threaten to destabilise urban life, and to promote more sustainable urban development. This paper takes up the challenge, explaining how intimately linked notions of equitability and sustainability are, and suggesting possible ways forward with respect particularly to urban morphology in the light of current theoretical debates. In this context, morphology is interpreted as constituting cultural spaces as much as purely physical spaces, since cities are socially produced cultural artefacts. A related task, of reconceptualising cities and urbanism as cultural expressions, in relation to the question of what (is in a) city?, falls beyond the scope of this symposium panel and will not be addressed substantively here.

THE URBAN LEGACY OF COLONIALISM AND MODERNISM

Since decolonisation, Africa's urban areas have experienced strong elements of continuity as well as change in respect of their morphology, social character, economic functions, planning and management. Towns and cities almost everywhere inherited a legacy of physically and socially structured inequality. The only partial exceptions to this were indigenous centres which had been ignored or bypassed by colonial settlers and their infrastructure and administrations. Here, as in Ife, Katsina and Kumasi, for example, indigenous social structures, customs land allocation mechanisms survived comparatively well, and inequality was less marked than in other previously indigenous cities like Kano or in those of colonial origin.

By way of generalisation, the main postcolonial urban changes over the last 40-odd years can be characterised as follows. Some of them relate specifically to urban morphology, but all have clear - and sometimes dramatic - implications for city structures and the nature and quality of urban life for different groups of residents.

- a) generally rapid urban growth, finding expression principally in outward expansion of the built-up area, apart from vertical commercial development and the construction of apartment blocks in a few specific residential zones. Although rapid urbanisation was long held to be virtually irreversible, the impact of severe economic depression coupled with structural adjustment policies has shown otherwise: Accra experienced net outmigration during the worst of Ghana's crisis in the early-1980s while Kitwe and Ndola on the Zambian Copperbelt have been similarly affected more recently (Potts 1995; Simon 1996a). The relative fortunes of large, intermediate and small towns also change according to prevailing conditions; for example, intermediate centres in Tanzania offer rural migrants a range of basic needs and risk-spreading opportunities despite high levels of unemployment and a cost of living which exceeds that on their rural *shambas* (Holm 1995). Despite concerns about statistical accuracy and comparability, international data suggest that access to basic needs (e.g. potable water, sanitation services, basic health care and education) remains greater in urban than rural areas even after more than a decade of structural adjustment and economic recovery programmes (Simon 1996; UNDP 1995).
- b) population growth principally through high net immigration, although the contribution of natural increase (i.e. births to existing urban residents) is gradually rising in both absolute and relative terms. Most new migrants have been poor, from rural areas and from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
- c) the inability of formal housing delivery systems, both official and private, to cater for the majority of new urban residents (Hardoy and Satterthwaite 1989). Consequently, residential densities in existing housing units have increased through 'doubling up' and subletting, while the proportion of urban residents living in informal/irregular shelter - either self-built or rented - has risen almost everywhere. In a substantial number of African cities they are in the majority, e.g. Lusaka 50 per cent; Ouagadougou and Dar es Salaam 60 per cent; Luanda 70 per cent; Bangui 75 per cent; Mogadishu 80 per cent (even before the recent urban war); and Addis Ababa 85 per cent (Simon 1992: 107).
- d) a modest degree of urban densification through plot subdivision and redevelopment in existing middle and upper income areas. However, there is still scope for considerably more.

- e) notwithstanding the above, relatively little change to the inherited physical fabric, as bricks and concrete are not amenable to rapid or large-scale restructuring short of massively expensive comprehensive redevelopment. The extent of such redevelopment has generally been greatest in the CBDs of major commercial centres, and reflects the operation of essentially capitalist land markets rather than state-led restructuring for socio-political ends. This applies to towns and cities of both indigenous and colonial origins.
- f) rapid expansion of public sector and some categories of industrial and commercial employment during the 1960s and 1970s, with business and personal services representing the main growth category thereafter. Overall formal sector employment has been generally static or in decline since the early to mid-1980s as a result principally of structural adjustment, liberalisation and privatisation policies. Almost without exception, African cities remain strongly multifunctional.
- g) generally sustained growth in the range and relative importance of so-called informal or unregistered employment, despite efforts to suppress it. In many parts of Africa, the numbers of people engaged in such income-earning strategies have mushroomed in inverse relation to formal sector employment trends since the mid-1980s.
- h) the persistence of inherited and generally inappropriate town planning mechanisms and procedures (Simon 1992), with the result that land use zoning, development control, building standards and urban design more generally have usually failed to address the needs and aspirations of the majority of urban dwellers or to formulate more locally, culturally, economically and environmentally appropriate alternatives even for new developments.
- i) cutbacks in social expenditure by the central and local state under structural adjustment, whether as part of formal IMF packages or self-imposed in an effort to avoid the invocation of aid conditionalities. School enrolments and the coverage of primary health care services are therefore falling in both urban and rural areas of many countries. Maintenance levels of physical infrastructure (e.g. roads, street lighting, water and sewerage reticulation systems and public buildings) have also declined almost everywhere, and alarmingly in some cities.
- j) a marked increase in the number and significance of urban-based protest movements and civil conflicts during the 1980s and 1990s. Some of these, such as the so-called

'bread riots' in Tunis, Accra, Harare and Lusaka, for example, were triggered by the often harsh and inequitable impacts of subsidy cuts, wage freezes, and retrenchments under structural adjustment. In South Africa, a campaign to literally 'make the townships ungovernable' formed a crucial element of resistance to apartheid in the mid-1980s. Unusually, recent years have witnessed several wider civil wars which had particularly devastating consequences for some towns and major cities and their inhabitants, most dramatically in Angola, Somalia, Liberia and Rwanda, although urban-focused conflicts are still raging in Algeria, Burundi and also Sierra Leone. In some cases, like Kigali, the cities were effectively emptied of people for a limited period but elsewhere, as in Mogadishu, Bardera and some smaller towns in Mozambique physical destruction was considerable. Many of Angola's inland cities and towns, especially Huambo, Moxico and Malange, have been all but destroyed. Others, like Luanda, experienced substantial inflows of displaced people.

GENERALISING AND THEORISING URBAN CHANGE

The extent to which meaningful generalisation about urban Africa is possible has been analysed in empirical terms (O'Connor 1983), with respect to more theoretically informed concerns with underlying forces and processes during the colonial and postcolonial periods (Simon 1992) and in terms of contemporary urban management challenges (Stren and White 1989). At one level, there is substantial evidence that a process of convergence in urban morphology has been occurring, with the gradual 'Westernisation' of hitherto indigenous cities and the 'Africanisation' of colonial urban centres. On the one hand, this reflects the diversification of functions and the development of new residential urban areas outside indigenous quarters. On the other, it refers to socio-cultural change and the effects of the different priorities of the local inheritors of cities previously designed by Europeans essentially for Europeans.

However, I have elsewhere argued against assuming an all-embracing, uniform or unidirectional process of convergence and homogenisation even under the influence of increasingly globalised production, distribution and consumption (Simon 1996a). Here I take issue with Roland Robertson (1992). Rather, on both intuitive and empirical grounds, it

seems that convergence and globalisation vary in impact and extent across both space and time, and even within and between social groups (defined in terms of ethnicity, class, culture etc.) in a given locality. Countermovements are also common, while new divergences and syncretic or pastiche forms constantly emerge. These find expression in social as well as physical urban terms, whether in postmodern architectural forms or distinctively new urban designs more in keeping with postcolonial and postmodern times.

This argument raises another way of seeing and interpreting the processes and features described in points (a)-(j) above. European colonialism in Africa was naturally motivated by a range of considerations and found expression in different ways according to local circumstances at a given time. However, driven by late nineteenth and early twentieth century industrial capitalism, the colonial impacts in terms of civilising and Christianising zeal, the nature of territorial administrations established, and the European-derived forms of urbanism and planning norms introduced, for example, were clearly modernist and modernising in thrust and content. Eurocentric, supremacist, discriminatory and exploitative they frequently were, but they provided a comprehensive justification for suppressing, deprecating and/or ignoring alien, the different, the 'other' in the name of this presumed 'greater good'. Town planning and other administrative codes were - and often remain - concerned with creating and maintaining a monolithic, narrowly conceived, formalistic and very procedural notion of urban order.

After independence, the hegemony of this modernist paradigm persisted, despite often radical changes in personnel (through indigenisation) and ideology. After all, it is now widely recognised that the various strands of radical nationalism and socialism shared the modernist pedigree of modernisation, namely being a universalising 'grand theory' or metanarrative concerned with defining and pursuing a single, 'best' or 'correct' path to a desired outcome. However, the ability to implement or continue implementing such agendas began to wane, as a result of sheer pressure of urban growth at one level but, more profoundly, also on account of their internal contradictions and the alienness and inappropriateness to local conditions and indigenous values, however these had been transformed by the colonial experience in any given context. Seen in this way, the 'breakdown' of conventional urban planning, development and management becomes not so much a matter of inadequate skilled staff and resources but a struggle between different value systems, priorities and procedures. People have increasingly been bypassing the state and its formal procedures both because it can't and

won't cater to their needs and aspirations. In other words, there is both necessity and defiance in popular actions. Local people, especially those currently marginalised, are claiming or reclaiming urban spaces and shaping them in their own images. The resultant conflicts and contradictions, the juxtapositions of radically different construction processes, built forms, identities, lifestyles and cultural expressions, have become almost the norm rather than the exception in Africa. Monolithic hegemony has given way to diversity, albeit often by default and grassroots action rather than by official design. In a very real sense, though, this is the essence of postmodernity. Whereas such pastiches, divergences and pluralities are still exceptional and very limited in physical extent in certain Northern cities (see Watson and Gibson 1995), they are widespread and have been manifest far longer in many parts of the South. One of the ideas explored below is how the promotion of more equitable and sustainable cities might embody or 'design in' difference and diversity rather than designing them out.

This ties up nicely with the implication of one less theoretical - but nevertheless essential - conclusion to be drawn from points (a)-(j) above. Although structural adjustment-type policies may have 'balanced the books' of the state and local authorities to some extent, reduced excessive reliance on distortionary subsidies, few urban residents across the continent would agree that their situations have improved tangibly in recent years. Indeed, there is considerable evidence to the contrary, even in those cities not directly affected by war (cf. *Commissao Nacional de Plano et al.* 1993; Holm 1995; Tevera 1995).

Hence, whatever the particular issues and problems in individual towns and cities, it can be argued that most present forms of urbanism remain highly inequitable and inappropriate, and have now also become unsustainable. This applies to some or all of: urban structure; modes of design, organisation and control (including planning and resourcing); rates of growth; the nature and patterns of energy consumption; the disproportionate consumption of other resources; and environmental quality in the broadest sense. There is therefore a widespread need for urban reconstruction, not merely in the sense of rebuilding or repairing so as to reproduce past processes, structures and forms, but in very different ways with different intended outcomes. These should accord with prevailing conditions and promote more sustainable, equitable and diverse forms of urbanism. The remainder of this paper explores how this objective might be promoted.

THE NATURE OF SUSTAINABILITY AND EQUITABILITY

I do not propose to engage in protracted definitional debates about sustainable development. For present purposes it is only necessary to point out the essential prerequisite that the environment in the broadest sense be utilised carefully so as not to degrade it (e.g. through the pollution of renewable resources) beyond local tolerance levels, deplete non-renewable resource endowments or otherwise compromise its long term viability and the ability of future generations to attain a comparable quality of life to ours. Interestingly, there is a strong resonance here with many traditional (but now generally transformed or lost) indigenous African cultural systems and mores, in terms of which the current generation were regarded as trustees of their land, environment and traditions for future generations.

A certain minimum acceptable level of equitability in any given context is also essential to sustainability if efforts to achieve the latter are not to be undermined. Put more explicitly, general legitimacy, acceptability and participation and empowerment are necessary. This is a somewhat broader consideration than the need to contribute to poverty reduction identified in the Brundtland Commission's report (WCED 1987). It is also a particularly challenging requirement in situations of such widespread poverty, inequality and powerlessness as in African cities.

In recent years, issues of sustainability have gained international prominence and political legitimacy. Although the presence of world leaders at special UN-sponsored summits and their signatures on the declarations and conventions which result may ultimately have more symbolic than substantive value, this nevertheless represents a major advance from the situation just a few years ago where such concerns could be dismissed as the preoccupations of a lunatic environmentalist fringe. For example, Chapter 7 of Agenda 21, which was adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, addresses ways to promote the sustainable development of human settlements. Similarly, the draft 'Global Plan of Action' expected to be agreed at Habitat II, the Second Cities Summit, in Istanbul in mid-1996, contains two key national commitments. These deal with 'adequate shelter for all' and 'sustainable human settlements in an urbanising world'. Meanwhile, last year UNEP and UNCHS established a joint Sustainable Cities Programme of technical co-operation and capacity building at the level of individual participating cities in different countries of the South. In addition, there is a growing

academic and professional literature on the subject, including at least two books entitled simply *Sustainable Cities* (Stren, White and Whitney 1992; Haughton and Hunter 1994 and one with sustainability in the subtitle (Cadman and Payne 1990); research initiatives or programmes are also currently being supported by two Research Councils in the UK.

RESTRUCTURING URBAN SPACE

For this symposium panel I am going to concentrate now on promoting sustainability and equitability in the the physical urban environment, i.e. urban space or morphology. Clearly, however, such concerns require appropriate local institutional contexts and appropriate financing mechanisms capable of providing both private and public funds into shelter and settlements development (UNCHS 1990a; Simon 1996b). Following from my discussion above about postmodernism, institutions and planning processes must become more flexible, participatory, transparent, responsive and better able to accommodate the diversity of competing views articulated by different community groups and interests. For example, South Africa's still unfinished transition to democratic rule at the level of local authorities has been providing some fascinating and very relevant examples in this context (Simon 1996b). In what follows, I draw heavily on ideas developed more specifically for southern Africa (Simon 1996b), duly modified to address conditions elsewhere on the continent.

In view of the inherent inequities and inefficiencies of current urban designs and layouts, it is necessary to consider potential changes to these areas as well as in the design of new urban extensions. Inevitably, though, there are numerous common issues, many of which will require amendment and adaptation of the existing planning system and design/building standards. The continued reliance on expatriate consultants and Northern-trained planners unwilling or unable to adapt to very different planning contexts, has been well documented (Wekwete 1988; Simon 1992).

Densification and Residential Integration

By encouraging or requiring the subdivision of large plots and greater vertical development (i.e. the construction of double-storey homes, duplex or town house schemes, and blocks of

flats), more people can be suitably accommodated and supplied with infrastructure within existing developed suburbs or townships, and at lower unit cost. There is certainly scope for this in many middle and high income areas across the continent. Some middle income areas in major South African cities have been experiencing considerable market-led densification of these types since at least the late 1970s (Dewar 1995; Simon 1992). Measures to encourage densification, and the development of vacant plots of urban land held for speculative purposes could include modifying zoning density limits, and introducing differential property rates which discriminate proportionately more heavily against undeveloped plots or those with low bulk-density ratios. However, such intervention cannot alone address the scale and magnitude of the problems facing African cities, particularly as regards the needs of the urban poor and those previously suffering discrimination in access to urban spaces and opportunities. A more comprehensive approach is required.

One crucial issue to be addressed is whether market-led property redistribution and residential integration can or will change the complexion of urban areas substantially. The evidence from cities of colonial origin ranging from Dakar to Nairobi and Windhoek suggests very clearly that the class character and associated characteristics of existing residential areas have generally been maintained. This applies especially in the more exclusive middle and upper income suburbs, where only people with adequate financial means or status are able to gain a foothold (Cumming 1990; Simon 1991, 1992; Yahya 1990). Occasionally, in the context of a shortage of appropriate housing for a particular income group, refurbishment and upgrading of poorer quality areas may occur. This is sometimes known as 'downraiding' in the literature, especially where people buy into supposedly low-income housing schemes. This has been well documented in Nairobi, for example (Simon 1992). A rather different case is Johannesburg's inner city Mayfair suburb, where substantial numbers of relatively well-off Asians from segregated townships on the outskirts of the city bought properties in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as apartheid laws were relaxed or defied. In many cases this enabled them to return to an area close to their businesses and from which they had suffered apartheid evictions (Parnell and Pirie 1991: 140). Class is thus becoming the basis of residential organisation rather than imputed race, but the legacy of apartheid and colonial segregation policies will ensure that a substantial overlap between the two remains for a considerable period.

Cities or city segments of indigenous origin where customary land and housing

allocation processes have survived to some extent, are now also experiencing greater filtering by income, as well as densification through multiple occupancy as pressure on available shelter increases. Under such conditions, transactions are becoming commercialised and housing quality is often declining. This is well illustrated in villages enveloped by Lagos (Aina 1989), as well as by conditions within the old walled cities of Ibadan and Kano, for example.

Reclaiming the Inner City

Generally, the most substantial residential opportunities for poor people within the former colonial or white cities have occurred where and to the extent that downmarket accommodation becomes available. Such properties are found especially in and around central business districts, in older cottages and blocks of flats. There is evidence of this in parts of Nairobi and Harare (Cumming 1990; Yahya 1990). The recent transformation of the formerly white Joubert Park-Hillbrow-Berea area of Johannesburg into 90-95 per cent black occupancy is undoubtedly the most dramatic example in South Africa, on account of its size and the rapidity of the process (Crankshaw and White 1995). Since the late 1960s, whites had been suburbanising at an increasing rate, precipitating a survival crisis for many flatland rentlords and for shops and offices in and around the CBD. Just as the clientele of these businesses became increasingly black, so landlords, managing agents and sectional title companies accepted black tenants in order to secure rents. Indeed, when the Group Areas Act was still in force (i.e. until mid-1991) higher rents could be charged on account of the illegality and attendant risks: at the same time, the need to provide formal leases could be avoided. Banks and other financial institutions 'redlined' the area, refusing to provide mortgage bond funds out of a mixture of racial prejudice and fear that property prices would fall substantially.

In order to help meet such rentals, and to assist relatives or friends lacking housing or facing the long, expensive commute from the townships, tenants began taking in subtenants. Multiple occupancy became common, services and infrastructure were overloaded and landlords reduced or ceased to undertake maintenance. Tenants sometimes responded by withholding rent payments. Evictions were sought and occasionally carried out. Since most lacked formal leases, they were technically illegal residents. In some areas, conditions

deteriorated rapidly, and crime increased. The term 'slum' is used regularly by municipal officials and politicians, although the City Council took little action.

People occupying several blocks of flats effectively abandoned by their owners were faced with evictions in what became a celebrated case of resistance organised by community based organisations, known as the Seven Buildings Project. Residents are organised into groups with responsibility for cleaning, maintenance and security. A resolution to the conflict is now evidently at hand: in January 1996 ownership of the blocks of flats will be transferred from the existing landlord to a company owned by the Project. The tenants will become sectional title shareholders, paying rent to the company, on the board of which one representative from each of the buildings will serve as a director. With a R5 million subsidy from the National Housing Forum, affordable, income-related rents can be charged (*Mail and Guardian* 1/12/95). If successful, this innovative scheme could serve as a model not only for the rest of what is colloquially dubbed Johannesburg's 'lost city'¹ but inner city areas of other conurbations as well. It provides a mechanism for managed transition, giving poor black people a stake in accessible parts of the existing urban structure, and avoiding the downward spiral of living conditions and quality which would otherwise result.

In indigenous city centres, the issue is not so much reclaiming them as revitalising and upgrading those which have suffered neglect and decline. Of course, a few have become attractive tourist foci. The old urban cores of North Africa are, in Kharoufi's (1994: 95) words, 'characterized by opposition between Arab-Muslim cultural values and Western values and symbols, and by the penetration of the systems and models of international tertiary industries into old city structures.' I will return to the implications of such conflicts below.

Reversing Modernist Zonal Planning: Encouraging Multifunctional Landuse

Another important way forward is to encourage multifunctional landuse and different urban designs, something which was (and in some cases still is) characteristic of indigenous cities. Current zoning and development control practice in most formal urban areas of colonial origin or others which have come within the ambit of urban planning controls (e.g. through

¹This term not only refers to the 'loss' of the area from the rest of Johannesburg through urban decline but represents an ironic contrast with the overexuberant kitch of The Lost City. Sol Kerzner's ruritanian resort in the former Bophutatswana bantustan.

extension of municipal boundaries) still has an acutely modernist thrust. It is very restrictive, favouring single functions in given zones, except within very clearly defined limits for the number and variety of convenience and other shops permitted in residential areas. Although certain office functions are now sometimes permitted within homes or entire houses e.g. medical, architectural, accountancy and other professional practices, industries are almost entirely banished from residential areas. Greater flexibility should be exercised in permitting non-disturbance causing industries, e.g. cottage industries, small-scale upholsterers, picture framers, repairers. Redevelopment, development on vacant land and in new areas should also make explicit design provision for a fuller mix of activities overall rather than on an exceptional permission basis. These principles have been adopted in the South African government's draft urban development strategy as part of their efforts to overcome the gross inefficiency of apartheid urbanism (Republic of South Africa 1995).

While not advocating a romantic return to preindustrial, indigenous or colonial urbanism, it is worth noting that earlier forms of multifunctional landuse, e.g. the 'home above the shop or workshop' have largely been eliminated through rigid application of modernist town planning. Apart from providing a boost to municipal revenue from increased rates and taxes, change in this respect would diversify the geography of employment, reduce commuter traffic pressure (and the associated energy, pollution and time costs²) and also provide greater convenience for local residents. As their unit costs, installation and operating costs decline, new information and communications technologies can also play a role in reducing the need for travel and face-to-face contact. Overall urban efficiency would thus be enhanced.

More appropriate and sustainable urban designs and standards can more readily be incorporated into new township developments or new settlements. These should aim to reduce the need for travel, especially by means of motorised transport, utilise appropriate energy sources and technologies (including new information technologies), improve the living environment and be designed to accommodate often diverse existing social structures and senses of identity. This would mean innovation in terms of street layouts and the creation

In Bangkok Metropolitan Area, for example, it has recently been estimated that the monetary cost alone of vehicle fuel wasted through idling in the chronic traffic congestion in one of the world's fastest developing metropolises, amounts to at least US\$500 million and possibly as much as \$2.92 billion annually (Setchell 1995: 9-10).

of diversity. By contrast, conventional town planning has generally sought to erase such diversity in favour of an assumed modern norm, namely geometric street grids and crescents. At least one recent author has advocated drawing lessons from the design principles of precolonial African towns and cities, especially in (West Africa, albeit in a somewhat romantic conception (Amankwah-Ayeh 1995). Rather, the most likely prospects lie in developing hybrids able to draw on appropriate traditions and principles of urban design - be they Islamic, Akan, Sotho, Nguni or whatever - but adapt them to current urban and social realities (Simon 1992). Abu-Lughod (1987), has made a particularly eloquent case in respect of Islamic cities in North Africa and the Middle East. One crucial issue here is to address problems still arising from the co-existence, overlap and/or conflict between surviving indigenous and Western landuse and land allocation processes (Attahi 1994: 213; Simon 1992).

Official toleration of indigenous dwelling forms and materials in formal low-income urban settlements, hitherto forbidden in terms of existing town planning regulations in Anglophone countries and beyond, would probably have major benefits for residents in terms of cost, construction materials and social appropriateness, although care would be necessary to avoid excessive environmental pressures where the timber and clay, for example, are collected (Simon 1985, 1992). For example, in 1992 a few rondavels (traditional round huts), built from a mixture of commercial and local materials, appeared on an ultralow income housing scheme on the outskirts of Windhoek. Over time these structures could be upgraded to extend their useful lives or replaced if necessary. Indigenous materials may also find a useful role as a complement to conventional 'Western' ones in higher income, commercial and public buildings as part of new hybrid styles.

Addressing Class Segregation: Promoting Social Integration

Socially more diverse cities can also be encouraged through efforts to break the tradition of residential zoning in terms of plot size and associated dwelling density, which is a surrogate form of institutionalised class segregation operating through the property market. Instead, more diverse mixes of residential types and densities within individual residential areas can and should be encouraged. This will undoubtedly generate substantial opposition from high income groups, fearful of the unknown and probably disguised in rhetoric of social difference

and thus conflict, rising crime and falling property prices. Ethnic minorities, such as the Asians in East Africa and Levantines in West Africa are well known to concentrate in a small number of high income areas of capital and commercial cities. However, the African inheritors of former colonial elite spaces have generally also perpetuated the social practices associated with their predecessors.

Encouraging change to such supposedly 'natural' patterns of social reproduction will constitute no mean challenge, requiring considerable political will by local authorities. The way forward would seem to be through the sensitive construction of a wider mix of housing styles, sizes and densities in individual areas. Direct contact from such proximity could help people to transcend inherited social prejudices and cleavages between 'them' and 'us', in other words, the fear of 'alien' racial, cultural and poorer 'others' (cf. Dewar 1995: 417). Again, no single or uniform blueprint can or should be imposed; local circumstances must be taken into account in determining an acceptable and appropriate mix of densities, 'income groups' and urban designs within each area. In any event, the scope for implementing change within many established suburbs is limited by the availability of open space, large plots suitable for subdivision and dwellings in poor condition which might be demolished, and possible problems resulting from the interfacing of different land allocation systems and principles.

One notable exception to the foregoing is in allocation or divestiture policies (in the case of privatisation) pursued by state or parastatal bodies with respect to their existing housing stock, where social policies can readily be implemented and could have a significant influence on emerging social complexions of particular areas within a city. This is relevant to many African cities, but Mozambique provides an appropriate example. The government's State Property Administration, APIE (*Administração do Parque Imobiliário do Estado*), inherited the formal housing and blocks of flats abandoned by the emigré settlers in the mid-1970s and other investment property in the 'cement cities' nationalised thereafter. Although allocation criteria based on need were established, over time the bureaucratic process became increasingly corrupt and subject to informal bypassing, while maintenance was negligible. Today these units are in an appalling state, especially with respect to infrastructure and services, and a major structural survey has just been undertaken to assess refurbishment needs (*Noticias* 23/6/95). Privatisation has been commenced, with current tenants supposed to have first option, although some properties (or substantial compensation) are being claimed by

retornados (returning emigrés). To date the state has issued several assurances that such repossessions will not be granted. Nevertheless, access to and control over such properties, and the resource they represent in a situation of chronic housing shortage, have become highly contested in ways contingent upon the nature of economic liberalisation in this impoverished peripheral ex-socialist state and the effective recolonisation by foreign capital (Simon 1992; Sidaway and Power 1995; *Noticias* 7/11/95). Privatisation is now beginning to move rapidly. By the end of September 1995, requests for purchase had been lodged in respect of 16,000 of the total national APIE stock of 56,500 dwelling units. 11,500 of these had been authorised, over 61 per cent of them (i.e. 9,847) in Maputo city. Another 1,823 were in the rest of Maputo province and 1,526 in Sofala province, including Beira, the country's second city. No other province registered more than 600 (*Noticias* 5/10/95). Details of the purchasers and their relative social positions are unavailable, so it is currently impossible to ascertain the extent to which desired beneficiaries are actually able to do so.

Upgrading low-income areas

Finally, we should not omit the well-known imperative of upgrading townships, shanty settlements and similar areas occupied principally by low-income households. Numerous such programmes have been undertaken across the continent since the first World Bank-assisted site and service scheme in Dakar in 1972. One of the principal lessons learnt in the process is that community participation and joint control are important ingredients of successful programmes: in other words, these need to be empowering processes, not merely housing or infrastructure delivery mechanisms (Friedmann 1992; Wisner 1988). Some of the issues raised in the preceding paragraphs apply here too, not least the question of planning for diverse income groups in areas from which higher income households have moved out as their financial resources have grown or more conveniently located alternatives have been identified. Addressing the needs of low-income areas (townships, informal settlements and low-income inner city neighbourhoods) is regarded as the single most important priority in South Africa's new draft urban development strategy (Republic of South Africa 1995: 24).

Conflicting land allocation systems have often had problematic consequences for planning and adequate housing provision, particularly by and for the urban poor (Peil 1976; Simon 1992), who increasingly have to seek their own land along the urban fringe. In

... traditional land owners have succeeded in maintaining some of their authority by creating subdivisions in the peripheral areas. Indeed, the scarcity and expense of lots produced by the official system, as well as the time taken to complete transfers, force the majority of citizens seeking land to fall back on the peripheral subdivisions produced by traditional land-owners. The coexistence of two judicial land authorities is a source of conflict, and interferes with the supply of urban land and the development of cities.

The objective of upgrading should be to achieve improvements in the overall quality of life, not merely in shelter quality through in-situ upgrading or some other form of aided self-help (cf. Hardoy *et al.* 1992; Wekwete 1992; Main and Williams 1994). Infrastructure, employment opportunities, recreational spaces and environmental improvements should all be included in such programmes. Especially in arid and semi-arid areas, which occur from the Maghreb to South Africa, access to adequate potable water supplies for a growing urban population and more water-intensive activities will represent a formidable constraint.

As vividly documented in the recent BBC TV documentary, *Cairo: Mother of Megacities*, the urgency of the challenge in that city of 11-12 million is underlain by the rate at which vital, fertile agricultural land in the Nile valley is disappearing under informal and illegal housing by poor migrants and long term residents and by rogue speculative developers respectively. State efforts to divert and rehouse such people in satellite cities in the adjacent desert have met with a generally poor response: new towns such as 10th of Ramadan and Sadat City remain largely uninhabited (see also Kharoufi 1994: 60).

CONCLUSIONS

I have argued that current urban processes and planning/management practices needs to change substantially as Africa's towns and cities are highly inequitable and increasingly also environmentally and socially unsustainable. Although planning is inherently concerned with long range futures, the methods and objectives of inherited modernist town planning and urban management are increasingly inappropriate to the pressing tasks of post-structural adjustment (and in South and southern Africa also post-apartheid) urban reconstruction. Concerns with homogenisation and standardisation especially within individual urban

segments, often militate against substantive change to the underlying character defined in terms of unifunctional zoning, plot size, housing density, building lines and the like. These have generally served as surrogates for racial exclusivity, but the process of market-led postcolonial or post-apartheid residential integration is producing increasingly class-based social and spatial cleavages, which nevertheless mirror their predecessors to a remarkable extent. On the other hand, formal processes and mechanisms are increasingly being bypassed by those who feel ignored or oppressed by the state; official incapacity and irrelevance have also been exacerbated by expenditure cuts. None of these developments will change the fundamental realities of unsustainable urbanism and urban social reproduction.

By contrast, the promotion of greater equity and sustainability, as well as accommodation (in both the physical and metaphorical senses) of the multiple, increasingly diverse, and even antagonistic social groups with distinct identities and agendas, will require very different visions and processes. These will need to be more participatory, decentralised, flexible and empowering, capable of providing local access and accountability within a framework offering strategic metropolitan-wide integration. Such notions do borrow from concepts of agropolitan development, urban villages and suchlike but, importantly, also from certain indigenous traditions as well as from contemporary debates in social theory about sustainability, postmodernism, postcolonialism and development.

Equally important, however, is to offer practical guidelines for operationalising the concepts and goals outlined. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (1991) offers four criteria for judging the sustainability of development in any human settlement:

- the quality of life it offers to its inhabitants;
- the scale of non-renewable resource use (including the extent to which secondary resources are drawn from settlement by-products for re-use);
- the scale and nature of renewable resource use and the implications for sustaining production levels of renewable resources;
- the scale and nature of non-reusable wastes generated by production and consumption activities and the means by which these are disposed of, including the extent to which wastes impact upon human health, natural systems and amenity (UNCHS 1991: 4).

None of these relates specifically to urban morphology, but addressing them will often have substantial spatial implications. Some require concerted institutional intervention, others can appropriately be addressed through local community action and participation. Resource mobilisation and the transmission of international experience as a basis for local adaptation or adoption are very important support activities which can involve both official and NGO structures and channels at local and supra-local levels in complementary ways. The Dakar Declaration, 'Environmental Strategies for African Cities', adopted in June 1995 and formally incorporated into the preparatory process for Habitat II at the African Ministerial Meeting in Johannesburg in October 1995, embodies these principles (UNCHS 1995).

I have explored how urban spaces can be modified or conceived in accordance with current perspectives on sustainability and equitability. The measures discussed have the common objective of promoting various forms of diversity and better functional, spatial, social and technological integration, so as to reduce energy consumption (UNCHS 1990b), pollution generation, travel time loss, both within and between parts of the urban mosaic. Interestingly and importantly, many of these have been echoed, at least in outline terms, in the draft urban development strategy of the South African Government of National Unity, published for debate at the end of 1995 (Republic of South Africa 1995).

There will undoubtedly be numerous obstacles and concerted resistance to such proposals from those who stand to lose effective power or control over resources, or who feel participatory processes to be excessively time-consuming and inconclusive. At one level, the current privatisation initiatives embracing urban land and various forms of property in many African countries create new opportunities for individual or corporate independence. Ultimately, however, they are likely to reduce the space for the agendas outlined here in favour of increasingly market-led outcomes. On the other hand, if the traditions of mobilisation among civic associations in South Africa and equivalent community based organisations and NGOs elsewhere are not harnessed within such a facilitatory framework, and if expectations and basic needs are not at least partially met, the results will be renewed alienation, division and resistance.

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URBANIZATION IN AFRICA UNDER ECONOMIC CONDITIONS:
PROBLEMS AND POTENTIALS

by

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1. Introduction

Until recently, it was thought that Africa would continue to be an overwhelming rural continent and that urbanization was not considered a problem because it was associated with modernization and industrialization. Both governments and international donor agencies fostered rural development and agriculturally-based strategies without paying attention to the rapid rates of urbanization. Then, national censuses began to show important increases in urbanization. Today, urbanization has been added to the long list of potentially devastating development problems that must be addressed. The fundamental problem is that the urban population is growing very fast while economic growth and the development transformations necessary to support it and enhance the quality of urban life are not occurring as rapidly. (Stren and White, 1989 and Figure 1).

Urbanization estimates indicate that the urban population of Africa is growing four times faster than that of the rest of the Less Developed Countries (LDCs). The governments of most African countries are increasingly aware of the need to ensure viable urban development for sustainable growth. Issues of urban management can only be discussed and properly understood in the wider context of national urbanization policies. The need for active urbanization policies is greater in Africa than it was in More Developed Countries (MDCs) because the African population

is growing faster, the rates of economic growth in Africa are low and the role of government is more pervasive in African countries than in other countries of the world (table 1). The national and urban governments in African countries are clearly faced with serious problems in managing their rapidly growing urban centres. These problems were compounded in the past decade by the fact that population growth outpaced economic performance. The GNP per capita fell by 2.2 percent per year in this period while unemployment quadrupled and real wages fell by 30 percent (Kuiper, 1992: 394). Development assistance in Africa has concentrated on rural areas in an effort to alleviate poverty in the continent. In response to limited human and financial resources, international development aid has focused on agricultural production, although Africa's urbanization has been accelerating. The limitations of the agricultural sector to provide adequate economic opportunities to a growing population have been recognized.

The urbanization process is bringing about economic and political changes that affect the ways in which Africans organize spatially and subsist economically. The challenge to Africa's development process is to manage the change that is taking place. The potential contributions of urban centres to national development need to be realized if the success of past gains in agricultural production are to be consolidated. Urbanization provides the

production efficiencies that support off-farm employment. Urban centres are the focus of both political and economic decentralization policies and are the principal sites for the processing and marketing of agricultural products. The patterns in which the urban population settles today will dictate the standard of living and the possibilities of improving that standard for years to come. A commitment to an explicit urban policy calls for expanding the activity of international donors in the public, private and informal sectors of urban areas to provide credit, land and infrastructure to low-income families. International donor institutions have an important role to play in supporting the efforts of public and private institutions to manage the urbanization process.

Secondary and small urban centres are at the core of the long-term relationship between urbanization and agricultural development and will play a key role in the Africa's urbanization. The interdependence of urban and rural populations in Africa is striking. There is a positive correlation between improved urban infrastructure and rising agricultural productivity. Care should be taken in identifying which to support. Secondary and small urban centres should be supported by investment in physical and social infrastructure on the basis of their own growth potential. Public expenditure should be geared to locations where rapid growth is occurring or is very likely to occur soon.

Urban services can only be provided efficiently if there is a partnership between central and local government, with greater responsibilities being given to the latter than has generally been the case. Municipal management must be improved. Decentralization makes better use of local human, financial and physical resources and offers the possibility for more effective resource mobilization, self-sustaining development projects that better reflect local needs and increased public participation in decision-making.

2. Population Distribution and Migration

(a) Population Trends

In 1990, the total population of the world was 5.3 billion of whom 4.1 billion lived in the LDCs countries (United Nations, 1993a and table 2 and figures 2 and 3). An estimated 43 percent of the world's population lived in urban areas (United Nations, 1993b). The world's total population was growing at an average annual rate of 1.7 percent but again there was a large differential in the population growth of NDCs and LDCs where annual rates of growth were 0.6 and 2.1 percent, respectively (United Nations, 1993a). Both differential mortality and fertility contributed to such differences. On average, fertility levels were highest in Africa, where total fertility was estimated at 6.25 children per woman for the period 1985-1990.

In the 1980s fertility remained above 5 children per woman in most African countries (United Nations, 1993a). Such high fertility implied that during 1980-1990 Africa contributed an increasing share of the total number of births in the world. Africa's high birth rates make a major contribution to urban population growth, often higher than that attributable to rural-urban migration. In many African countries, 60 percent or more of urban growth results from the excess of urban births over deaths. Few efforts are thus more important to attain a more manageable urban population size than to encourage small families by, among other things, improving the status of women and facilitating access to family planning and health services.

In 1990, the world's rural population was 3 billion and is projected to reach a maximum of 3.7 billion persons by the year 2015 when all but 252 million of them will be living in LDCs. In Africa the rural population is expected to keep on growing beyond 2015 (table 3). Because of such trends, many African countries find themselves in the position of having to absorb large rural populations at the same time as they struggle with rapid urbanization. During 1975-1990, nearly 70 percent of the total population growth registered in Eastern African countries took place in rural areas, 60 percent of that in Middle African countries and about half of that in the Northern, Western and Southern African countries.

In 1990, Africa accounted for 16 percent of the rural population of the LDCs and is expected to host 24 percent by 2025 (United Nations, 1993b). It is the only major region projected to increase its share of the rural population worldwide. From 1975 to 1990, 126 million persons were added to the African rural areas and another 289 million persons are expected by 2025. By 2025, the African rural population will be more than twice the size of the entire rural population of MDCs in 1975 (United Nations, 1993b). Because overall rates of population growth are so high in African countries, rural populations are increasing despite substantial rural-urban migration and the high urbanization increase. Population pressure has aggravated the poverty that is endemic in the rural areas of many African countries. Environmental degradation resulting from overcrowding and overgrazing has also contributed to high rates of rural out-migration. Indeed, "push factors" are perhaps as important as "pull factors" in generating rural-urban migration and hence urbanization (United Nations, 1991).

(b) Migration

Migration in Africa is associated with a series of social, cultural, political and economic factors. Prominent among the social factors is education. Thus, the desire to acquire high levels of education leads people to move to areas where

educational facilities are located. In addition, the better educated move to areas offering employment commensurate with their abilities. Other social factors that affect rural-urban migration in Africa include how the prospective migrants perceive living conditions in urban areas; the presence of friends and relatives in urban areas and the prospective migrants' expectations of a rise in social prestige associated with migration.

Political factors have been of increasing importance in causing migration to urban areas in Africa. However, these factors are often interwoven with ethnic racial considerations. During the pre-colonial era, internal migration in Africa was primarily motivated by the desire to conquer. The gradual emergence of a modern economy within the framework of colonial administrative structures changed migration patterns. The colonial urban administration was not under the authority of the African ethnic hierarchy. The political structure was based primarily on non-ethnic considerations. But although colonial order enhanced the possibility of migration, it also tended to limit it. Most obviously, it stopped movements caused by warfare and conquest.

The most important economic factor usually cited as influencing rural-urban migration in Africa is the urban-rural income differential. Various African governments concentrated

investment in a few urban centres thus causing regional inequalities which, in turn, paved the way for rural-urban migration. In such situations the location of productive activities virtually determines the intensity, pattern and direction of migration. Other economic factors which lead to migration include the existence of high population pressure on land, low rates of investment in agriculture, fragmentation of land ownership, inequalities in the distribution of land and other allocative mechanisms.

Rural-urban migration, while imposing pressures on already strained urban resources, does not necessarily provide relief for rural areas and often increases regional income inequalities. In addition, many African countries are facing serious food shortages requiring the allocation of scarce foreign exchange for imports, although they could well be sufficient in terms of food supply, or at least meet a large part of their food needs, if domestic production were supported. Hence, rural development strategies should be pursued to alleviate the negative consequences of rapid urban growth.

Before discussing some of the consequences of the migration process in Africa, it is important to highlight some of the human development gains and losses that Africa has recorded since the end of the colonial era. Between 1960-1965 and 1985-1990, infant mortality rates have fallen by 36 percent and life expectancy has

increased from 42 to 52 years (United Nations, 1993a). Adult literacy in Africa increased by two thirds between 1970 and 1985, but economic growth has been slow in the 1980s and the population has been rising at a rate of 3.2 percent per year. As a result, GNP per capita fell by an average of 2.2 percent per year in the 1980s (United Nations Development Programme, 1991 and 1992).

Despite improvements, under-five mortality still stands at 178 deaths for every 1,000 live births. More than half of the population has no access to public health services. Almost two-thirds lack safe water. Tropical diseases afflict a high proportion of the population. Unemployment and underemployment is one of the most serious problems. Real wages fell by 30 percent between 1980 and 1990. Many people have left rural areas, partly because the urban centres offer better prospects. But people have also been driven from the land by population pressure and the degradation of the soil. Family budgets in the region are tight. The net primary enrolment ratio for girls is 44 percent compared with 54 percent for boys, and female literacy stands at only 34 percent compared with 56 percent for males (United Nations Development Programme, 1991). In several African countries, these problems have been compounded by political violence stemming from cross-border conflicts, ethnic upheavals and civil strife, all of which have created 5.4 million refugees (United Nations High Commission for Refugees, 1993). Displaced

persons exist in virtually all the major urban centres in Africa. These include beggars, parking boys and the mentally ill who are unwanted and rejected as part of urban development (Obudho, 1991a and African Urban Quarterly, 1974). Rural poverty undeniably affects a greater number of persons and is more severe than urban poverty. However, urban poverty cannot be ignored. In Africa, approximately one in every six urban dwellers is living in poverty. Whatever their share of the urban population, the plight of the urban poor is serious.

The high rate of urbanization in Africa has become a major concern in many countries because of the many socio-cultural, economic, political and environmental problems associated with rapid urbanization. Such problems are especially acute because urbanization has resulted in the excessive growth of the major urban centres. Although rural-urban migration is a major contributor to such growth, the contribution of high natural increase is also of key importance (Obudho and Adudu, 1989). Migration to urban areas is deemed to be the result of unjustified development strategies that favour urban areas, especially in market-oriented economies where investment has been increasingly concentrated in a few and rapidly growing urban centres.

(i) Consequences for the Rural Areas

In the rural Africa, rural-urban migration affects incomes, rural capital formation and technological change, modes of rural production and the fertility of the rural population. Remittances from urban areas raise rural incomes, increase levels of consumption and, by encouraging technological change, further raise rural incomes. However, the increase depends on the volume of migration, its composition, its destination and the socio-economic status of migrants. Most rural-urban migrants are adults, generally better educated than the average rural dweller, hence their movement involves sizeable transfers of human capital from the rural to the urban sector that may adversely affect agricultural productivity and incomes.

Where rural out-migration is temporary, the absence of men for extended periods may increase the work burden of the family members left in rural areas and leave the family more vulnerable to unexpected crises. Male rural-rural migrants sometimes replace female workers who will then be restricted to work within the home. Although migrants send remittances to rural areas, they often receive in return help from rural relatives, particularly in the form of food.

A declining labour to land ratio often provides an opportunity to change rural production techniques: the transfer of labour to

more productive urban activities eventually generates a growing demand for rural output and thus alters the rural-urban terms of trade, raising agricultural prices relative to those of urban goods. The increase in agricultural prices is likely to stimulate agricultural production and raise rural income. Remittances from urban areas are also likely to raise rural incomes and may not only increase levels of consumption but also encourage technological change that further raises rural incomes.

Out-migration from rural areas is likely to push up wage rates and encourage labour-saving technological change or greater work participation by the remaining family members. Technological change would also be stimulated to the extent that out-migrants allocate savings to rural areas in the form of remittances. Remittances may be used for productive investment or better housing and education. Technological change can be attributed to the dynamism of returning migrants, who bring money as well as knowledge and experience of alternative production techniques.

If migration is concentrated among both the fairly rich and the fairly poor, income inequality may tend to grow. However, if the very poor migrate as whole families pushed from rural areas by debt and loss of land, the beneficial effect on wages may reduce rural income inequalities. If migrants from richer households predominate and remittances go to relatively prosperous farmers

who can introduce technological innovations to produce higher output and incomes, migration will eventually increase inequality in income and land distribution thus inducing further out-migration.

Rural out-migration tends to be associated with greater reliance on wage labour. The out-migration of young adults changes the age composition of the rural population and often raises the value of the labour of those staying behind to work in family farms, prompting them to hire wage-labour. Migration may also lead to the commercialization of agricultural activity, which is further encouraged by favourable changes in commodity terms of trade and the extension of markets.

Because migration affects the income distribution in rural areas and income distribution is an important determinant of fertility and aggregate population growth, it also affects the latter. In addition, the migration of young unmarried men of working age may result in severe sex imbalances in rural areas and influence the proportion of persons able to find marriage partners. Furthermore, the large-scale emigration of men in search of urban employment frequently contributes to the dissolution of already existing marriages or delays family formation. Lastly, returning migrants may spread new values and information about family planning and may introduce new family-size ideals.

(ii) Consequences ^{SW} ~~to~~ Urban Areas

Migrants may lower wage rates in urban areas thus leading to the expansion of employment; they may provide dynamic elements in the urban informal sector providing a catalyst for development; or they may sustain a higher rate of economic growth because of the relatively higher propensity to save, their lower rate of absenteeism and the longer hours of they tend to work. Migrants to urban areas may have lower activity rates than locals because of discrimination based on ethnicity or religion and because they are less likely to have the same support of friends and relatives at the place of destination as they had at the place of origin.

The influx of migrants into urban areas increases the demand for infrastructure and community services. Most urban centres are unable to meet the growing demand for these services since the latter often require large investments. However, migration may also increase the size of an urban centre thus producing economies of scale. Different groups of migrants will enter the various segments of the urban labour market and hence have a different job mobility. The relatively young and more productive individuals who tend to dominate migration flows will be an asset for the area of destination. In addition, migration of young persons will lower the crude death rate of urban areas and it will likely increase the proportion of women in the child-bearing ages. To the extent that fertility in urban areas is

lower than that in rural areas, over the long run urbanization may contribute to the reduction of overall fertility.

While the colonial rule led to the establishment of infrastructure and public sector employment, it was not complemented by the expansion of manufacturing and commercial activities in most African urban centres. Indeed the modern sector of most African economies has been heavily dominated by public employment. Such modern sector employment is scarce but it continues to attract the better educated migrants from rural areas who often remain unemployed. Most of them end up working in the informal sector which is hard to put to sustain an ever increasing population.

Unless positive measures are taken, the rapid increase of the urban population in Africa is likely to exacerbate the prevailing ills associated with the rapid expansion of slum and squatter settlements. Such settlements constitute the living environment for at least one third of the urban population of all African countries and they are growing at a rate that has doubled in the last six years (Obudho and Nhlanga, 1988 and Obudho and Syagga, 1996). The growing gap in shelter needs faced by most major urban centres in Africa has been and will continue to be filled by slum and squatter settlements. In Africa, despite the considerable economic progress made since independence, the

general standard of human settlement is still unsatisfactory for most of the urban population. In many urban areas, there is overcrowding and unauthorized construction of unplanned dwellings built with unsuitable materials. Combined with lack of basic infrastructure such as water supply, sewage and roads, the growing slums and squatter settlements create an unacceptable environment ripe for the spread of disease or the outbreak of fires, violence and other urban disasters. The need for a strategy to build low-income shelter has been recognized and attempts have been made towards improving shelter for the urban poor, especially through site and service schemes and upgrading efforts (Obudho and Syagga, 1996).

Urban centres in Africa have been unable to supply education, health and transport facilities to meet the increasing demand. Although growing demand has put pressure on the local authorities, deterioration in the provision of those services continues. Debilitating conditions prevalent in urban Africa include malnutrition and insufficient medical services. Urban transport has also deteriorated as congestion, poor roads and lack of enough terminal facilities prevail. Underlying these problems is the lack of funds available to African authorities. The modern sector is faced with serious constraints including limits on public sector expansion, high domestic resource costs for manufacturing, small national markets and the scarcity of credit.

3. The Urbanization and Sub-urbanization Processes

(a) Cause

African countries are facing three problems simultaneously: rapid population growth, declining agricultural productivity and massive migration to urban areas. The urban economies have not been able to absorb such large numbers of rural migrants. Ethnic conflicts and wars, natural disasters and desertification have added to this influx. It is estimated that half of all refugees in the world are located in Africa.

Migration has become a survival strategy to gain a cash income and to diversify the sources of income for the household left behind in the village. With little to lose, many migrants have taken this risk. In reality, most of them are bound "... to exchange misery with hope ... for misery with hope...." (Adepoju, 1988: 4). It might be said that urbanization in Africa has largely resulted in a process to be best described as "the Urbanization of poverty."

A basic cause of rural poverty in Africa is the vulnerability of its agriculture: scope for irrigation is limited and it is thus largely dependent on rainfall. Rapid population growth necessitates the occupation of marginal land as the only

alternative. However, soil degradation occurs rapidly in these marginal areas, forcing people to move on and occupy more.

Several other factors should be mentioned which make the exodus from rural areas difficult to reverse. Literacy campaigns and vocational training have doubtless stimulated the migration of young people: there is only a limited demand for literate and trained people in rural areas. Moreover, agricultural work is generally looked down upon.

To slow down migration, three types of policies (largely implemented in combination) were pursued. The first aimed at transforming the rural economy, the second focused on discouraging migration and the third aimed to slow the growth of the large urban centres by encouraging the growth of middle-sized urban centres or the establishment of new regional centres. None of these policies was really successful. Economic forces thus determine the process of urbanization, a process which has steadily become irreversible.

(b) Trends and Prospects

Urbanization has not been an entirely modern development in Africa since some of the world's earliest urban centres were located in parts of Western, Northern and Eastern Africa. In

Africa, the capitals of some pre-colonial kingdoms date back to the tenth and eleventh centuries (Chandler, 1994a: 3-14 and 1994b: 15-32). However, it was not until the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century that many of Africa's major urban centres developed, though most of them remained small for several decades (Chandler and Tarver, 1994: 33-48). Since the Second World War the pace of urbanization in Africa has accelerated markedly and is expected to continue to do so in most African countries for sometime to come (Hance, 1970; El-Shakhs and Obudho, 1974; Obudho and El-Shakhs, 1979; O'Connor, 1982 and 1983 and Tarver, 1994).

Africa is the least urbanized region of the world, with 32 percent of its population living in urban areas in 1990. In 1990, 206 million persons lived in the urban centres of Africa, accounting for 15 percent of all urban dwellers in the LDCs. Thirty-eight percent of the population of Africa will reside in urban areas by the year 2000 and 54 percent by 2025 (United Nations, 1993b). There is significant variation in the level of urbanization among the different regions of the Africa. In Eastern Africa the proportion urban amounted to only 19 percent in 1990, it was 32 percent in Middle Africa, 37 percent in Western Africa, 43 percent in Northern Africa, and 46 percent in Southern Africa (table 4). The general direction of these differentials at the regional level is expected to be maintained until 2025. Several African countries, including

Burkina Faso, Burundi, Ethiopia, Guinea Bissau, Lesotho, Malawi, Niger, Rwanda and Uganda are still barely urbanized having less than 20 percent of their populations living in urban areas 1995.

Growing at 4.5 percent per year during 1985-1990, the urban population of Africa has the highest rate of growth in the world. Since 1950-1955, the average annual rate of growth of the urban population in Africa has varied between 4.4 and 4.8 percent per year (United Nations, 1993b and Obudho, 1994: 49-64). By 2020-2025, the urban population is expected to grow at 3.4 percent per year, about six times the equivalent rate for the MDCs. Urban growth rates are high for every country of Africa and especially for Eastern and Western Africa where they exceeded 5.5 percent per year in 1985-1990 and are expected to remain high until the end of this century (table 5).

During 1990-2000, 55 percent of the population growth in Africa will occur in urban areas, amounting to an additional 117 million persons. During 2000-2025, the equivalent figure will be 535 million or nearly three quarters of total population growth. With its low levels of urbanization, Africa is experiencing a high urbanization rate, estimated at 1.6 percent per year for 1990-1995. The urbanization rate in Africa is expected to peak at 1.65 percent in 1995-2000 and then decline to 1.2 percent by 2020-2025 (United Nations, 1993b). The urban population in

Africa has increased from 33 million in 1950 (constituting 15 percent of the total population) to 164 million (30 percent) in 1985 and it is likely to reach 857 million (54 percent) by 2025. Until 1980, Africa had the lowest level of urbanization in the world and it is expected to maintain that rank until the end of this century (United Nations, 1993b).

Continental comparisons of urbanization conceal important sub-regional and national differences (figures 4 and 5). Low levels of urbanization are characteristic of most regions of Africa, though Northern and Southern Africa are considerably more urbanized than the rest. Based on current estimates and projections, rural residents in Eastern Africa are still expected to outnumber urban dwellers by the year 2025. In contrast, already by 2000 about 51 percent of the population of Southern Africa will live in urban areas. By 2025, at least 61 percent of the population of Northern, Southern and Western Africa is expected to live in urban areas, whereas the equivalent proportion will be 55 percent in Middle Africa and only 4 percent for Eastern Africa. The growth rates of the urban population are, however, highest in Eastern and Western Africa: around 6 and 5 percent, respectively, during the 1990s (table 5).

In Northern Africa, all countries, except Sudan, are highly urbanized. In 1985, about a quarter of the population of the

region lived in urban centres of 20,000 inhabitants or more, compared with 13 percent in the whole of Africa, and the proportion of the population living in urban centres with 100,000 inhabitants or more was 13 percent against 10 percent for Africa as a whole. In 1990, Libya was the country with the highest proportion of the population living in urban areas (82 percent), followed by the Western Sahara, Tunisia and Algeria, in order of importance, all with more than 50 percent of their population urban (United Nations, 1993b). The only country in the region with a proportion urban below the African average of 31 percent was Sudan (with 22 percent urban). Morocco exhibits the greatest concentration of the urban population, with 50 percent living in urban centres of 10,000 inhabitants or more. It is followed by Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Tunisia and Sudan, in order of importance. In Northern Africa, there are over 210 urban centres with at least 20,000 inhabitants. Almost half of them are located in Egypt. Cairo-El-Dokki is the most populous urban centre in the continent (Colony, 1991 and 1993a: 77-110).

In western Africa, the evidence indicates the existence of important urban centres centuries ago, particularly in Senegal, Ivory Coast, Liberia and Gambia, to mention only a few. However, most urban centres in western Africa were established during the

colonial period. Western Africa exhibits relatively low urbanization levels. Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia and Mauritania are the countries with the highest proportion urban in the region (over 40 percent in 1990). At the other end of the scale, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Niger and St. Helena all had less than 20 percent of their populations living in urban areas in 1990 (United Nations, 1993b). There are over 44 urban centres in Western Africa with 100,000 inhabitants or more and over 71 percent of them are located in Nigeria. Lagos is the largest urban centre in the region. Among urban centres with at least 100,000 inhabitants, those in Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal and Sierra Leone grew faster (Obudho 1991 and 1993a: 77-112).

In 1990 Middle Africa exhibited intermediate levels of urbanization, with 32 percent of its population living in urban areas (table 1). Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Congo, Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe all had over 40 percent of their population living in urban areas (United Nations, 1993b). Only 10 percent of the population lived in urban centres of 20,000 inhabitants or more, and only seven countries in the region have urban centres with at least 100,000 inhabitants, namely, Angola, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Gabon and Zaire. The Congo has the highest proportion of its population in such urban centres, the Central African

Republic has 10 percent, Zaire 6 percent and Cameroon 4.4 percent, whereas the proportion for the whole of the region is 4 percent. Among the eighteen large urban centres in the region, eleven are located in Zaire and the largest are Kinshasa and Katanga (Obudho, 1991 and 1993a: 77-112).

Eastern Africa has the lowest level of urbanization despite the fact that it is one of the most densely populated regions in Africa (Obudho, 1993b: 77-108). However, small countries in the region, like Djibouti, Reunion and the Seychelles have relatively high urbanization levels (near or above 60 percent in 1990). At the other extreme, Burundi, Ethiopia, Malawi, Rwanda and Uganda had levels of urbanization below 13 percent in 1990 (United Nations, 1993b). The low urbanization of the region in general can be attributed to the fact that, during the colonial period, Africans were prevented from residing permanently in urban areas. In addition, most of the economies of the Eastern African countries are based on agriculture and there are few large-scale industrial or mining complexes. The urban population is growing very fast in Eastern Africa at an estimated annual rate of 5.1 percent in 1990-1995. Yet, the percentage of the population living in large urban centres remains low (Obudho, 1993b: 77-108). In those countries with urban centres of 100,000 inhabitants or more, a high proportion of the urban population is concentrated there. In Malawi, for instance, that proportion

is 100 percent. in Kenya 88 percent, in Somalia 75 percent, in Ethiopia 74 percent and in Madagascar 58 percent. Only in mainland Tanzania does less than half of the urban population live in large urban centres. The largest urban centres in the region are Addis Ababa, Dar-es-Salaam and Nairobi (Obudho, 1991).

In Southern Africa a large proportion of the urban population is found in urban centres having at least 20,000 inhabitants. However, the bulk is concentrated in the Republic of South Africa, where nearly 60 percent of the population lived in urban areas in 1990. Of the fifteen urban centres in Southern Africa, with populations exceeding 100,000, eleven are in the Republic of South Africa. Johannesburg is one of the eight African urban centres with more than a million inhabitants and the Republic has the other three most populous urban centres in the region namely Cape Town, Durban and East Rand. Urbanization in Southern Africa is high because of the large industrial complexes and mining activities in the region (table 6 and figures 6 and 7).

(c) Urban Problems

The African urban centres are facing rapid growth rates which considerably complicates problems which are further aggravated by the economic recession and the effects of structural adjustment programmes. We will briefly discuss these problems in urban development (table 6 and figures 6 and 7).

(i) Rapid Growth

Although the level of urbanization in Africa is still relatively low, the continued growth of the urban population poses serious developmental problems. Rapid urban growth is determined by rural-urban migration, high urban natural increase and the reclassification of previously rural areas as urban. There are also non-spatial factors that have significant impacts on the form, nature and extent of urban growth, including fiscal, industrial, defence, equalization, agricultural and immigration policies. Experience has shown that the effects of urban growth of some of those policies may be more significant than those of policies explicitly directed to influence urban growth. Consequently, it is important for African governments to evaluate the impact that non-spatial policies may have on urban growth. Of special importance is the rapid growth of major urban centres whose role has been primate and parasitic in the sense that they have continued to attract development projects and part of the rural population at the expense of other areas.

(ii) Employment and Income

Data collected in 12 countries in Africa show that real wages in the urban manufacturing sector have fallen dramatically since 1970. With some notable exceptions (Zimbabwe, Botswana and Ivory Coast), real incomes in 1985 were about half those in 1970. Data

from a smaller group of countries show that this decline had already started in the 1960s and, indeed, give empirical proof of the existence of a privileged urban sector at that time (Amos, 1989: 375-391).

This decline in urban incomes has narrowed the urban-rural income gap. Data from 11 countries show that in six cases this gap has become smaller than 5 percent, while in none was it greater than 10 percent. This narrowing of the gap becomes even more striking if the value of rural subsistence and urban-rural remittances is taken into account.

The informal sector is increasingly being accepted by African governments as having a dynamic potential for productivity and income generation. It is the most rapidly growing sector of Africa's urban economies, employing over 50 percent of the urban labour force. Lucrative activities are, however, often subject to monopolies in the form of legislation, licensing and control by political, tribal, kin and peer groups. Groups that have no access to these lucrative activities have no alternative but to work in less productive and stagnant sub-sectors and thus easily become marginalized.

(iii) Human Settlements

Two main trends can be discerned with regard to African urban centres: a decline in the provision of public sector for workers and the increasing commercialization of low-income shelter (both formal and informal). Non-demolition policy towards slum and squatter settlements was partly responsible for the latter trend. As a consequence, the price of shelter and the proportion of income spent on shelter have increased considerably. Overcrowding and changing household composition are strategies of the urban poor to cope with this shelter shortage (Obudho and Mhlanga, 1988 and Amis and Lloyd, 1990).

Cramped living conditions (with averages of four or more persons per room and in many instances less than one square metre of floorspace per person) increase the risk of disease and accidents. In most African urban centres there are no sewers at all. Only a few slum and squatter settlements have an adequate water supply system and garbage remains mostly uncollected - the result being disease (Hardoy and Satterthwaite, 1992).

As a result of the economic recession, the impact of structural adjustment programmes, the narrowing gap between urban and rural incomes and the deteriorating living conditions in slum and squatter settlements, migration from rural to urban areas has

started to decline. Fewer opportunities for subsistence production make survival in the urban centres difficult and force marginalized groups to consider re-migration. World Bank figures now point to a decline in urban growth rates from 6.2 percent in the 1970s to 5.7 percent between 1980 and 1985. Countries such as Tanzania, Zaire, Ghana and Uganda are currently even experiencing re-migration to rural areas!

(iv) Urban Management

Management problems resulting in dilapidated infrastructures and inadequate performance of urban services have been noted in all African countries. These problems can be attributed partly to the current recession and partly to the tensions between central and local governments. Governmental institutions at the urban level are politically vulnerable and financially weak. Strengthening their financial position by pricing their services at market levels meets opposition from above (i.e. the central government) and from below (the citizens) (Stren and White, 1989).

The assumption that Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) increase institutional capacity is at least doubtful. A more compelling argument is that further reduction of the existing low salaries of government staff will further undermine the morale of local officials and will lead to absenteeism, moonlighting and other survival strategies.

It has become clear that urban growth has outstripped management capacity, financial resources and even information on the urbanization process itself. Most local governments have moved away from the provision of free services to the poor (such as water standpipes) and middle-class (subsidized rented accommodation). In practice this means that individuals and communities have to find their own solutions by means of private water connections, bore holes, generators and self-help shelter. It goes without saying that only the relatively wealthy can afford these solutions. It is also clear that they are not in the public interest and frustrate attempts at even the most basic forms of urban environmental planning.

(v) Provision of Infrastructural Services

Given that in Africa major urban centres have been growing at the expense of small and intermediate urban centres, the increasing concentration of population has resulted in practical administrative difficulties related to the provision of public services to a rapidly growing population. There has been a failure to predict and plan for urban growth. Local authorities have been unable to grasp the implications of a population that doubles every nine years. Problems of accessibility to services are compounded by the fact that most urban residents earn low incomes and are not able to pay for the services they need (Obudho, 1993b: 77-112). Despite the deficiencies in their basic

infrastructure and social services, urban centres in Africa are the core of modern economic life and offer opportunities to migrants. Economic growth and economic activity rates in the main urban centres are high, even against a background of poor infrastructure and inefficient urban management. Urban centres are incubators of innovation, new enterprises and are crucial sources of employment. The value added by the urban work force is generally higher than that added by the rural work force. In Kenya, for instance, one-third of the GDP originates in Nairobi. Urbanization is positively correlated with the growth of modern manufacturing in Africa and there are also many instances of positive association with agricultural growth because urban centres are both the distribution points for agricultural inputs and the major markets for agricultural produce. Urban centres are also the financial centres and the source of funds for development. The non-agricultural sector usually pays a larger share of taxes than the agricultural sector in most African countries (Bird, Karasena and Miller, 1985), although agricultural employment as a proportion of the total is high and industrial employment low (De Cola, 1986: 76-190).

Africa suffers from a severe deficit in terms of the quality, quantity and maintenance of urban infrastructure. In Zaire, for instance, urban infrastructure and services reach less than one half of the urban population. The infrastructure of Kinshasa and

secondary urban centres was meant to serve only a fraction of the current population. Further, the existing infrastructure is eroding from lack of maintenance. Urban centres in most Africa face similar problems and, if conditions in the primate urban centres are deficient, secondary urban centres face even more severe deficits (Hamer, 1986). Almost no urban centre in Africa has managed to expand infrastructure to accommodate population growth. Nairobi has achieved more than most. In Nairobi, the problem of maintaining the existing system is the major issue and maintenance has often been neglected. Half of Nairobi's population lacks access to basic urban services (Obudho, 1996).

(vi) Decline in GNP

The rate of growth of the urban population of Africa has continued to increase even as the rate of growth of GNP per capita declined from 1.3 percent in the 1960s to 0.7 percent in the 1970s and even further in the 1980s. Migration has been fuelled by macro-economic and spatial policies that have favoured urban dwellers. In a number of African countries, however, the growth rate of the primate urban centre has started to decline in recent years, while the growth rates of secondary urban centres have been exceeding that of the primate urban centre (Baker, 1990 and Baker and Pedersen, 1992).

(vii) Weak Inter-Urban and Urban-Rural Linkages

There are also severe weaknesses in inter-urban and urban-rural linkages. For instance, the condition of roads between Kumasi in Ghana and its surrounding areas is so bad that transportation costs are about twice as high as they should be. Many African countries have adequate road networks, but the roads are in poor condition. Thus the "costs" of poor infrastructure affect the African economy in numerous ways. Enterprises that might have come into being have not done so. Those that exist are sub-optimal in size, utilize inappropriate technology or face higher than necessary operating costs. Clearly, when enterprises themselves have to provide infrastructure their burdens increase. As a consequence, enterprises are not able to expand to the size necessary to take advantage of economies of scale. In addition, lack of infrastructure in small and intermediate urban centres is a major inhibitor in the realization of urban-rural linkages. But in large urban centres losses stem from an inability to take advantage of so-called economies of agglomeration.

(viii) Structural Adjustment Policy and the Urban Bias

Most African economies are undergoing SAPs, which usually consists of setting the prices right, better fiscal and monetary discipline, encouraging private savings and investment

and strengthening economic management, in general. Part of the SAP is likely to change the terms of trade between urban and rural-based economic activities and households. Agriculture will tend to receive more attention under the SAPs than in the recent past since one goal is to remove "urban bias" in national and regional development planning. Kenya's policies, for example, have always been relatively free from "urban bias". In Kenya, both Nairobi and small intermediate urban centres have shared urban growth and it is felt that this growth has not been induced by urban price distortions. Urban areas do not receive food subsidies, urban wage increases are controlled and public transit fares and water tariffs are not subsidized. Kenya has always had a spatial investment strategy whereby resources are allocated on the basis of population. There are, however, cases of subsidy by default. While water fees are not actually subsidized, they are frequently not collected. Similarly, to the extent that property taxes are not collected, urban land and service consumption is subsidized (Obuchno, 1996).

(ix) Small and Intermediate Urban Centres and the Rural Areas

The development of Africa's nation-sized urban centres will be the focus of the next phase of urbanization since such urban centres are the spatial centres linking urbanization and agricultural development. The interdependence of urban and rural

populations in Africa is striking. An estimated 70 percent of urban residents maintain strong linkages to the rural sector. In some urban centres up to 90 percent of the inhabitants may be linked to the rural sector. Studies of small and intermediate urban centres in Sierra Leone have shown that such urban areas have grown as a direct consequence of the commercialization of agriculture in their surrounding region (Gibb, 1984: 110-143). Almost all African countries are at a stage of development where the majority of the work force will be engaged in agricultural activities for many decades. Some secondary urban centres are growing very rapidly because the agricultural areas to which they are linked are prospering. More attention should be given to the role of secondary urban centres in agricultural processing, marketing, storage and distribution (Pedersen, 1990 and 1991 and Baker and Pedersen, 1992).

It is important to understand the nature of urban-rural linkages by considering *inter alia*, the demand by the rural population for non-food goods, the inputs and services needed by the agricultural sector and the demand for food by urban dwellers.

The first two depend on the demand for agricultural output and the first is highly income elastic. If policy reforms now underway increase the demand for locally grown food and leave a larger proportion of the export crop surplus in rural areas, then

there will be higher rural demand for non-food goods, agricultural inputs and services. In fact, increasing the demand for the last two is necessary for an appropriate supply response on the part of farmers to increases in farm prices. Increases in rural incomes brought about by improved accessibility to markets and rising agricultural productivity lead to higher levels of activity in secondary urban centres. The rural poor have a high average propensity to consume. Low-income households consume products and services produced locally rather than from distant urban centres. Therefore, increased rural consumption due to increased income will tend to diversify the economic activities of nearby urban centres and create substantial off-farm employment opportunities.

Increasing demand for agricultural inputs and services may be weakened by the removal of subsidies for urban food consumption. Improvements in agricultural productivity will probably owe as much to expanding local markets. It is the changing distribution of population between urban and rural areas that will have the most profound impact on agricultural incomes in the long run (Rondinelli, 1983). Over the next 25 years or so almost all

African farms will come under the influence of urban markets. This spread of urban markets should greatly increase the disposable income of farmers. Such an increase will be more

rapid than that anticipated for formal or informal sector activities in urban areas. In fact urban wages are expected to fall in real terms and this has already happened in some urban centres because of the removal of urban subsidies. Hence, the growth of urban centres and the linkages between them and rural areas will support improvements in agricultural productivity and thus help to improve macro-economic performance. Barriers to the realization of effective urban-rural linkages in Africa include over-valued exchange rates and low administered food prices; reliance on parastatal companies; lack of access to credit; lack of transportation networks between and within urban centres; lack of market information; weak technological support; lack of infrastructure; and insufficient local institutional strength and ability to generate local revenues (Cohen, 1981; Becker et al. 1985 and Hahn, 1986).

Secondary urban centres should be supported by investment in physical and social infrastructure on the basis of their own potential rather than by syphoning off capital to promote "territorial equity". Public expenditure should be geared towards intermediate urban centres where rapid growth is already occurring or is very likely to occur as a result of structural adjustment and changes in macro-economic and sectoral policies. The best measure of "need" is that economic activity levels are ahead of service provision by the public sector. However, the

satisfaction of such needs will require all the public sector resources likely to be available in the foreseeable future, given the very high urban population growth rates in many locations. Economic activity levels may be stimulated by public sector investments but in the end local prosperity will depend upon private sector initiative. The urban sector also has a contribution to make to human resource development: effective training programmes are a key to successful decentralization efforts; health is partly an infrastructure issue - not only as a matter of medical services but also of improved water supply and sanitation; high population growth rates are slowed best where family planning programmes are most successful (Pedersen, 1975: 74-84).

(x) Growth Pole Policies

The 'growth pole' policies advocated during the 1950s and 1960s largely failed to stimulate the growth of small and intermediate urban centres or link them more closely to their surrounding rural areas (Pondinelli, 1983 and Oducho, 1985). To the extent that these policies led to the simple transplantation of capital-intensive and export-oriented industries, they failed to benefit the majority of the surrounding population or to strengthen urban-rural linkages. In addition, considerations of 'territorial equity' led to investments in infrastructure in

areas that lacked real potential and were not attractive to business. Among the most significant support that african governments can give to emerging small and intermediate urban centres and their surrounding areas is to improve their accessibility. An important contributor to the success of Kenya's small and intermediate urban centres is a good national road network, despite the increasing lack of maintenance (Obudho, 1993c and Gaile and Ngau, 1995: 100-116).

Development can be characterized in terms of four stages identified in terms of agricultural and urban activities. The first involves a subsistence economy in which almost everyone is engaged in agricultural production and where markets are local. The second occurs when local markets emerge and expand, and agricultural productivity begins to rise. Most of the labour force is engaged in agriculture and urban primacy is high. The third stage is characterized by increased urban population representing the major market for produce as, for instance, in Zimbabwe. The fourth involves increasing industrialization, with most people living in urban centres, as in present day Mauritius, which is probably the only African country to have reached such a stage. Countries that have reached the fourth stage have a strong service sector and high agricultural and industrial productivity, urbanization is high and primacy has been reduced.

In order for countries to progress from first to the second stage, investment in urban infrastructure and to build linkages with rural areas is required. To move into the third stage, small and intermediate urban centres must be promoted as major centres of economy activity linking the urban and rural sectors. The decentralization of governmental functions should be initiated in the third stage and emphasized in the fourth. Donors should then focus on the development of urban centres.

It has been argued that decentralization is not a substitute for the more efficient and equitable use of resources within urban centres. Decentralization policies must encourage the growth of the farm sector as well as the growth of small and intermediate urban centres (Obudho and Aduwo, 1989). The more equal the distribution of income and assets in rural areas, the greater the benefits of decentralization policies. Small and intermediate urban centres can be strengthened through appropriate transport policies, the creation of industrial estates and networks joining intermediate urban centres with the regional capital (Obudho, 1983).

(d) The Growth of Mega-cities and Large Urban Centres

In 1950 there were 76 urban centres with over one million inhabitants, most of which were in the MDCs. By 1980, 35 percent of the world's urban population lived in urban centres with more

than one million inhabitants. The number of such urban centres is expected to increase to 440 by the year 2000 when they will house 43 percent of the world's urban population. Africa's share of mega-cities and large urban centres is expected to increase from 14 percent in 1950 to 46 percent in the year 2000. That year, Africa will contain the largest number of large urban centres in the world. Although in 1990 only one of the 33 large urban centres was in Africa, urban centres in Africa are growing faster than those in MDCs ever did (Population Crisis Committee, 1990a and Obudho, 1993a: 77-112 and figure 8).

The problems related to the high rates of urban growth in Africa are often further accentuated by the concentration of population in the mega-cities and large urban centres. To the extent that these mega-cities and large urban centres are the focus of development, they act as a magnet for migrants from both rural and other urban areas. The result of this process is to increase the concentration of the urban population in one large metropolitan area to form what has been called a primate urban pattern. The growth of mega-cities and large urban centres and the prospects of their continued expansion rank among the most pressing urban problems in Africa. The size of mega-cities and large urban centres, in addition, magnifies the problems of income and development discrepancies usually inherent in primate urban patterns.

The largest urban centres in Africa are faced with increasing problems as population growth outruns investment in urban infrastructure. In most African mega-cities and the large urban centres households spend over 40 percent of their income on food. Shelter conditions are typically crowded given generally high population densities. In Johannesburg and Lagos, for instance, an average of five to six people per room was reported. In Kinshasa and Johannesburg, at least two-thirds of the households lacked water or electricity; in Lagos and Cape Town over 40 percent did. In most Africa mega-cities and large urban centres there was less than one telephone for every ten persons. In Johannesburg and Lagos, at most one third of adolescents aged 14-17 were in school and, although the percentages of school enrolment among that age group were higher in other mega-cities, the highest proportion, recorded by Algiers, amounted to only 67 percent. In terms of infant mortality, Cape Town and Johannesburg have reached relatively low levels (18 and 22 infant deaths per 1,000 live births, respectively). The two African mega-cities or large urban centres with the highest infant mortality (over 80 infant deaths per 1,000 live births) were Lagos and Kinshasa. Murder rates were high in Alexandria, Cairo, Johannesburg and Cape Town (near or above 50 per 100,000 persons annually), but data on infant mortality were generally not available for the African urban centres surveyed. Similarly, measures of air pollution were only available for Cape Town and

Johannesburg. Yet in most African mega-cities and large urban centres rush hour traffic moved slowly (at less than 25 miles per hour) thus contributing to air pollution (table 7 and Obudho, 1993a: 77-112).

4. Towards an Urban Planning Policy

African urban centres have now sunk into a severe crisis. Attempts to subsidize urban services and urban food supply have floundered. Local governments have turned to administrative decentralization, community self-help, privatization and full cost-recovery in order to regain some control. But none of these policies has yet reversed the general trend of deteriorating urban conditions.

It is the governments and people of Africa who must first shoulder the responsibility for tackling these problems. The two major international development agencies, the UN and the World Bank, were among the first to acknowledge that the rural bias prevailing in the development policies of the 1980s had to be adjusted. The mere fact that soon more than half of the LDCs population will live in urban centres in itself already justifies that adjustment. But even more important is the growing recognition that urbanization both contributes to and accelerates national economic development.

Having become aware of the positive role urban centres play in national development, the World Bank now advocates the enhancement of urban productivity by improving the infrastructure, the regulatory frameworks and administrative institutions. Instead of being a provider of urban services, government should create a policy environment in which private enterprises, households and community groups are given the incentive to meet their own needs.

UNDP, in its turn, has frankly acknowledged its rural bias. In the past 20 years the UN organization devoted only 2 percent of its expenditure to urban project! With regard to urban development, the organization now urges the donor community to look beyond economic growth and to focus on human development. Though this shift should be welcomed, still more has to be done by the donor community.

Implicit in the discussion above is that the organizational structure in Africa has inhibited the planning process. There are no carefully coordinated strategies focusing on urban problems. There is too much emphasis on the provision of services and too little effort is made to involve people and their resources in planning. Secondary urban centres are becoming increasingly important centres of opportunity for migrants and catalytic nodes that link rural areas to the

national economy (Rondinelli, 1983 and Obudho and Aduwo, 1989). Urban policy should be directed to these intermediate urban centres since they have played an important role during the last few decades and will continue to do so. Their rapid rates of growth of both population and formal employment indicate their dynamism (Obudho, 1983 and Baker, 1990). African governments have stimulated the growth of these urban centres and their impact on their rural surroundings by promoting industrial dispersion and administrative decentralization. Successful policies must be based on the bottom-up approach to planning (Obudho, 1983).

Urban residents have benefitted from the "urban bias" of the government policies. Yet, the reduction or elimination of such biases will be politically difficult because the urban elite controls political power. Africa has shortages of all the elements needed to formulate and implement policies, including trained manpower, fiscal resources, executive and administrative organs. For that reason, programme objectives often cannot be achieved within established time limits and it is difficult to pursue improvements at the national and local levels.

Policies to develop new urban centres have been pursued by some African countries. Political considerations have led to the establishment of new urban centres such as Dodoma in Tanzania or

Abuja in Nigeria. Egypt has also embarked on a policy to channel migrants to six new urban centres constructed in the desert areas and to several new development regions in the desert. The development of "growth poles" was aimed at directing urban-bound migrants to small and intermediate urban centres. Such policies assumed that initial government expenditures in land and infrastructure would lead to the self-sustaining economic growth of disadvantaged regions. Although many economic plans in Africa have identified potential growth centres and mechanisms to encourage their development, industrial growth pole schemes implemented to date have experienced many problems mainly because direct outlays and subsidies for growth-pole ventures have been draining African governments (Baker, 1990).

"Growth-pole policies" have been aimed at reducing subnational imbalances in per capita income or production and at directing productive investment away from traditional urban centres. So far, however, minimal success has been achieved despite the increasing number of small and intermediate urban centres designated as growth poles. Such failure stems from the tendency to concentrate on the promotion of industrial development in the designated settlements at the expense of industrial development in rural areas. Moreover, some industries have tended to operate below capacity because of difficulty in getting the necessary inputs, power cuts, poor infrastructure and lack of skilled

personnel (Renaud, 1981). The encouragement of small-scale industries would be preferable and the improvement of local infrastructure is necessary. "Growth centres" often provide less stimuli to the surrounding areas than expected. Furthermore, such stimuli are generally outweighed by negative effects. Growth-centre strategies have also failed to meet social goals because of the confusion between social and spatial equity. While the government intervention may enhance the role of settlements in national production, it cannot always achieve social and economic benefits for most of the population living there. In most African countries, the basic problem is poverty and it cannot be overcome by such a strategy alone. The desired economic growth has failed to come about because of the imprecise diagnosis of existing conditions in "growth poles" and their zones of influence: simplistic and piecemeal understanding of factors underlying development; lack of integration of settlement policies with micro-development policies; inadequate recognition of factors specific to each urban centre and unrealistic and imprecise estimation of the investments needed to implement proposed policies. A reassessment of the potential role of small and intermediate urban centres, therefore, seems necessary.

The promotion of intermediate urban centres goes hand in hand with measures to foster rural development. The Government of Kenya hopes to reduce Nairobi's rate of growth by promoting

small-scale industries in rural areas and developing alternative growth centres. This strategy also involves the creation of a network of rural service centres throughout the country and the selective allocation of investment using a bottom-up strategy (Obudho, Akatch and Aduwo, 1988: 158-188). The government of Botswana is attempting to control migration from rural areas mainly through its national settlement policy which seeks to reduce urban-rural imbalances by an adequate allocation of investment, providing infrastructure in rural areas and adopting an integrated rural development programme.

There is need to foster decentralization in management. Municipal management, which includes the management of urban centres and that of public authorities providing urban services must be strengthened so that decisions are more sensitive to local needs and opportunities. However, over the past twenty years the tendency in Africa has been towards the centralization of authority. Some devolution of authority has occurred in the case of large urban centres but it has rarely been effectively extended to intermediate urban centres. There is, however, a general recognition that urban services can only be provided efficiently if there is a partnership between central and local governments, with greater responsibilities being given to the latter than has generally been the case. Decentralization permits that better use be made of local human, financial and physical resources.

Training is the key to effective management for both urban centres and public enterprises. Many African countries have announced decentralization policies that give local authorities more responsibility for the provision and maintenance of local services before they have the necessary human and financial resources to do so. Financial constraints make it difficult for central government to allocate significant budgets to local authorities. Local government must be encouraged to raise its own revenue locally and eventually to execute its responsibilities without the supervision of the central government.

Improved local resource mobilization is important for effective urban management and decentralization. Governments may have to raise more revenue from urban households and businesses when taxes on agricultural output are reduced as part of the SAPs. The share of local government in the mobilization of public sector resources is low in Africa. There has been more resource mobilization in capital urban centres than in small and intermediate urban centres in Africa, mainly because capitals have highly valued taxable property and a working tax collection system. But urban centres have various sources of local revenue. A major obstacle to improve revenue mobilization is the absence of a relationship between taxes paid and services enjoyed by taxpayers. Thus, revenue collection would be enhanced if taxpayers were informed of the objectives of taxation and if some

revenue were earmarked for vital and visible projects. Better local resource mobilization by public enterprises is also important. Urban households and businesses are often willing to pay more for water and power than is assumed by the managers of public utilities.

Land is vital resource is development that is under increasing pressure as rapid population growth continues. Because land is so important, it is a political issue. Land is inefficiently used resource in Africa. There is a need to improve land registration, development, property tax valuation, land tenure and property rights as well as to reduce barriers to the smooth functioning of land markets. Land policy and management issues have been neglected. Although lack of serviced or serviceable land is often identified as a major constraint to efficient urbanization, governments rarely formulate land policies that deal with this problem. They often lack the information to do so since almost none has the capacity to prepare maps that reflect rapidly changing urbanization, very few have topographic maps and hardly anyone knows how much land the public sector owns. Problems arise from the conflict between traditional and modern land tenure systems. A modern economy needs to permit changes in land rights and consequently in land uses as income levels rise and the economy evolves. Urban centres have to be developed at higher densities since land in the urban centre

becomes relatively scarce and the unit costs of supplying infrastructure fall with increasing density.

African governments attach high priority to the provision of suitable shelter for all. Many are directly engaged in the provision of dwelling units. However, public resource constraints are so severe that governments will increasingly need to limit their support only to those activities that cannot be carried out by private sector as, for instance, by acquiring land for development, securing tenure, supplying basic infrastructure, establishing appropriate planning standards and facilitating the mobilization of domestic private financial resources for shelter construction (Obudho and Mhlanga, 1988: 327-348 and Obudho and Slegga, 1986). Donor agencies should encourage investment in shelter by supporting sites and services projects as well as upgrading projects. Housing is a productive investment. It mobilizes domestic savings, requires few imports and creates substantial direct and indirect employment in the small enterprise sector, improving labour productivity through better living conditions and by generating income through the operation of small home-based businesses or through renting of rooms. It thus contributes also to skill development. The multiplier for shelter investment appears to be among the higher multipliers of all industrial sectors. As economies develop, shelter development is an increasingly important part of annual

investment. Squatter settlement upgrading is also important. Africa's urban centres are growing so quickly that settlement sites cannot be prepared and serviced. Squatter settlements dominate many urban centres, accommodating as much as 70 per cent of the population in some cases. Such settlements are characterized by high densities, poor water supply and sanitation, and almost no all-weather roads. Evaluations have shown that squatter upgrading projects involving improved access to water, better sanitation, better roads, the lay-off of workshop areas, public transportation and loans to improve property have had very high economic rates of return.

Until the 1960s the growth of urban centres was such that technical resources, development policies and budgeting were either within the capacity of urban centres or central government departments. As urban centres in Africa began to grow rapidly so did the gap between the urban centres' development needs and available resources. By the 1980s, the dominant view in the international community was that the master-plan approach in Africa has failed because it was too static in nature; seldom offered guidance on techniques of implementation; seldom evaluated the costs of development; generally not involve community leaders and updated infrequently. The net effect of such inadequacies is that the urbanization process in Africa proceeded largely without control.

Financial shortfalls are common in African urban centres, especially for the provision and maintenance of urban services, the acquisition of land for urban expansion and the provision of employment opportunities. Lack of coordination between government agencies often exacerbates the lack of resources. Institutional short-comings include the lack of trained personnel, especially at the level of local government, and problems of institutional coordination in development planning and management. The staff often consist of a handful of dedicated and knowledgeable heads of department directing largely unmotivated junior and medium-level staff. The problems of staff shortages are often compounded by the absence of clear guidelines on areas of responsibility and decision-making powers. Consequently, coordination between the policy-making staff, technicians and those in charge of implementation is ineffective. The filtering down process works poorly, and there is no horizontal decision-making at lower levels. Coordination should be a two-way process.

As the accelerating rate of urban growth began to overtake the ability of governments to provide adequate urban services and guide urban expansion, as urban unemployment increased and central governments were unwilling to increase the powers and resources of urban centres to manage themselves, so the public became increasingly defensive and the private sector increasingly antagonistic. The private sector has been increasingly unable

to rely on the public sector to provide urban services and sees only the negative regulatory aspects of government. Slowly, governments are realizing that the "project" approach is only one of the many tools to orient urban development and that, in order to cope with urban growth given limited resources, the only realistic option is to engage in other direct public sector interventions.

The increasing complexities of urban areas require a re-evaluation of the traditional role of the public sector. Urban-sector interventions characterized by a "project" cannot hope to meet the massive demand for improved services and shelter in many urban centres, let alone contribute significantly to economic growth. As economic conditions have deteriorated in Africa, economic objectives for urban areas have become more critical, requiring a more integrated approach to urban development. Traditional master planning has paid little attention to the necessary resource allocation needs and financial feasibility of policies. Programmes should be vehicles for institutional development and the strengthening of technical, managerial, financial and administrative capabilities that will sustain development.

5. Conclusion

Future policies should gain control of urban growth; develop alternative methods of providing low-cost urban services; recover investment costs to permit financial replaceability; strengthen national and municipal institutions; stimulate community participation; develop economic and institutional links between the urban and rural sectors and promote effective urban management strategies. To gain control of urban growth it is necessary to reduce current levels of national subsidies to the capital and shift the financial burden to those who benefit from it. In order to develop alternative ways of providing urban services, the pricing and distribution of services must be reviewed and means of recovering an increasing share of the economic cost of the service provided must be devised, probably by eliminating the subsidies enjoyed by urban consumers. Attention must be focused on major urban centres because they consume large amounts of national revenue, their income levels are relatively high implying that urban dwellers are more able to pay for services than rural residents, and the efficient allocation of scarce national resource is essential if African countries are to improve national incomes in future. African governments should re-examine that standard and types of services provided to their growing urban populations. When services aim at maintaining relatively high standards, they are unlikely to

reach the majority of urban residents who are primarily low-income. African governments must experiment with cheaper methods of providing services and improve administrative efficiency.

To recover the investment costs for services provided in urban centres, those using such services must be asked to pay according to their means. The present system whereby services are delivered at very low cost but reach only a small number of people cannot expand unless cost recovery becomes a reality. Implementation of an effective system of municipal taxation would help in this area.

None of the above objectives can be achieved unless African governments make serious attempts to strengthen the institutions working in the urban centres. In most African countries, the department concerned with urban planning has been under-staffed and insufficiently financed to permit the execution of its legal responsibilities. There should be increased financial autonomy for the municipalities, training of staff and a clearer definition of municipal jurisdictions.

Given the financial and institutional weaknesses of the public sector in most African countries, it is imperative that programmes be designed to stimulate greater community participation in the financing and delivery of urban services.

Self-help programmes, incentives to the private sector and the use of community organizations or even ethnic and religious organizations must be encouraged in order to generate increasing activity and interest by the urban population.

As part of the economic diversification of urban economies, efforts must be made to develop economic and institutional links between urban centres and rural areas. These links must include the urban production and provision of goods and services needed to support rural development such as the manufacturing farm implements, repair centres for agricultural machinery and the processing of agricultural products. This approach requires that more resources be devoted to the development of small and intermediate urban centres to perform such functions.

Because policies and programmes to control rural-urban migration and the diffusion of the urban way of life have not been successful, there is an increasing recognition that the growth of urban centres is inevitable and that solutions to the problems of urban centres depend heavily on their effective management. Urban management is a holistic concept. It can strengthen the capacity of governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations to identify policy and programme alternatives and to implement these with optimal results. The challenge of urban management is to respond effectively to the problems of particular urban centres

so as to enable them to perform their functions effectively. Effective urban management involves improving financial management; providing urban shelter, services and infrastructure; improving urban information systems; strengthening the urban informal sector and strengthening the institutional capacities of urban centres.

There has been a heightened public awareness of the need for African governments to take decisive measures to improve conditions in urban centres and the governments themselves have not been idle in attempting to articulate the nature of urban problems. The need for a clearly formulated urban policy thus arises precisely because of the importance of ensuring an appropriate role of urban centres in regional and national development in Africa. It is against this background that we have suggested placing productive investments in those urban centres that are the most efficient and have already proved to have high economic potential, whatever their size. A crucial need is to develop links between the economic activities of the mega-cities, large urban centres, small and intermediate urban centres and the national development strategies in Africa. The new planning strategy for African country is to move beyond isolated projects that emphasize shelter and residential infrastructure towards integrated urban-wide efforts that promote urban productivity and reduce constraints on efficiency; increase

the demand for labour stressing the generation of jobs for the urban poor; improve access to basic infrastructure and social services emphasizing the needs of women and the poor; address urban environmental problem and increase our understanding of urban issues through international research. These efforts should promote the role of urban centres as engines of growth for rural areas and hence for national economy as a whole.

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Table 1 Percentage of Population Residing in Urban Areas, by Major Area, Region and Country, 1950-2025

Major area, region and country	Percentage urban									
	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	202	
World Total	29.3	34.2	36.6	39.4	43.1	47.6	52.8	58.5	61.	
More Developed Regions	54.3	60.6	66.6	70.2	72.7	75.6	79.1	82.4	83.	
Less Developed Regions	17.0	22.2	24.7	28.8	34.3	40.3	46.8	53.5	83.	
Africa	14.5	18.3	22.9	27.3	32.0	37.6	44.2	50.9	54.	
Eastern Africa	5.3	7.4	10.3	14.6	19.1	24.5	30.7	37.7	41.	
British Indian Ocean Terr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Burundi	1.7	2.0	2.4	4.3	5.3	7.0	9.8	14.1	16.	
Comoros	3.3	9.8	19.4	23.2	27.8	34.1	41.8	49.7	55.	
Djibouti	41.0	49.6	62.0	73.7	80.7	84.3	85.7	88.8	89.	
Ethiopia	4.6	6.4	8.6	10.5	12.3	14.9	19.5	26.2	29.	
Kenya	5.6	7.4	10.3	16.1	23.6	31.8	39.7	47.6	51.	
Madagascar	7.8	10.6	14.1	18.3	23.8	30.8	38.6	46.6	50.	
Malawi	3.5	4.4	6.0	9.1	11.8	15.6	21.0	27.9	31.	
Mauritius (1)	28.8	33.2	42.0	42.4	40.5	41.7	46.8	54.3	57.	
Mozambique	2.4	3.7	5.7	13.1	26.8	41.1	50.5	57.7	61.	
Reunion	23.5	32.8	43.6	54.7	63.9	71.2	76.5	80.3	81.	
Rwanda	1.8	2.4	3.2	4.7	5.6	6.7	8.9	12.6	15.	
Seychelles	27.0	25.4	26.0	42.8	59.3	69.2	74.1	78.3	80.	
Somalia	12.7	17.3	20.4	22.2	24.2	27.8	33.9	41.9	45.	
Uganda	3.1	5.1	8.0	8.8	11.2	14.2	18.8	25.1	28.	
United Rep. of Tanzania	3.8	4.7	6.7	14.8	20.8	28.2	36.3	44.3	48.	
Zambia	8.9	17.2	30.2	39.8	42.0	44.7	49.7	56.5	59.	
Zimbabwe	10.6	12.6	16.9	22.3	28.5	36.0	43.9	51.7	55.	
Middle Africa	14.2	17.9	24.8	28.2	31.9	37.3	44.5	51.9	55.	
Angola	7.6	10.4	15.0	21.0	28.3	36.2	44.2	51.9	55.	
Cameroon	9.8	13.9	20.3	31.4	40.3	49.3	57.4	63.9	66.	
Central Africa Republic	16.0	22.7	30.4	38.3	46.7	54.6	61.5	67.5	70.	
Chad	3.9	6.8	11.8	20.5	31.6	41.8	49.7	57.0	60.	

Source: UNCHS - Habitat, 1991: 3 & 4

Congo	30.9	31.9	32.8	35.8	40.5	46.7	54.0	60.9	64.4
Equatorial Guinea	16.0	25.5	26.7	27.4	28.7	32.9	40.1	48.1	51.1
Gabon	11.4	17.4	25.6	35.8	45.7	53.8	60.7	66.8	69.9
Sao Tome and Principe	13.0	16.0	23.4	32.8	42.3	50.5	57.8	64.3	67.7
Zaire	19.1	22.3	30.3	28.7	28.1	31.0	37.9	45.9	49.9
Northern Africa	24.5	30.0	36.2	40.2	43.8	48.4	54.4	60.7	63.9
Algeria	22.3	30.4	39.5	43.4	51.7	59.6	66.3	71.7	74.9
Egypt	31.9	37.9	42.2	43.8	43.9	46.4	51.8	58.9	62.9
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	18.6	22.7	45.3	69.6	82.4	88.4	90.7	92.1	92.9
Morocco	26.2	29.3	34.5	41.0	46.1	50.9	56.8	63.2	66.9
Sudan	6.3	10.3	16.4	20.0	22.5	27.3	34.4	42.4	46.9
Tunisia	31.2	36.0	43.5	50.3	56.0	62.0	67.9	73.0	75.9
Western Sahara	67.8	55.9	43.3	49.3	56.5	63.1	68.9	73.9	76.9
Southern Africa	38.2	41.9	43.6	44.5	46.2	50.6	57.1	63.5	66.9
Botswana	0.3	1.8	8.4	15.1	25.0	36.7	46.9	54.5	58.9
Lesotho	1.0	3.4	8.6	13.3	19.4	27.1	35.3	43.3	47.9
Namibia	9.4	15.0	18.6	22.8	27.8	34.4	42.1	50.0	53.9
South Africa	43.1	46.6	47.8	48.1	49.2	53.1	59.5	65.8	68.9
Swaziland	1.4	3.9	9.7	17.8	26.4	36.1	45.3	53.0	56.9
Western Africa	10.2	14.5	19.7	26.0	33.2	40.8	48.6	55.9	59.9
Benin	4.4	9.2	18.2	31.6	38.2	45.5	53.0	60.1	63.9
Burkina Faso	3.8	4.7	5.7	8.5	15.2	24.2	33.5	41.4	45.9
Cape Verde	7.9	16.3	19.6	23.4	28.7	35.6	43.6	51.4	55.9
Cote d' Ivoire	13.2	19.3	27.4	34.8	40.4	46.9	54.1	61.0	64.9
Gambia	10.6	12.4	15.0	18.2	22.6	28.9	36.7	44.7	48.9
Ghana	14.5	23.3	29.0	31.2	34.0	39.2	46.6	54.2	57.9
Guinea	5.5	9.9	13.8	19.1	25.8	33.6	41.6	49.5	53.9
Guinea-Bissau	10.0	13.6	15.1	16.8	19.9	25.2	32.6	40.6	44.9
Liberia	13.0	18.6	26.0	35.0	45.4	55.4	63.3	69.1	71.9
Mali	8.5	11.1	14.3	18.5	23.8	30.4	38.1	46.1	50.9
Mauritania	2.3	5.8	13.7	29.0	46.8	59.0	65.3	70.8	73.9
Niger	4.9	5.8	8.5	13.2	19.5	26.8	34.4	42.4	46.9
Nigeria	10.1	14.4	20.0	27.1	35.2	43.3	51.1	58.3	61.9
St. Helena (2)	29.5	29.1	25.2	17.4	17.4	19.4	26.1	33.6	37.9
Senegal	30.5	31.9	33.4	35.9	39.8	45.1	51.7	58.9	62.9
Sierra Leone	9.2	13.0	18.1	24.5	32.2	40.2	48.1	55.6	59.9
Togo	7.2	9.8	13.1	22.9	28.5	33.7	40.6	48.5	52.9

TABLE 2: TOTAL POPULATION (IN THOUSANDS), POPULATION GROWTH (PERCENTAGE) AND DENSITY (PER 1,000 HECTARE), AND BY AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

	POPULATION	GROWTH RATE	DENSITY
ALGERIA	24960	2.80	106
ANGOLA	10020	2.81	80
BENIN	4630	3.15	429
BOTSWANA	1304	3.45	23
BURKINA FASO	8996	2.89	329
BURUNDI	5472	3.01	2125
CAMEROON	11833	3.42	240
CENTRAL AFRICA REPUBLIC	3039	2.89	47
CHAD	5678	2.54	45
CONGO	2271	3.30	58
COTE D' VOIRE	11997	3.84	396
EGYPT	52426	2.15	543
ETHIOPIA	49240	2.98	425
GABON	1172	3.30	45
GHANA	15028	3.17	653
GUINEA	5755	3.04	280
KENYA	24031	3.74	441
LESOTHO	1774	2.92	584
LIBERIA	2575	3.27	265
LIBYA	4545	3.62	26
MADAGASCAR	12004	3.24	206
MALAWI	8754	3.63	896
MALI	9214	3.17	77
MAURITANIA	2024	2.86	20
MAURITIUS	1082	1.08	5963
MOROCCO	25061	2.43	563
MOZAMBIQUE	15656	2.70	200
NAMIBIA	1781	3.10	22
NIGER	7731	3.27	56
NIGERIA	108542	3.25	1241
RWANDA	7237	3.46	2899
SENEGAL	7327	2.79	384
SIERRA LEONE	4151	2.65	580
SOMALIA	7497	2.37	120
SOUTH AFRICA	35282	2.18	289
SUDAN	25203	2.89	106
TOGO	3531	3.17	635
TUNISIA	8180	2.08	526
UGANDA	18794	3.75	923
UNITED REP. OF TANZANIA	27318	3.76	308
ZAIRE	35568	3.23	159
ZAMBIA	8452	3.80	114
ZIMBABWE	9709	3.11	251

Source: UNCHS - Habitat, 1991: 4

TABLE 3 URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION (IN THOUSANDS)
(PERCENTAGE), AND BY AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

GROWTH RATE

	URBAN		RURAL	
	POPULATION	GROWTH RATE	POPULATION	GROWTH RATE
ALGERIA	12912	4.31	12048	1.03
ANGOLA	2836	5.41	7184	1.68
BENIN	1747	4.81	2883	2.07
BOTSWANA	359	8.28	945	1.27
BURKINA FASO	811	5.91	8185	2.57
BURUNDI	303	5.82	5169	2.84
CAMEROON	4878	5.65	6955	1.68
CENTRAL AFRICA REPUBLIC	1418	4.56	1621	1.30
CHAD	1676	5.54	4002	1.14
CONGO	919	4.69	1351	2.29
COTE D'IVOIRE	4850	5.34	7147	2.75
EGYPT	24466	3.69	27961	0.71
ETHIOPIA	6367	5.50	42873	2.57
GABON	535	5.11	637	1.63
GHANA	4960	4.41	10068	2.53
GUINÉA	1476	5.74	4280	2.02
KENYA	5664	6.94	18367	2.64
LESOTHO	359	6.33	1414	1.95
LIBERIA	1183	5.55	1392	1.10
LIBYA	3189	4.67	1356	0.90
MADAGASCAR	2858	5.84	9146	2.35
MALAWI	1034	6.34	7720	3.23
MALI	1765	4.88	7449	2.75
MAURITANIA	947	5.66	1078	0.02
MAURITIUS	438	1.12	644	1.05
MOROCCO	12033	3.88	13028	0.99
MOZAMBIQUE	4188	7.64	11468	0.54
NAMIBIA	495	5.21	1285	2.23
NIGER	1506	6.64	6225	2.36
NIGERIA	38159	5.47	70383	1.94
RWANDA	555	7.48	6681	3.08
SENEGAL	2815	4.16	4512	1.89
SIERRA LEONE	1335	5.01	2815	1.43
SOMALIA	2727	4.44	4770	1.08
SOUTH AFRICA	20991	3.25	14291	0.50
SUDAN	5550	4.58	19653	2.39
TOGO	909	5.93	2622	2.12
TUNISIA	4445	2.76	3735	1.24
UGANDA	1959	6.30	16835	3.43
UNITED REP. OF TANZANIA	8967	7.96	18351	1.34
ZAIRE	14043	4.82	21526	2.13
ZAMBIA	4216	5.59	4236	1.85
ZIMBABWE	2677	5.40	7032	2.16

TABLE 4: PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION LIVING IN URBAN AREAS, IN AFRICA, BY SUBREGIONS, 1975 - 2025

Subregion	1975	1980	1985	1990	2000	2025
Africa	25.0	27.3	29.6	32.0	37.6	54.1
Eastern	12.3	14.6	16.9	19.1	24.5	41.3
Middle	26.6	28.2	29.8	31.9	37.3	55.5
Northern	38.4	40.2	42.1	43.8	48.4	63.7
Southern	44.1	44.5	45.2	46.2	50.6	66.4
Western	22.7	26.0	29.5	33.2	40.8	59.3

Source: United Nations (1993b), table A.I

TABLE 5: AVERAGE ANNUAL RATE OF CHANGE OF THE URBAN POPULATION IN AFRICA, BY SUBREGIONS, 1975 - 2025

Subregion	1975-	1985-	1990-	1995-	2020-
	1980	1990	1995	2000	2025
	(percentage)				
Africa	4.59	4.51	4.53	4.46	3.39
Eastern	6.50	5.55	5.62	5.44	4.22
Middle	3.98	4.39	4.64	4.62	3.83
Northern	3.61	3.42	3.41	3.42	2.41
Southern	2.89	3.01	3.22	3.36	2.26
Western	5.73	5.52	5.32	4.97	3.49

Source: United Nations (1993b), table A.5

TABLE 6: URBANIZATION LEVEL, GROWTH RATE (PERCENTAGES), AND BY AFRICAN COUNTRIES 1990.

	URBANIZATION LEVEL	GROWTH RATE OF URBANIZATION LEVEL
ALGERIA	51.73	1.52
ANGOLA	28.30	2.60
BENIN	37.73	1.66
BOTSWANA	27.51	4.83
BURKINA FASO	9.02	3.02
BURUNDI	5.53	2.80
CAMEROON	41.22	2.23
CENTRAL AFRICA REPUBLIC	46.67	1.67
CHAD	29.52	3.00
CONGO	40.49	1.39
COTE D'IVOIRE	40.43	1.50
EGYPT	46.67	1.53
ETHIOPIA	12.93	2.53
GABON	45.67	1.82
GHANA	33.01	1.24
GUINEA	25.64	2.69
KENYA	23.57	3.20
LESOTHO	20.26	3.41
LIBERIA	45.93	2.28
LIBYA	70.16	1.05
MADAGASCAR	23.81	2.60
MALAWI	11.81	2.71
MALI	19.16	1.70
MAURITANIA	46.77	2.80
MAURITIUS	40.47	0.04
MOROCCO	48.02	1.45
MOZAMBIQUE	26.75	4.94
NAMIBIA	27.81	2.11
NIGER	19.48	3.38
NIGERIA	35.16	2.22
RWANDA	7.67	4.02
SENEGAL	38.42	1.37
SIERRA LEONE	32.18	2.36
SOMALIA	36.37	2.07
SOUTH AFRICA	59.50	1.07
SUDAN	22.02	1.68
TOGO	25.74	2.76
TUNISIA	54.34	0.68
UGANDA	10.43	2.56
UNITED REP. OF TANZANIA	32.83	4.20
ZAIRE	39.48	1.59
ZAMBIA	49.88	1.79
ZIMBABWE	27.57	2.30

Source: UNCHS - Habitat, 1991: 12

TABLE 7: SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS FOR AFRICA'S MEGA - CITIES AND LARGE URBAN CENTRES

Metropolitan area	Population (thousands)	Public safety: murders per 100,000 people	Food costs: per cent of income spent on food	Living space: per persons per room	Housing Standards: per cent of houses with water/electricity	Communications: telephones per 100 people	Education: per cent of children in secondary school	Public health: infant deaths per 1,000 live births	Peace and quiet levels of ambient noise (1-10)	Traffic flow: miles per hour in rush hour	Clean air alternate pollution measurement	Urban livability score
Cairo, Egypt	11,000	56.4	47	1.5	94	3	53	53	7	12.4		35
Johannesburg South Africa	4,600	19.8	-	5.0	28	6	25	22	3	38.8	1200 PPM	46
Lagos, Nigeria	4,000	-	58	5.8	50	1	31	85	7	17.4		19
Alexandria, Egypt	3,640	49.3	51	1.5	98	4	47	38	3	16.6		42
Kinshasa, Zaire	3,200	-	63	1.7	33	0	60	86	4	18.6		29
Casablanca, Morocco.	2,900	-	44	2.3	84	3	53	56	5	43.5		48
Algeria, Algeria	2,685	-	55	2.5	100	8	67	32	3	18.6		48
Cape Town, South Africa	2,425	64.7	34	1.2	58	18	66	18	3	23.0	1030 PPM	52

source: Population Crisis Committee, 1990a P. 10

Fig. 1 : AFRICA : POLITICAL

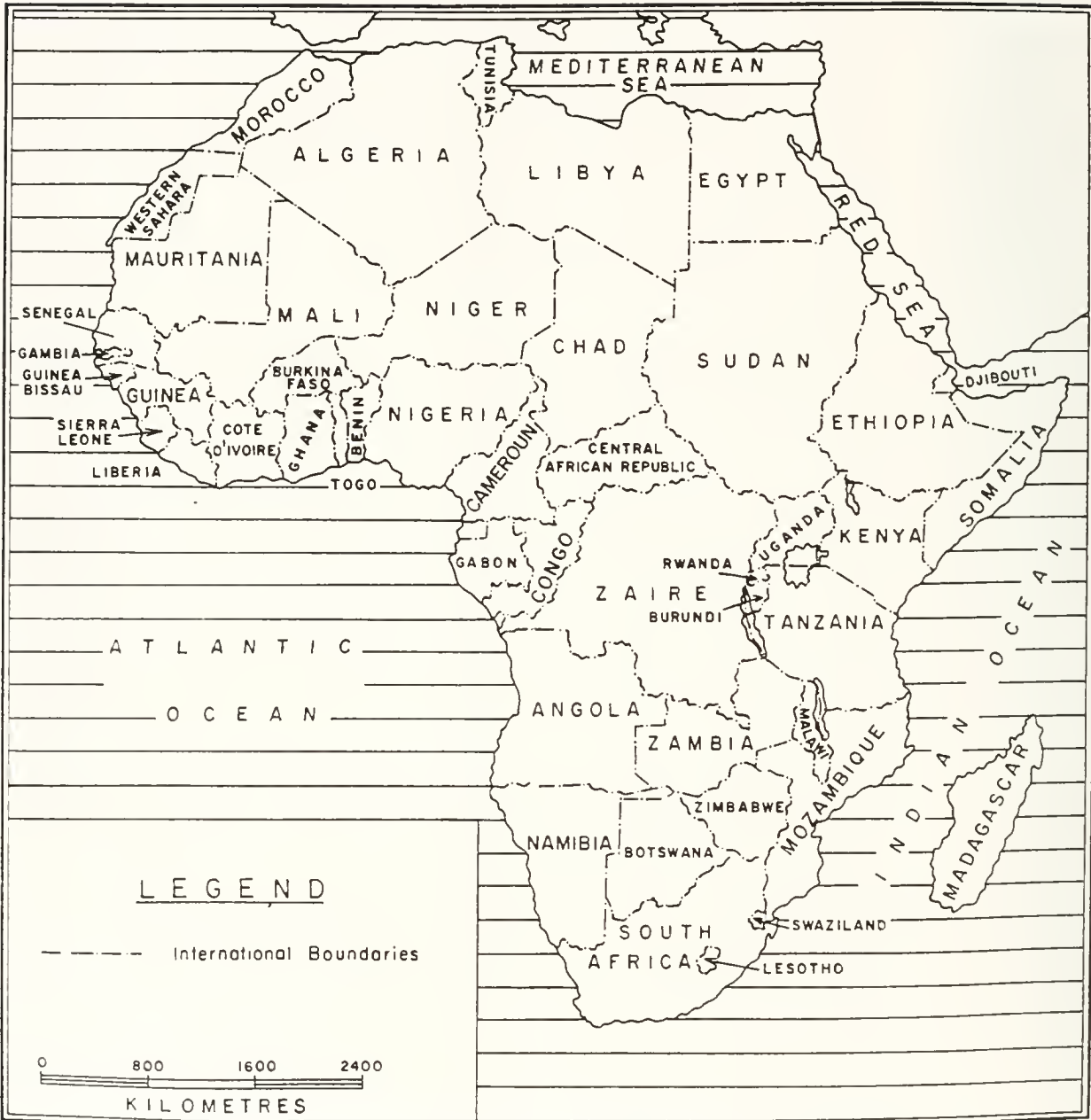


Figure 2: AFRICA : TOTAL POPULATION, 1990

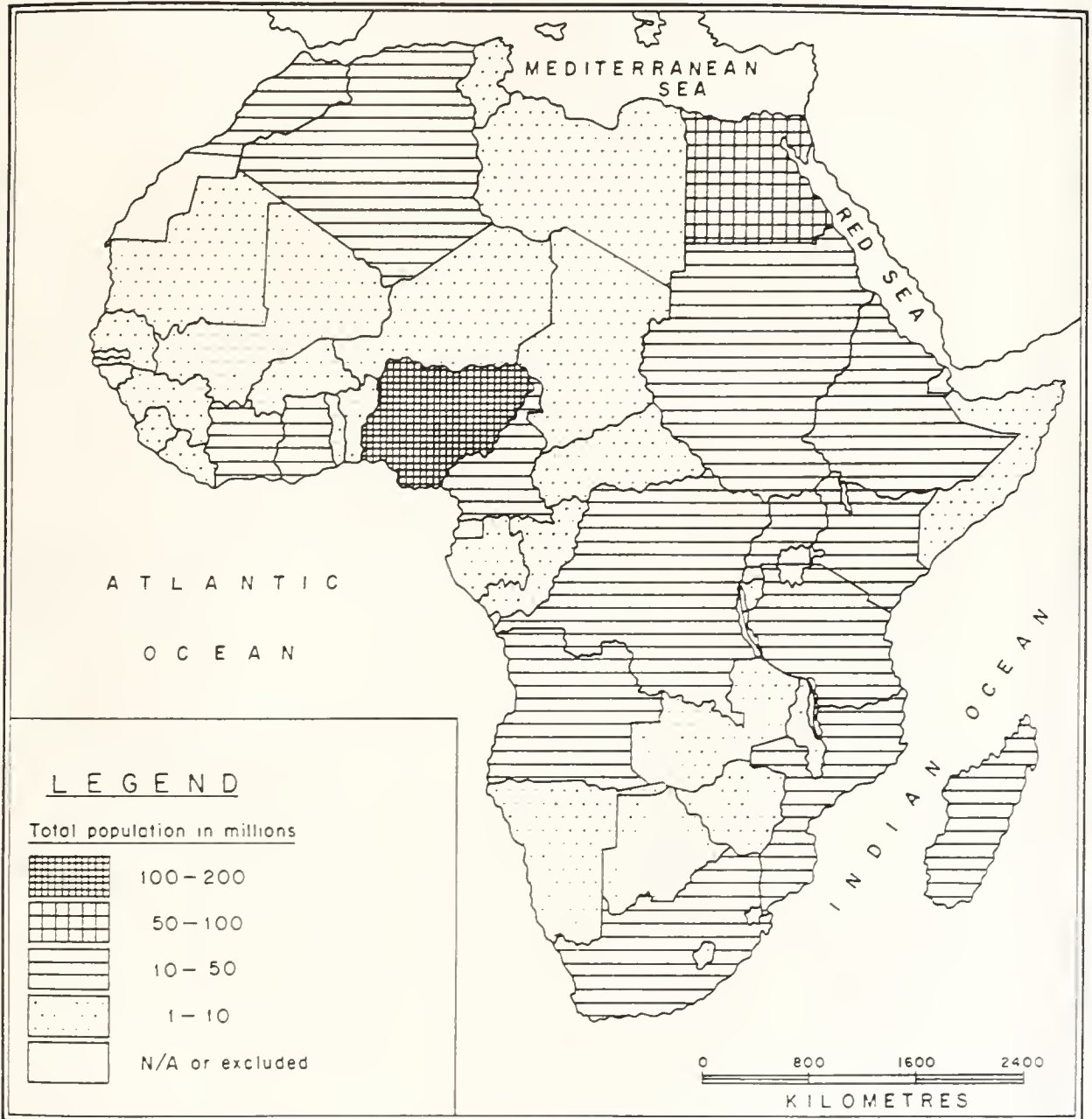


Fig. 3 : AFRICA : POPULATION GROWTH, 1990-1995

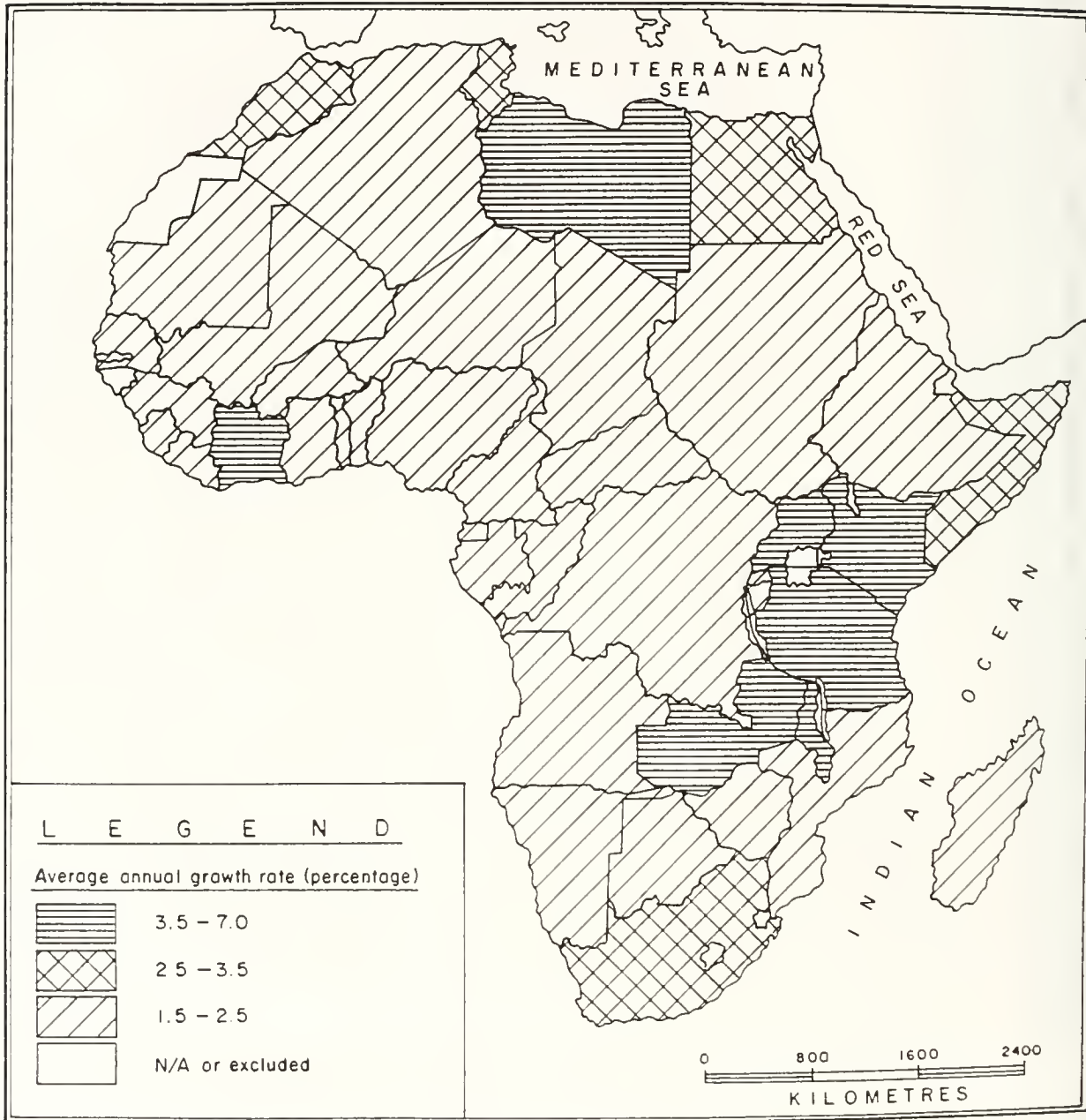


Fig. 4 : AFRICA : URBAN POPULATION, 1990

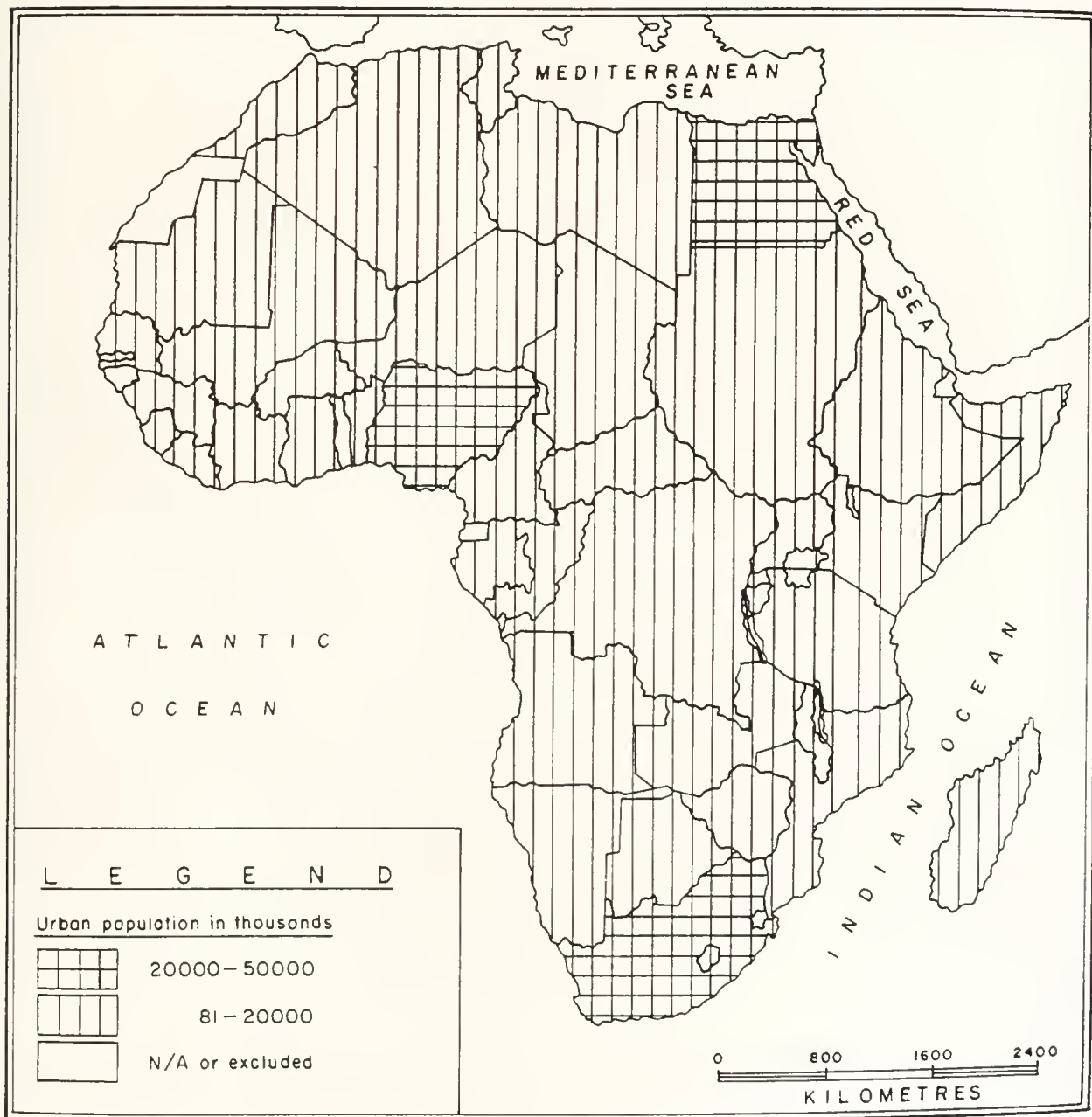


Fig. 5 : AFRICA : URBAN POPULATION GROWTH , 1990-1995

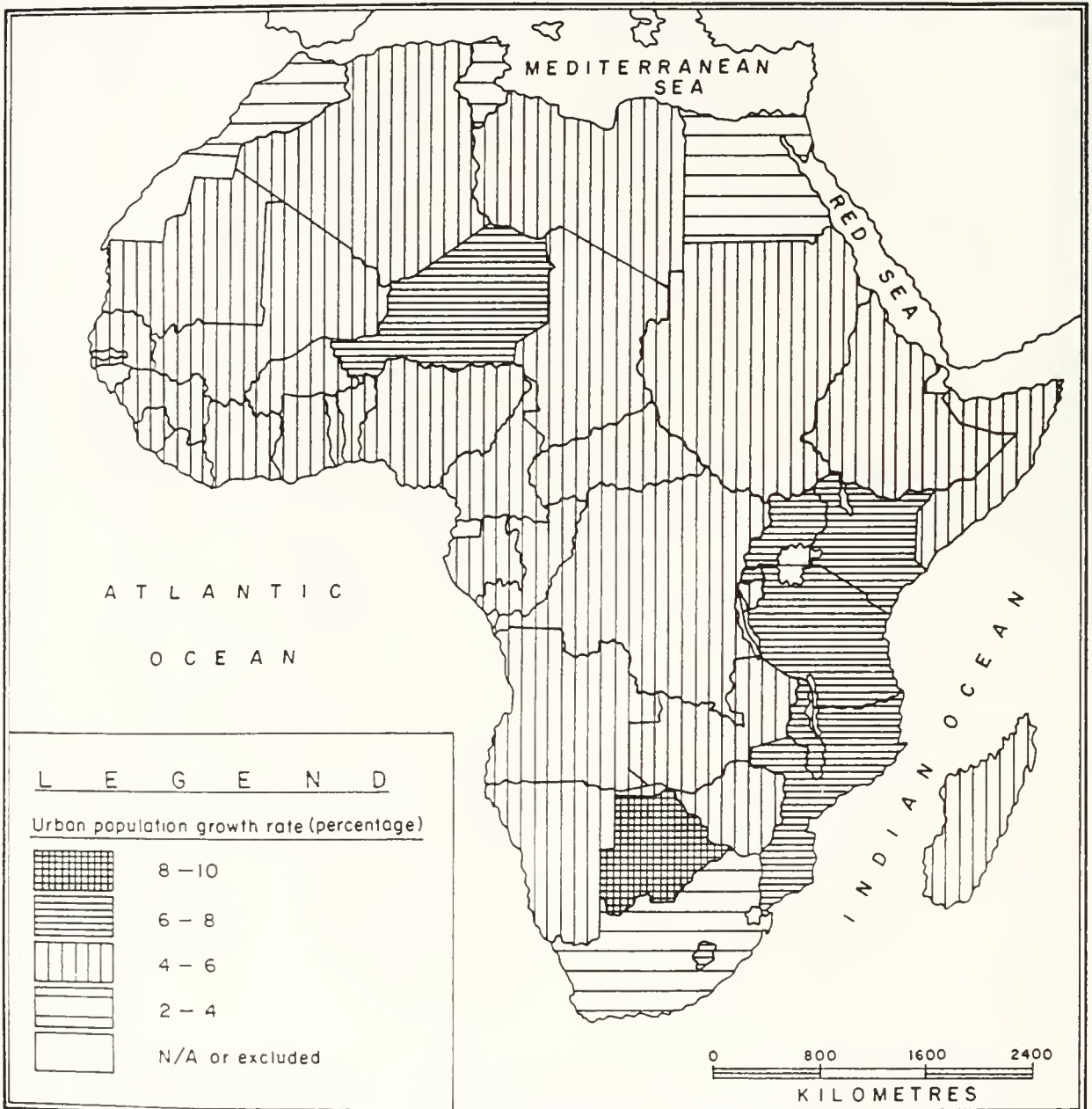


Fig. 6 : AFRICA : URBANIZATION LEVEL , 1990

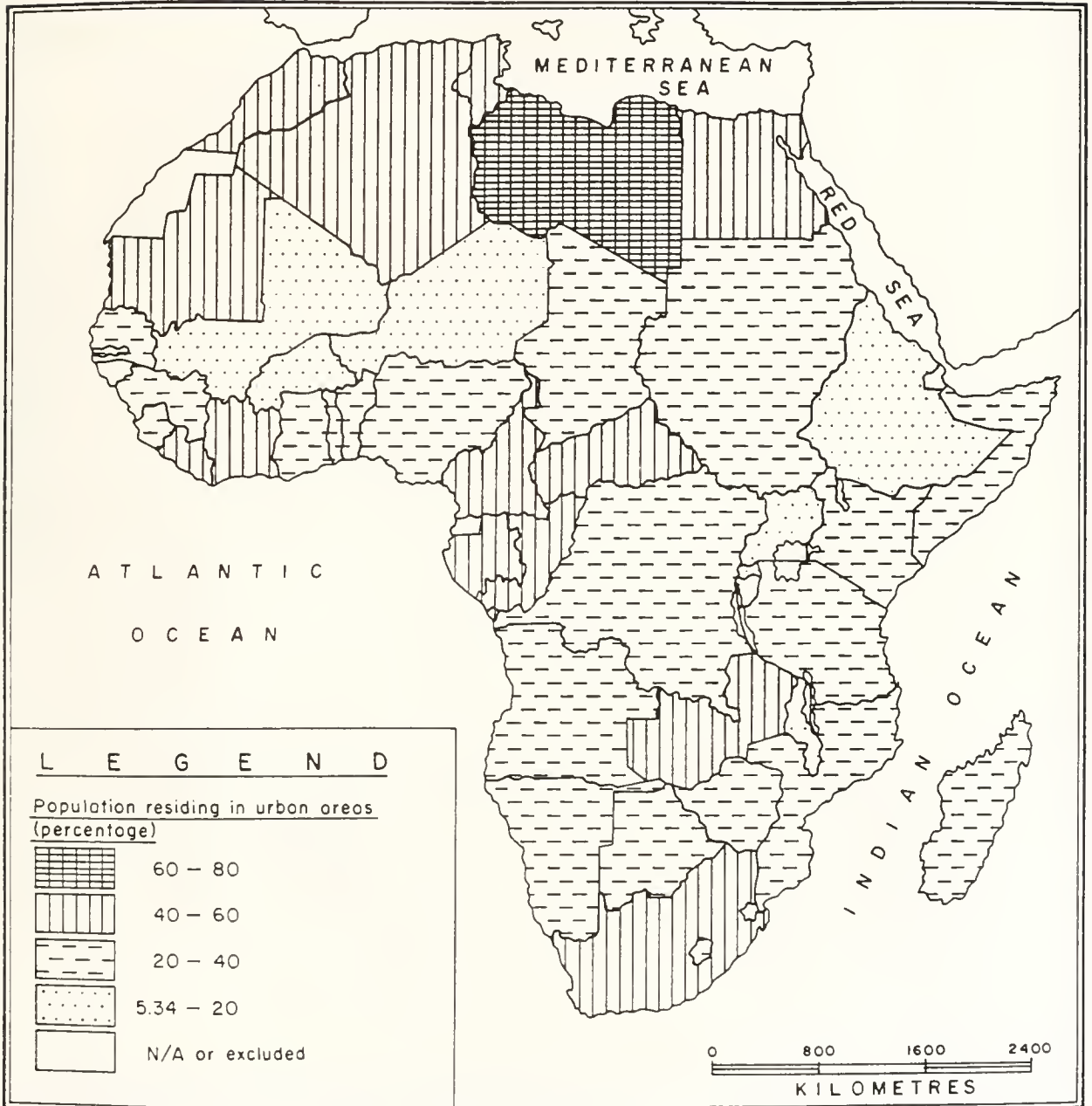


Fig. 7 : AFRICA : GROWTH RATE OF URBANIZATION LEVELS, 1990—1995

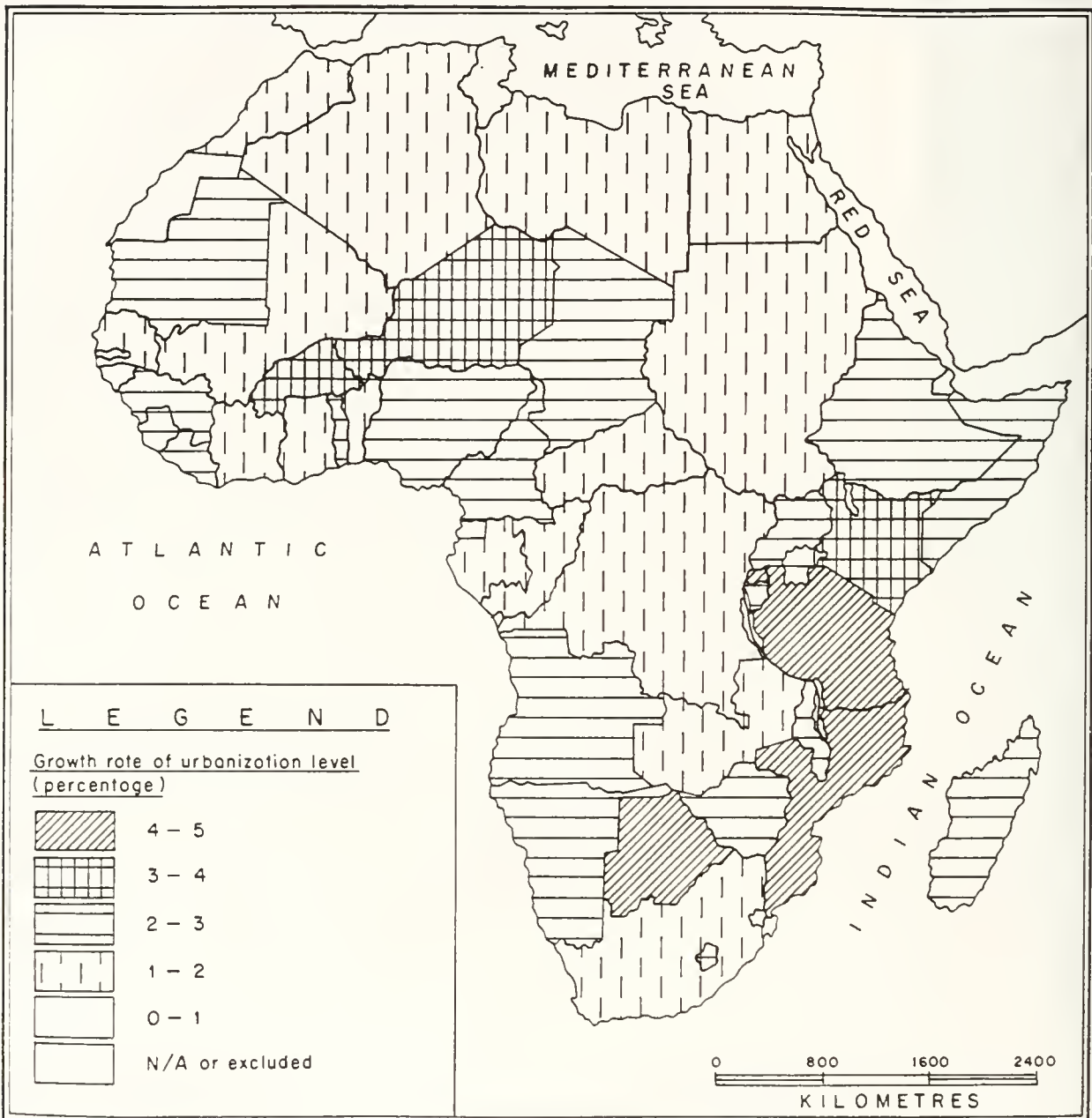


Fig. 8 : AFRICA : URBAN AGGLOMERATIONS, 1990

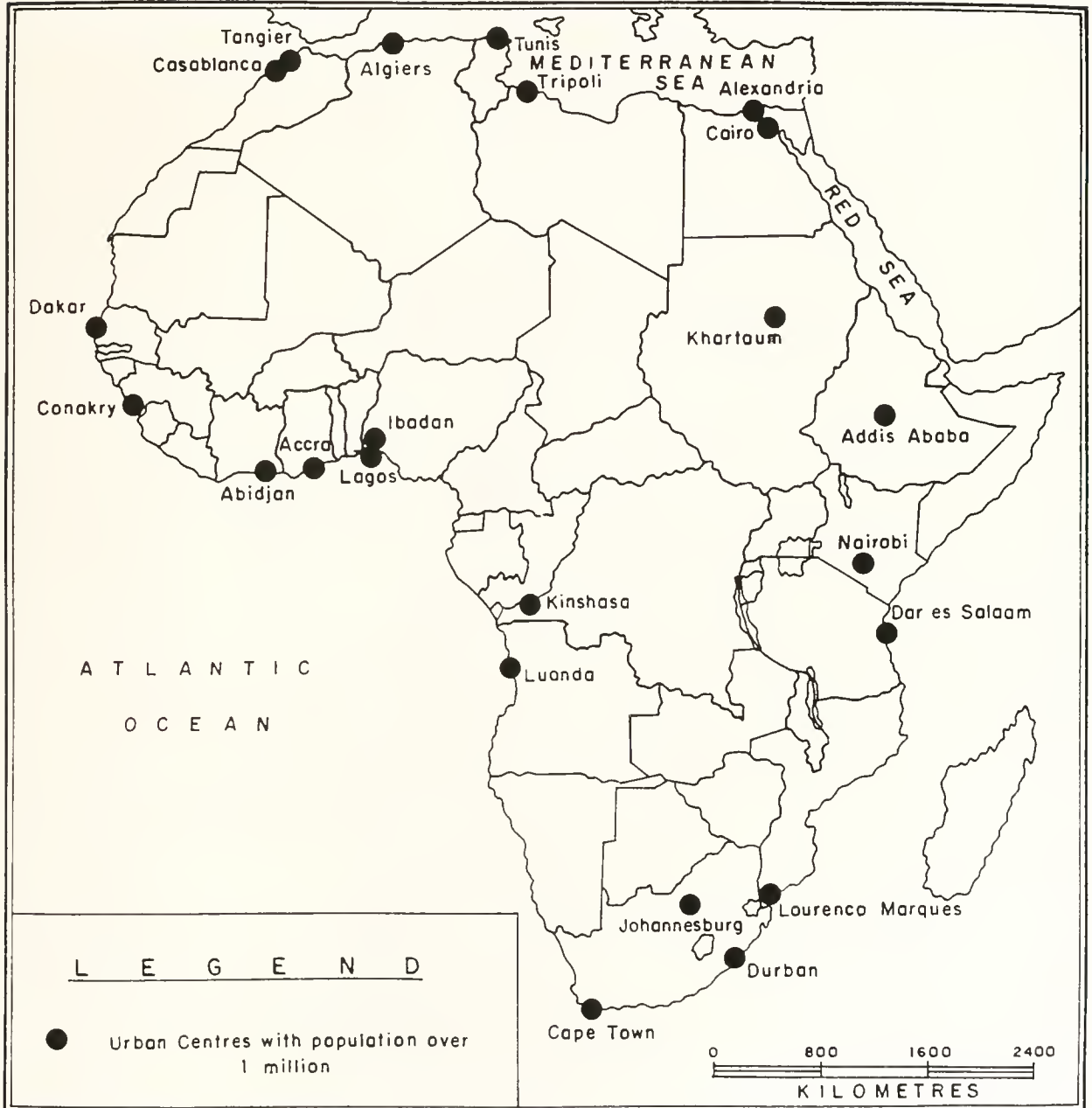
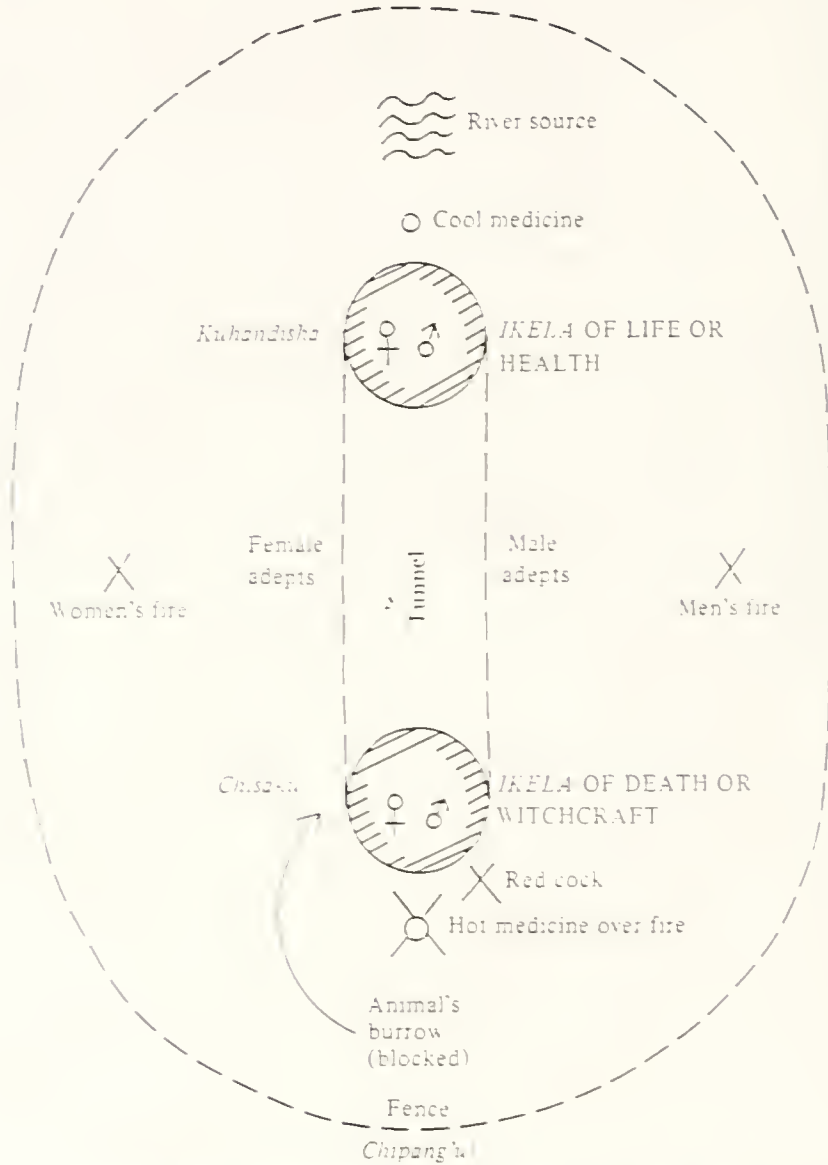


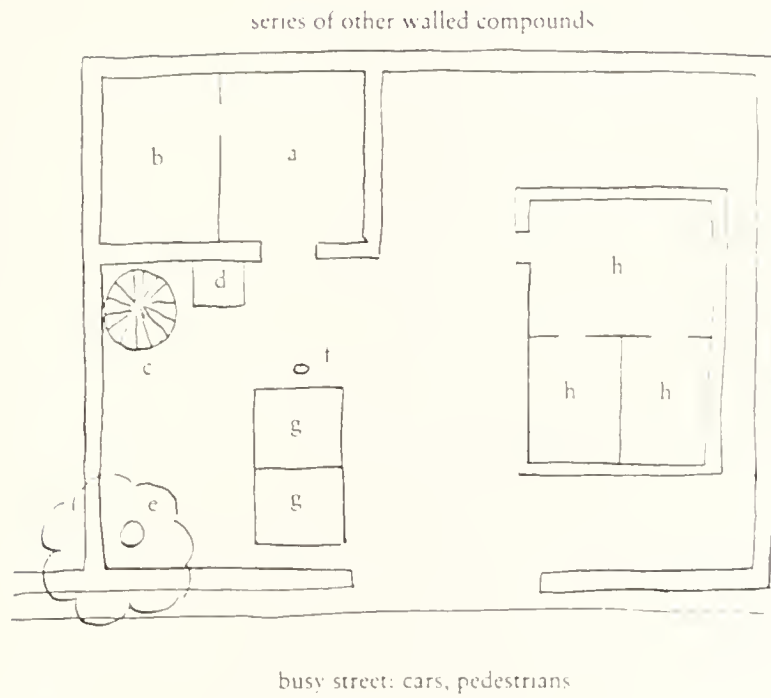
FIGURE 1



Schematic Representation of the Spatial Symbolism of the *Isoma* Ritual

Source: Turner, 1996, p.30

FIGURE 2



Source: Janzen, 1992, p.17

Structural Adjustment Programs and the City in Africa

Barry Riddell
Geography, Queen's

CHANGING TIMES, ALTERING ACTORS

During the past 150 years, the face of the African city has undergone dramatic change, as the forces shaping its facade have altered. This transition reflects a periodization during which a changing set of actors has moulded the urban landscape. During Precolonial times the forces which shaped the city were essentially internal in character; they reflected forces which were found within Africa. They largely indexed the operation of politics and religion. While residing mainly within the cultural ecology of local events, more global connections were indicated in reflections of political might and long-distance trade (O'Connor 1983). Indeed, the wax and wane of empire had expression not only in the size of certain places, but was also reflected in their internal morphology, inhabitants, occupations, structures, and the nature of transport connections.

Then followed the period of colonial contact. The early years were times of legitimate commerce, and had little impact other than a concentration of commercial activities in coastal locations and the subsequent growth of a few centres. The subsequent slave trade was a period of pillage and depopulation throughout most of the continent; however, a small number of coastal locations felt positive benefits as transshipment centres or as the foci of entrepreneurial networks. However, during the period of 'high' colonialism, the forces shaping the nature of the city became increasingly external in nature, and this domination increased with the formal declaration of 'colonies' and 'protectorates' by several European countries. Features of the new urban landscapes included the hierarchical nature of

city systems, the importance of transportation to their morphology, the imposition of European style buildings (such as the Law Courts or the Administrative Headquarters), and the use of major streets for displays of power. There were also certain African influences which were legacies of the past and were of no significance to the imperial imprint, but which were maintained: the market places associated with local trade and commerce were the main expressions. As well, certain African features were continued because they were essential to the operation of the colonial system; and this was true of many chiefs and chiefdoms (the indirect rule in British Africa is the most prominent example) (O'Connor 1983).

Most of the continent experienced the coming of Independence in the early 1960s (although Ghana's came earlier, and a few countries had to wait until the 1970s, 80s, or even 90s for their freedom from the external yoke.) With the granting of Independence, the actors shaping the city reverted to internal forces once again as the face of the urban landscape reflected this newly won Independence. Most countries engaged in efforts at industrialization in an attempt to foster the new nations' development efforts, and factories with their employment opportunities became novel features in such centres. The new manufacturing plants reflected attempts at import substitution or export valorization. This indexed the fact that during the colonial period, such centres served as centres of control; now, they became engines of development with their new factories highlighting the shift in economic emphasis from the colonial focus upon the mine and farm (primary production for export) to the factory and to the services to be provided for the African population, especially schools and hospitals. Also, the cities expressed the 'urban bias' policies of government, and the city became much more attractive to a migratory rural population, with the urban centres' economic opportunities (jobs, higher wages) and services (education, health, water, and electricity) attracting migrants from the countryside. It is small wonder that the African city

began to explode in size: as well as the artificial disparities resulting from government allocation and taxing policies, colonial barriers to the habitation of cities were lifted.. The city offered both employment and enhanced opportunities. In addition to the new landscape, however, certain legacies of the colonial past continued to influence the city (Stock 1995). Among these three were of paramount importance: the notion of planning, a legislative agenda, and the concept of government involvement in housing.

However, commencing in the period of the mid- to late 1970s, neocolonial factors which were struggled against in the early Independence years began to dominate the urban landscape . The most important of these was the weakening of local efforts at industrialization, with the resultant mass of unemployed workers it created. (this was due to the increasing domination of global production and trade by massive multinational firms (MNCs)). I recall how the Development Plan in Sierra Leone was carefully crafted by the government to take effect from 1975: however, a few years later the plan was abandoned because it was recognized that the local state did not control the commanding heights of the economy and the local landscape was shaped by forces which lay beyond the country in the form of multinationals, currency exchange, foreign aid, and the demand and price of her products (Riddell 1985).

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s the shape of the city has increasingly become dominated by the activities of International Financial Institutions (IFIs), such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (IBRD). These were dramatically indexed by the 15 programmes of the IMF undertaken in Africa in 1980 (followed by a subsequent 156 further agreements in the 1980s and 86 later tranches or new schemes begun in the 1990-95 period (IMF Survey)) and by the first Structural Adjustment Loan of the World Bank to the African nation of

Kenya (followed by 51 further Structural Adjustment Loans (SALs) to countries in Africa over the next 13 years (World Bank, Annual Reports).¹

These Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) of the IMF and the IBRD provided loans of convertible currency to African nations when no other agency was willing to offer financial support; however, because the money was provided in the form of loans (and not gifts), the IFIs imposed a set of 'conditionalities' upon the recipient countries. The aim of such conditions was to adjust such countries from being in a negative balance-of-payments situation through to stabilization to subsequent growth: the recipients were intended to pay back the loans. Such conditions varied from country to country, depending upon their resource base and the nature of their financial circumstances. However, the vast array of particularity in the more than three hundred separate programs may be generalized for the continent by indicating that five basic types of conditionalities could be found in the majority of such schemes (Riddell 1992). These included:

1. Currency Devaluation (intended to render imports more expensive and thus reduce them, while at the same time boosting exports by lowering their international price).
2. Trade Liberalization (intended to better enable all countries in the world to use their 'comparative advantage').
3. A Reduced Role of the State (their position is premised upon the notion that such state entities have interfered with the working of the market forces of supply and demand in the past: they are removed in order to allow market forces and privatization to expand and dominate the market).

¹In addition, the World Bank's Urban Projects by 1995 included over 40 schemes undertaken in Africa at a cost of approximately \$US1.6B (information from paper presented by Christie Gombay at the 1995 African Studies Association Conference, 'Urban Politics and Urban Management: Are They Mutually Exclusive?')

4. The Elimination of Subsidies (previously provided at great expense by African states in order to enable their populations (mainly the poor) to have access to goods and services, especially to items such as food and petroleum).
5. An Increase in the Export of Primary Products for the Global Market, especially of agricultural goods (in order to generate greater revenue).

These are the primary economic measures of SAPs²: they influence the parameters of global trade and finance. However, even though these first round effects are national in scope and economic in nature, they have led to a set of 'second round' effects upon the landscapes of urban places in Africa and the people who reside there, and as a result of such 'conditionalities', cities are reshaped to reflect their direct and indirect influences. In other words, the conditions imposed to influence the workings of the economy rebound upon the political economy.

The major force has been the removal of the dominance of 'urban bias' from the policy scene of African nations. Such partiality varied in its manner of implementation from country to country: however, the ability to act in this style resided in the redistribution powers of the state. The African state was able to conduct such 'urban bias' policies via its powers of differential taxation and the allocation of spending. For example, it could tax rural produce by way of the operation of produce marketing boards or export taxes, and then could spend the money on urban lighting or city schools. By doing this urban places gained an 'artificial' advantage in various economic measures (jobs, wages) and welfare

²Of course, there are many others, however, for our purposes they only add complexity to the basic argument. Here, would be included measures such as wage + price controls, credit restriction, public sector retrenchment, taxation measures, interest rates, privatization, control of the money supply, and trade regulations.

opportunities (health, education). This favouring of the city reflected the working of the political economy of such countries: It partly was an indication of the legacy of the colonial past; It partly indexed the correlation of concentration of activities and infrastructure with economic development³; It was partly to place the tangible benefits of change close to the allies of the States' leaders; and It partly resulted from fear of the urban crowd and the threat of riot and the overthrow of government. Such behaviour can be explained using several conceptual frameworks including the rational choice school (Bates 1981), the vampire state analogy, the notion of the politics of the belly (Bayart 1992), neopatrimonialism (Hutchful 1995), the stress on getting prices right (Ravenhill 1993), the overdeveloped state, or the state as a redistribution mechanism (Riddell 1985). However it is explained, it describes an empirical reality which dominated the African scene. Its removal by SAPs has resulted in a very dramatic alteration in the geographic composition of African nations: the unevenness in development which had a class reflection, also was geographically expressed. The 'ironing out' of this inequality, which had favoured the city in Africa in the early Independence years, has resulted in ten alterations of African cities:

1. **A Slowing of Population Growth.** One of the great difficulties of the early years of Independence can be characterized by several phrases often heard in media accounts of the difficulties of African cities: 'cities that came too soon' and 'exploding cities in unexploding countries'. Cities experienced massive increases in size, due largely to the attraction of migrants from the countryside. Under adjustment conditionalities the urban place has become far less attractive to rural

³Such agglomeration economies took place in the historical evolution of economic development in countries of both the First World and former Second World

dwellers and thus the massive migration from the countryside to the city has slowed. The diminishing of urban attraction is most dramatically expressed in levels of unemployment and standard of living. At the same time, conditions in rural areas have declined as well, and some would talk of a rebalancing of the U-R disparity leading to continuing massive migration to the city. However, this has been offset by two rural events: the fact that SAPs have resulted in improved rural prices for agricultural exports and the fact that rural residents in areas not dominated by high population densities or market exchange can employ their 'exit option' and retreat to the economy dominated by subsistence and social exchange (for there, conditions may not be ideal, but the threat of starvation is absent for there are usufruct rights to land).

However, the major factor is the removal of urban bias and the great difference in employment and welfare opportunities between the city and the countryside. For the past third of a century the city has been the focus of industrial activity, service provision, and infrastructure. The urban-rural equation has suddenly been changed: the city is less attractive as the cost of living has risen, subsidies removed, services decreased, and employment opportunities lessened. Now, SAPs encourage export agriculture and discourage infant industries. They revalue currencies and thus reduce the supply of cheaper food imported into urban markets. They lead to the removal of subsidies, and reductions in the prices of urban food and petroleum have been major urban attractions. Tight credit has reduced urban business and thus the creation of jobs. Education, which has been a great stimulus of urbanward migration, has been reduced. Geography has been reshaped as a result of such events!

2. The Rise of an Informal Economy whose activities are dominated by trade, service provision, and petty commodity production. This second economy also

incorporates activities which may be termed redistributive in nature, many of which activities are outside the law. This reflects the fact that the formal economy has withered under such programmes and the people whose jobs have disappeared, whose services have declined, and whose standard of living has dropped precipitously have attempted to cope in the difficult circumstances. As well as people searching for survival in difficult circumstances, the growth of the informal sector also indexes an attempt to escape from the taxation, policies, and regulation of state control⁴. The cities of Africa are no longer 'Theatres of Accumulation' (Armstrong & McGee 1985).

3. The Nature of the Urban Economy Changes. The formal economy declines due to both the reduction in state employment and the removal of protection for local industry. As a result, the nature of the city's economy alters from one based upon employment in government and industry to one dominated by the growth of the relative importance of the service sector and an informal economy. As a result, the city's generative power is reduced.

4. Human Underdevelopment. Human life in the African city is impoverished by a set of events which follow from the imposition of SAPs. The cost of living mounts, wages are reduced in a glutted labour market, services such as health and education are reduced, housing conditions are weakened, employment opportunities are reduced by the removal of industrial protection and the downsizing of the state. Food is less available in the city as currency devaluation implies that imported products rise dramatically in price and land is removed from

⁴Not all activity in the informal economy is the result of coping or survival strategies. Much reflects the operation of economic criteria

food production in order to produce export crops.. However, the greatest impact is upon health care⁵.

5. Capital Flight. In order to avoid further devaluation, inflation, and to escape from a weak economy with low profit expectations, money leaves the country by escaping to safer havens in Europe or elsewhere. This is especially bothersome in two senses: first, the funds represent a loss of a scarce resource in African nations with great 'opportunity costs' associated with them; and secondly, the designing of SAPs has consumed thousands of highly trained economist over a quarter of a century - they've imposed poverty on the masses, but surely they could have done something with regard to the relatively small number of people moving money if they chose. That they did not do so is a black mark against them! This is underlined by the fact that such financial transfers are vital in the operation of increasing rich-poor disparities (9 below).

6. Brain Drain. As opportunities are lessened in African cities, people leave. Unfortunately for African countries, those with the greatest inputs in terms of training and education are likely to depart: they are most able to obtain employment abroad. Unfortunately, their migration is a great loss to Africa, in that they remove the scarce resources invested in their education and training.

7. Reduction in the Quality of Life. The city has become a more violent place. Part of the reason is the growth of the informal economy, some elements are illegal and some involve redistributive (robbery) activity. This is an unfortunate side effect of people attempting to cope and with less money being available for policing activities. A further reflection is an economy dominated by drugs; there is no doubt

⁵See for example: Anyinam 1980, Lugalla 1995, Turshen 1991

about a huge market and the opportunity for wealth not afforded by more legitimate activities.

8. The Nature of Industry. The industrial face of African cities alters in two senses. First, there has been a marked downsizing due to the both the removal of protective barriers and the devaluation of the local currency⁶. Secondly, the nature of industry changes as firms involved in agricultural export tend to prosper, as do those linked to MNCs. In the early years of Independence, industry tended to be concentrated in primate cities in order to take advantage of the access to the port, markets, and the seat of government. No longer is this the case, and so the impact of S.A.Ps on industry is most pronounced in the primate cities.

9. Mounting Inequality. Perhaps the most visibly apparent aspect of adjustment programmes is the disparity between the lives of the wealthy and the poor. The distinction is so glaring in the city because the two distinct worlds exist side by side. The wealthy are better able to cope with the reductions. They are not impacted by the declines in employment and wages, they can employ services abroad when schools and hospitals are forced to cut back,⁷ and they can participate in both 'capital flight' and 'human capital flight' by moving their money or themselves abroad. The IFIs devote much rhetoric to protecting the poor. However, the reality is much different - for example, Hutchful's paper on the issue, as it has played out in Ghana (Africa's Adjustment Model), is titled 'Smoke and Mirrors' (Hutchful 1994).

⁶In the senses both that industry is less able to afford to purchase parts and inputs from abroad, and any equity investment is likely to devalue as the currency floats (Parfitt 1995, Riddell 1993, Simon 1992). Also, with trade liberalization comes the fact that manufacturing activity in Africa is more vulnerable to fluctuations in demand and in the activities of MNCs (Campbell 1989).

⁷This disparity is made even more apparent by corruption, most often through the manipulation of the state, which leads to riches for some. For an indication of the wealth of a few amidst a declining formal state, see Reno (1995) on Sierra Leone's recent experience.

10. Food Supply. Because there is such a stress by the IFIs on increasing agricultural exports, there is an impact upon food supply. Because such an effect operates in an indirect fashion, it is often ignored. Such increased production absorbs supplies of both land and labour. If these inputs came at no cost, all would be well. However, areas which were formerly used to produce food have been turned over to cash-generating crops. Also, peoples' time, which was formerly devoted to food production, is diverted toward the export crops. In this sense, there are 'opportunity costs' to such export production. Moreover, these expenses also extend to the spending of scarce money on the infrastructural facilities needed to export such goods and to the import of seeds and fertilizer for them. To be fair, it should be noted that food production will be somewhat enhanced by currency devaluation, and thus the removal of imported foods from the market will act as a stimulus to the production of food..

Conclusion

Adjustment programmes have altered cities. From a position of leadership in national economies and a magnet attracting people from the countryside, the city has become the focal point of national depression. Such depression is marked by:

- A Slowing of Population Growth
- The Rise of an Informal Economy
- The Changing Urban Economy
- Human Underdevelopment
- Capital Flight
- Brain Drain
- A Reduction in the Quality of Life
- A Change in the Nature of Industry
- Mounting Inequality
- Supply of Food

The recency of such impacts is underlined by the facts that such SAPs date back less than twenty years and that much of the literature is virtually silent on the subject.⁸ The crisis engendered by SAPs and debt has come to dominate the agendas of African countries, pushing all other considerations to the back burner. Management, planning, and policy have become luxuries (Riddell 1995). African cities have been devastated; but, there is no solution in sight.⁹

The impact upon cities is made even more severe by the perceptual dimension to impact. In urban areas, the effects of events such as price changes and unemployment are immediately apparent in this densely populated setting. However in the countryside, population is much more dispersed and the drama associated with reduced levels of living is dissipated over vast areas and great numbers of people. The result is that a situation which is extreme in *objective* terms is underlined by the *relative* effect in cities.

Each country is dealt with separately in the programmes of the IMF or the IBRD. Yet, the problem of debt is common throughout Africa - and can even be said to be common throughout the Third World. Thus the solution to debt resides not within the victims, but in the workings of the global economy. Africa's poverty results from the operation of international trade and the 'vampire' state systems which control African countries. The situation has moved beyond crisis to disaster. It is one in which food, health, and education are beyond the reach of most people. And this is not just today, but it seems that this situation will obtain forever. There is no recovery in sight and when people 'exit' back to subsistence farms or to an informal economy, it should be no surprise. When there are riots about rising prices or falling employment, it is a sign that there is no other solution. And when countries fall apart, debt is a conditioning force.

⁸For examples, see Gilbert 1992-1993-1994 and Stren 1992

⁹Other than George's suggestions of a 3-D solution (George 1988) or that the Boomerang effects of debt will cause the First World to revise the working of the global economy (George 1992)

In the 1960s, the African city was the salient of growth and development. However, today it is the depth of disaster. Structural Adjustment has destroyed African economies; however, the effects are even worse in cities. The poignancy is underlined by the fact that a short time ago, the African city was on the leading edge of development and change.

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DRAFT, NOT FOR CIRCULATION, NOT FOR QUOTATION WITHOUT PERMISSION

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Mapping the Late Twentieth Century Ecological Collapse in East Africa: From the Gender of Urban Spaces to the Spatiality of New Epidemics

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Twenty years ago Helge Kjekshus published his ground breaking and influential book, Ecology Control and Economic Development in East African History.¹ As an interdisciplinary work that integrates the findings of demography, ecology, entomology, geography, and medicine, it seems to prefigure the methodological concerns of this conference. And as a contribution to economic history, it seems remarkably explanatory of the problem at the heart of this paper--the current decline of living standards in East Africa.²

Kjekshus's thesis is that the vibrant precolonial East African economies of the mid-nineteenth century were destroyed by decades of disasters related to colonization.³ These afflictions caused an ecological breakdown in the 1890s, which Kjekshus

¹Kjekshus, Helge. Ecology Control and Economic Development in East African History. London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1977. James Currey has just published a new twentieth anniversary edition.

²I follow Kjekshus in using "East Africa" to refer to mainland Tanzania.

³The precolonial history is the most controversial aspect of Kjekshus's thesis, but acceptance of his premise is not critical to acknowledgment that disaster followed. Wright situates the ecological crisis in the years 1870 to 1905 (Wright, Marcia. "East Africa, 1870-1905." In Cambridge History of Africa. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, vol.6, p.575). Lonsdale is cautious about causal connections between ecological crisis and political action (Lonsdale, John. "The European Scramble and Conquest in African History." In Cambridge History of Africa. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, vol.6, pp.688-691). And Koponen rejects Kjekshus's thesis as exaggerated (Koponen, Juhani. Development for Exploitation: German Colonial Policies in Mainland Tanzania, 1884-1914. Helsinki: Finnish Historical Society, 1994, pp.643-649.

traces through a series of interrelated epidemics--of rinderpest,⁴ smallpox, and a sand-flea plague⁵--followed by famine (which was provoked in part by European procurement of local foodstuffs), decades of destructive colonial warfare, and finally, massive labor recruitment. The colonists' need for labor inaugurated new patterns of migration and provoked new social dislocations that severely disrupted family life. The result was that farmers and pastoralists lost the control they had once exercised over their environment and returned "to a frontier situation where the conquest of the ecosystem had to recommence."⁶

I am intrigued by striking parallels between ecological breakdown at the end of the nineteenth century in East Africa and the ecological collapse we observe today.⁷ In this paper, I want to follow Kjekshus in using an interdisciplinary approach to explore apparent similarities between the role of the European colonial powers in the earlier period of economic and social dislocation and that of the International Financial Institutions (IFIs, notably the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank) in current economic and social disruption. The role of late nineteenth century epidemics in ecological breakdown suggests a second possible parallel to present-day epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. A third correspondence may exist between earlier colonial wars and civil conflicts today in which the industrial powers play a critical role.

⁴Rinderpest is an acute contagious viral disease of cattle and pigs; it was imported with cattle from India which the British used to feed their troops during military campaigns. It followed an epidemic of bovine pleuro-pneumonia and killed up to 95 percent of the herds; it virtually destroyed the East African cattle economy and populations subsequently dispersed (Wright, op. cit., p.576).

⁵The jigger flea or chigger (*Sarcopsylla penetrans*) was imported in sand used as ballast in slave ships returning to Africa from Brazil. The flea burrows beneath the skin, lays eggs that hatch and cause sores; if untreated, these sores lead to blood poisoning and death. Africans had no experience of the disease and no methods to combat it.

⁶Kjekshus, Helge. Ecology Control and Economic Development in East African History. London: Heinemann Educational Books 1977, p.184.

⁷Darkoh, M.B.K. "Desertification in Tanzania." Geography 1982, 67:320-331; Darkoh, M.B.K. "Land Degradation and Soil Conservation in Eastern and Southern Africa: A Research Agenda." UNEP Desertification Control Bulletin 1993, 22:60-68.

Of course there are important differences between the two periods. The nineteenth century ecological breakdown is associated with a period of demographic decline, whereas the current period is characterized by rapid population growth. Urban spaces were insignificant in the nineteenth century but figure importantly in both resource use and the circulation of disease in the twentieth. And whereas economic historians did not appreciate women's contributions to nineteenth century economy and society, they cannot ignore women's pivotal roles in production and reproduction today. An additional reason for paying attention to gender is that much of the new thinking on population, sustainable development and environment comes from feminist writers.

Human Agency and Ecological Deterioration

Kjekshus was reacting to the general assumption that Africans had no control of their environment before colonizers introduced the mastery of western science and technology. Kjekshus's purpose was to refute opinions, summarized in the statement below, that East Africans were captives of their barbarism and environment:

Forced to live in overcrowded stockades where he could keep cattle, the East African soon exhausted the land with trampling and overgrazing. Soil erosion ensued and he frequently had to move his dwelling place to recommence his work of destruction somewhere else in the abundant waste of virgin land.⁸

Kjekshus wanted to establish constructive African agency, to show that "nineteenth century East Africans were on the offensive against a hostile ecological system, and that until the end of the century, they were the victors in that struggle."⁹

Colonial powers believed in African agency insofar as they thought that Africans were the architects of their own degradation. Victim-blaming explanations of environmental deterioration current in the colonial period are still in circulation today, though usually couched in less overtly prejudiced terms. Cleaver and Schreiber hypothesize strong synergies and causality chains that link rapid population growth, environmental degradation, and poor agricultural performance; they cite traditional African production methods, traditional land tenure and use, traditional responsibilities of women, and

⁸Kjekshus, Helge. Ecology Control and Economic Development in East African History. London: James Currey, 1996, p.4.

⁹Kjekshus, Helge, op. cit., 1996, p.3.

traditional use of forest resources.¹⁰ Notice that they ignore large-scale commercial agriculture, transnational agribusiness, and public and private estates. In Tanzania, 70 percent of commercial agriculture is in private hands.¹¹

The World Bank describes the poor as both victims and agents of environmental damage. As victims,

It is often the poorest who suffer most from the consequences of pollution and environmental degradation. Unlike the rich, the poor cannot afford to protect themselves from contaminated water...in rural areas they are more likely to cook on open fires of wood or dung, inhaling dangerous fumes; their lands are most likely to suffer from soil erosion.¹²

As agents, the Bank continues, the poor cannot avoid degrading their environment because, for example, they cultivate unsuitable areas--steep slopes, semiarid land, and tropical forests. Again, their "traditional uses of land and fuel have depleted soil and forests and contributed to agricultural stagnation."¹³

The Role of Population in Ecological Decline

Kjekshus's argument turns on the importance of high population density to the maintenance of environmental control,

¹⁰Cleaver, Kevin and Götz Schreiber. The Population, Agriculture and Environment Nexus in Sub-Saharan Africa. Washington, Dc: The World Bank Agriculture and Rural Development Series No.9, 1993, p.1. Emphasis added. Reading this volume one has the impression of entering a time warp; for a contrasting study of contemporary rural life, see Mbilinyi, Marjorie. "Agribusiness and Women Peasants in Tanzania." Development and Change 1988, 19:549-583.

¹¹Bierman, Werner and Jumanne Wagao, "The IMF and Tanzania--a Solution to the Crisis?" In World Recession and the Food Crisis in Africa edited by Peter Lawrence, pp.140-147. London: James Currey, 1986. Of total acreage cultivated, 3% was large-scale farming--state farms, estates, settler farms, and large African farms (Kjaerby, F. "The Development of Agricultural Mechanisation in Tanzania." In Tanzania: Crisis and Struggle for Survival, edited by Boesen, J. et al., pp.173-190. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1986.

¹²World Bank. Development and the Environment: World Development Report 1992. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992, pp.1-2.

¹³World Bank, op. cit., 1992, p.27. Emphasis added.

which was critical to herding, farming and trade. After establishing that East African populations at mid-nineteenth century were larger than previously supposed, Kjekshus documents the turn-of-century reversal: cattle herds succumbed to rinderpest and people were decimated by disease, notably smallpox and jiggers, as well as by warfare. This combined human and cattle depopulation led to the reassertion of nature, abetted by misguided colonial prohibitions on grass-burning and hunting. The untamed shrubs and trees that grew in these formerly populated areas provided a natural habitat for the tsetse fly; and where the fly flourished, economic activity ceased.¹⁴

In contrast, the World Bank and others attribute environmental degradation and agricultural stagnation today to rapid population growth. Cleaver and Schreiber cite the failure of Africans to adapt to conditions of rapid population growth and high population densities as the cause of decline in agriculture and the environment.¹⁵ The World Bank argues that high population densities result in fallow periods that are no longer sufficient to restore fertility to the land, and they claim that family size is higher where land damage is greatest and fuelwood supplies are depleted.¹⁶

In a recent discussion of these issues in Tanzania, Madulu suggests that "high population growth and economic backwardness are dependent variables which contribute significantly to rapid resource depletion and environmental degradation."¹⁷ But the regional data for Tanzania do not bear him out. Areas like Rukwa, which has the highest population growth rate in the country outside of Dar es Salaam, are fertile, productive and relatively prosperous, whereas Kilimanjaro, which has a low population growth rate, reports declining yields and returns.¹⁸

¹⁴Unlike rinderpest, trypanosomiasis affected both cattle and people. Kjekshus follows Ford in this analysis, but Lonsdale remains skeptical. Ford, John. The Role of the Trypanosomiasis in African Ecology: A Study of the Tsetse-fly Problem. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971; Lonsdale, op. cit., p.691; and see Turshen, M. The Political Ecology of Disease in Tanzania, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1984, pp.113-114, 134-135.

¹⁵Cleaver and Schreiber, op. cit., 1993, p.7.

¹⁶World Bank, op. cit., 1992, p.27.

¹⁷Madulu, Ndalaha Faustin. "Population Growth, Agrarian Peasant Economy and Environmental Degradation in Tanzania." International Sociology 1995, 10(1):35-50.

¹⁸Population data from Barke, Michael and Clive Sowden. "Population Change in Tanzania 1978-1988: A Preliminary

These positions are predicated on the idea of a fixed "carrying capacity" without specifying the meaning of the concept. Reviewing the voluminous literature on human carrying capacity, Cohen found twenty-six definitions published since 1975 but no single generally accepted sense of the term and no formula that could be used to calculate convincingly the number of people the earth can support.¹⁹ The dozen or so definitions of nonhuman carrying capacity--derived from basic and applied ecology--are no more useful in determining sustainable ratios of population and resources. Cohen concluded that most definitions recognize the need to extend ecological criteria of carrying capacity to include technological enhancement of productivity and cultural standards. Technology and culture set limits on population size well before the physical requirements for sheer subsistence do. People have the capacity to create new systems of material production and human labor has the potential to transform nature; labor, technology and productive systems can transcend contemporary economic constraints and the environmental problems that are symptomatic of economic malaise.²⁰

Claims that rapid population growth is the direct cause of environmental deterioration oversimplify highly complex interactions. They lead too easily to the conclusion that population control is the answer to environmental deterioration, while avoiding most of the hard policy and power issues. Tanzania's population is growing rapidly at 3.2% per year.²¹ The high total fertility rate²² of 6.8 has not changed since 1970;

Analysis." Scottish Geographical Magazine 1992, 108(1):9-16; agricultural data from Van Donge, J.K. "The Continuing Trial of Development Economics: Policies, Prices and Output in Tanzanian Agriculture." Journal of International Development 1994, 6(2):157-184.

¹⁹Cohen, Joel E. How Many People Can the Earth Support? New York: W.W. Norton, 1995. See especially Appendix 6, pp.419-425.

²⁰Trefon, Theodore. "The Challenge of Attaining Sustainable Use of Forest Products by Central African City Dwellers." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, November 1995, Orlando, Fl.

²¹Average annual growth for the years 1980-93; this is higher than the sub-Saharan average of 2.9%. World Bank, World Development Report 1995, Washington, DC, pp. 210-211.

²²The total fertility rate refers to the average number of children born to each woman in accordance with current fertility patterns; it estimates the total number of children a woman will eventually bear if her child-bearing follows current patterns and she survives her child-bearing years.

contraceptive use is a low 10% and abortion is not allowed.²³ But even the unmet need for family planning should be understood as a consequence of policies that raise the price of imported pharmaceuticals (including contraceptives) and curtail government support of public health services.²⁴

The Role of IFIs in Ecological Collapse

Feminist analysts incriminate development policies, particularly structural adjustment plans pursued at the insistence of IFIs, in environmental degradation; these policies compound the debt problem and cause widespread misery, deprivation, and destitution.²⁵ In Tanzania, macro-policies of structural adjustment forced the government to shift priorities "from human to economic development, from food to cash crops, from smallscale to largescale enterprises, and from inward-orientation to an export-led policy in development."²⁶ The link to environmental degradation is direct: the Tanzanian government and its foreign donors prioritize cash crops for export and divert labor and land away from food crops; structural adjustment directives reduce public investment in extension services, credit, and other inputs necessary for smallholder farming and move resources to the large-scale plantation and large farm sector. Transnational corporations and big companies, which own and/or manage many plantations, are the major beneficiaries of external support for agricultural rehabilitation.

Intensification of agricultural production by both small and large producers has contributed to growing soil and environmental degradation. Vegetation has been burned or otherwise removed to open new pastures and farm land. Largescale growers plunder the land with largescale mechanised farming systems, the same way big

²³United Nations. The World's Women 1995: Trends and Statistics. New York: UN, 1995, p.30.

²⁴Lugalla, Joe. "The Impact of SAPs on Women and Children's Health in Tanzania." Review of African Political Economy 1995, 63:43-53.

²⁵Wiltshire, Rosina. Environment and Development: Grass Roots Women's Perspective. Pinelands, St. Michael, Barbados: Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), 1992; Braddiotti, Rosi, Ewa Charkiewicz, Sabine Hausler and Saskia Wieringa. Women, the Environment and Sustainable Development: Towards a Theoretical Synthesis. London: Zed Books, 1994.

²⁶Tanzania Gender Networking Programme. Gender Profile of Tanzania. Dar es Salaam: Tanzania Gender Networking Programme, 1993, p.46.

timber companies plunder the forests, and mining companies the earth. Once soil fertility (or timber/mineral output) declines, they move on to other locations and countries. Smallholder growers have fewer options and are more dependent on sustainable use of the environment.²⁷

Exports of nontraditional goods have also increased with possibly irreversible ecological consequences. Sales of wildlife products (illegal trophies, ivory, crocodile skins, ostrich and other birds), forest products (e.g., timber, black woods, mangrove, mahogany, medicinal plants) and marine products (prawn, lobsters, sea slugs, etc.) have all increased with liberalization under structural adjustment policies.²⁸

This evidence seems to confirm a certain continuity in the roles played by the colonial powers at the end of the last century and by the IFIs at the end of this century in ecological collapse. But the parallels do not end with exploitation for purposes external to East Africa, nor do the environmental ramifications of structural adjustment policies end with a description of the physical impact on the land. In the next section I want to discuss the displacement of people and the spatial consequences of dislocation.

Labor Migration and Population Mobility

Although Lonsdale argues that large-scale population movements were scarcely new in Africa,²⁹ Kjekshus credits the colonists' need for labor with the inauguration of new patterns of migration and the instigation of new social dislocations, which had profound effects on the vulnerability of Africans to disease and on their ability to maintain control over their environment. The German colonizers extracted labor for portage and to service their armies, work that entailed long distance

²⁷Tanzania Gender Networking Programme, op. cit., p.55. Between 1983 and 1993, sisal sales declined 78%, coffee declined 90%, tobacco declined 95%, and cashew nuts declined 78%; the only crops showing rising sales were cotton (212%) and green tea (127%) (ibid., p.47). Tanzania has made negative progress in repaying its external debt, which rose from 2.9 billion in 1980 to 7.5 billion in 1993 (World Bank, World Development Report 1995, Washington, DC, p.200).

²⁸Chachage, C.S.L. 'Forms of Accumulation, Agriculture and Structural Adjustment in Tanzania.' In Social Change and Economic Reform in Africa, edited by P. Gibbon, pp.215-243. Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala, 1993.

²⁹Lonsdale, John, op. cit., p.691.

travel to new locales. German public and private employers demanded labor to create an infrastructure and to produce the crops needed by home markets. Much of this workforce was recruited at gunpoint and force marched to distant worksites.³⁰

The relation between population mobility and the spread of disease is well documented.³¹ The late nineteenth century introduction of new diseases--rinderpest and sand fleas--is clearly traceable to European treks across Africa; the epidemics of endemic diseases--smallpox and trypanosomiasis--are also bound up with colonization. The question here is, What is the relation today between labor migration and the introduction of new diseases--AIDS (and elsewhere, Ebola)--and current epidemics of endemic diseases--malaria and tuberculosis?

Some direct labor recruitment continues today³² but more typically the need for cash forces peasants into distant labor markets, much as colonial taxation schemes compelled subsistence farmers to seek waged work. Over the past two decades, as farm incomes declined, more young men sought work in nonfarm activities, a trend reflected in the continuing imbalance of male:female ratios in urban areas (92 women per 100 men in 1995).³³ As immiseration increased on small holdings, more young women joined this migratory movement, seeking casual employment on sugar cane and tea plantations, on large farms, and in the urban informal sector. Common nonfarm activities are brewing and selling beer, petty trade, preparing and selling food, domestic service, bar work in clubs and pubs, and prostitution.³⁴

³⁰Rodney, Walter. "The Political Economy of Colonial Tanganyika 1890-1930." In Tanzania Under Colonial Rule, edited by M.H.Y. Kaniki, pp.128-163. London: Longman, 1980.

³¹Prothero, R.M. "Disease and Mobility: A Neglected Factor in Epidemiology". International Journal of Epidemiology 1977, 6(3):259-267.

³²Daley notes that "refugees, not only provided casual labour on local tobacco farms, but were directly recruited by state-owned plantations. Both Tanzania's sisal industry and the Tea Authority recruited workers within the settlements in the 1980s." Daley, Patricia. "The Politics of the Refugee Crisis in Tanzania." In The IMF and Tanzania, edited by H. Campbell and H. Stein, pp.175-199. Harare: SAPES Trust, 1991. See below for a discussion of the refugee situation in Tanzania.

³³United Nations. The World's Women 1995: Trends and Statistics. New York: UN, 1995, p.62.

³⁴Tanzania Gender Networking Programme, op. cit., pp.66.

Mbilinyi offers this analysis of farm labor trends in Rungwe District, Tanzania:

The crisis of labour for capital and the crisis of reproduction for peasant farming result from the related movements of labour out of capitalist farming and peasant agriculture. First, male labour withdrew from capitalist farm labour, as men sought higher-paying non-agricultural wage employment or entered non-agricultural petty commodity production and trade during the 1960s and early 1970s. This followed the earlier (though ongoing) withdrawal of male labour from the peasant labour force and the intensification of female labour in peasant farming as women entered non-farming petty commodity production and trade or got wage employment during the 1970s and early 1980s. Both men and women withdrew from peasant farming because of its low returns and sheer drudgery. One consequence of these movements is the decline of a reservoir of cheap labour to work as casual labour for large-scale farm enterprises or peasant labour in export crop production.³⁵

For a sense of how uprooted this generation is, these trends should be read together with data on falling percentages of men and women marrying young: at the beginning of the 1970s, 50% of women and 6.6% of men in the 15 to 19 year age group were married; by the end of the decade, 35.7% of women and 3.5% of men in this group were married.³⁶

There are two more groups in circulation who need to be mentioned because of their particular relation to disease and the environment: the armed forces and refugees.

Armed Forces

Tanzania has one of the largest standing armies in sub-Saharan Africa.³⁷ The Tanzanian army saw active service in the

³⁵Mbilinyi, M. op. cit., p.574.

³⁶United Nations. The World's Women 1995: Trends and Statistics. New York: UN, 1995, p.35. Latest available data.

³⁷In 1992, the armed forces consumed 3.6% of GDP, which is greater than the 3.2% spent on health (UNDP. Human Development Report 1995. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995, p.183). Military spending in Tanzania (in current dollars) declined from \$119 million in 1987 to \$106 million in 1994; the strength of the armed forces has also declined from 46,800 in 1992 to 32,000 in 1995. In addition Tanzania supported a Citizens' Militia of

1979 invasion of Uganda and in the 1980s in Mozambique.³⁸

In epidemiological terms, armed forces act as transmitters of venereal diseases and HIV/AIDS between infected groups and the general population.³⁹ Whether in regular armies, militias, or groups of bandits, these young, single men attract commercial sex workers to their barracks or kidnap women from villages to provide sexual services in their camps. Many use drugs, and when injured in battle require blood transfusions; blood supplies, often drawn from their own ranks, may be HIV contaminated.

Refugees

While Tanzania is fortunate to have escaped the worst sort of civil conflicts that have afflicted so much of the continent since independence, it is a major recipient of refugees from six neighbors: Burundi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sudan, Uganda, and Zaire. Between 1964 and 1992, Tanzania accepted 292,000 refugees;⁴⁰ after the most recent upheaval in Rwanda, 591,000 refugees entered the country.⁴¹ To avoid the sort of ecological destruction that typically occurs around refugee camps, Tanzania has pursued a policy of resettlement and strict control of

80,000 in 1995 (International Institute for Strategic Studies. The Military Balance, 1995-1996. London: IISS, 1995, p.258).

³⁸See my speculations on the relation between the army and the spread of AIDS in East Africa (Turshen, M. The Politics of Public Health. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1989, pp.219-241).

³⁹Baldo, M. and A.J. Cabral. 1990. "Low intensity wars and social determination of the HIV transmission: the search for a new paradigm to guide research and control of the HIV-AIDS pandemic." In Action on AIDS in Southern Africa: Maputo Conference on Health in Transition in Southern Africa April 1990, edited by Z. Stein and A. Zwi. New York, Committee on Health in South Africa.

⁴⁰UNDP. Human Development Report 1995. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995, p.161.

⁴¹Data as of December 23, 1994 (Smith, Charles David. "The Geopolitics of Rwandan Resettlement: Uganda and Tanzania." Issues: A Journal of Opinion 1995, XXIII/2:54-57). Because the incidence of HIV/AIDS was so high in Rwanda before the genocide (15.2 AIDS cases per 100,000 people in 1993 [UNDP, op. cit., p.171]), this population faces and poses special health risks.

refugee mobility.⁴²

Refugee women face particular hazards that expose them to disease. During their flight, refugee women are especially vulnerable to violence and exploitation, and refugee camps are high-risk situations where women are at the mercy of the army, camp guards, and unrelated male refugees.⁴³ Women may be violated by any of these men or they may be forced to exchange sex for food and other necessities.⁴⁴ Despite women's vulnerability to sexual abuse, health programs for refugee populations have not systematically targeted sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV infections.⁴⁵ In general Tanzania has no formal STD program and cases are not properly reported or recorded, though clinics and services have been proposed. At least some of the high risk of this situation can be lowered by making women participants in camp administration from the outset, but this is not the practice in Tanzania.⁴⁶

Urbanization

The immiseration and environmental degradation of the countryside have pushed many young men and women toward the city. Tanzania has seen its urban population grow from 5% in 1960 to 22% in 1992.⁴⁷ Urban areas play a particular role in the circulation of disease in late twentieth century Africa. Diseases

⁴²Daley, Patricia, op. cit., p.180.

⁴³A study of displaced pregnant women in Zambezia Province, Mozambique found the prevalence of past or current syphilis was 12.2% (within the range of prevalences found elsewhere in Africa); at least 8.4% of the women had been sexually abused during displacement. Women reporting more than five events of sexual abuse were more likely to be HIV-infected (Cossa, H.A. et al. "Syphilis and HIV infection among Displaced Pregnant Women in Mozambique" International Journal of STD and AIDS 1994, 5(2):117-123).

⁴⁴Forbes Martin, S. Refugee Women. London: Zed Books, 1991. In the early period of an emergency, medical facilities rarely can deal with more than saving lives, and women's reproductive and other health needs, including the need for protection from STDs and AIDS, go unattended.

⁴⁵Akeroyd, Anne V. "HIV/AIDS in Eastern and Southern Africa" Review of African Political Economy 1994, 60:173-184.

⁴⁶Daley, Patricia, op. cit., p.189.

⁴⁷UNDP, op. cit., p.185.

related to the urban environment include the common diarrheas, associated with contaminated water and lack of sewerage,⁴⁸ and tuberculosis, which is one of several diseases of poverty associated with malnutrition and urban overcrowding to which migrants are especially susceptible. Tanzania has a high annual TB incidence rate of 140 cases per 100,000 population in 1990.⁴⁹

Cities, in the first and third worlds, are sometimes painted as dens of iniquity that breed sexual promiscuity and sexually transmitted diseases.⁵⁰ For many women and men cities do offer freedom from restrictive rules of rural behavior and may be perceived as sites of decadence, where important cultural values are destroyed; but other migrants experience more repressive patterns of social organization in urban than rural areas.⁵¹ So the urban space is a site of contradictions, and the circumstances of migration determine whether migrants find themselves at high-risk of disease in the city.⁵² A new and growing phenomenon is the number of unsupervised street children

⁴⁸See Lugalla, op. cit., for a dismaying description of unsanitary conditions in Dar es Salaam.

⁴⁹World Bank. World Development Report 1993. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, p.206.

⁵⁰Blanc, C.Z. Urban Children in Distress: Global Predicaments and Innovative Strategies. Yverdon, CH: Gordon and Breach for UNICEF, 1994, pp.25-27.

⁵¹Boyce Davies, C. "Epilogue: Representations of Urban Life in African Women's Literature." In Women's Lives and Public Policy: The International Experience, edited by M. Turshen and B. Holcomb, pp.171-181. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1993; Turshen, M., H. Bretin and A. Thébaud-Mony. "Migration, Public Policy and Women's Experience." In Turshen, M. and B. Holcomb, eds., op.cit., pp.83-96.

⁵² For a review of the literature on AIDS and migration, see Lalou, R. and V. Piché. "Migration et sida en Afrique de l'Ouest: Un état des connaissances." Montréal: Université de Montréal, Département de Démographie, 1994, document de travail. They find a high correlation in demographic studies between labor migration and the spread of HIV, but they warn that more empirical research is needed to discover how workers, the majority of whom come from areas of low prevalence, can be carriers of HIV. They point out that several little studied factors are critical to HIV dissemination: whether the migration is seasonal or long-term, whether families travel together, the frequency of return, and attitudes about extra-marital sex in both places of origin and destination.

in Dar es Salaam (and elsewhere), who are subject to particular forms of sexual and other exploitation.⁵³

Villagization and Environmental Deterioration

Villagization is a policy that entailed massive population redistribution; it was a homegrown policy imposed in the 1970s by the state and not by external agents. There is a growing consensus that this modern development policy (rather than traditional methods of farming and herding, as the World Bank would have us believe) is responsible for crop losses, declining soil fertility, and increased erosion.⁵⁴ This environmental destruction occurred because the authorities forced cultivators to live close to one another instead of close to their farms: to avoid the increased traveling time to and from fields, villagers over cultivated nearby plots. Planners neglected livestock requirements and did not impose destocking: overgrazing and other damage resulted. Village women depleted sources of firewood close to the village, adding the problem of deforestation; and they spent additional time fetching water from streams that were now far away.⁵⁵ These changes increased labor requirements and had the greatest negative effects on women and children.

This said, I would agree with Samoff that the large-scale features of underdevelopment cannot be understood by looking only within the country.⁵⁶

Linking Disease Epidemics to Environmental Destruction

The link between disease and development is well established.⁵⁷ The recent expansion and intensification of

⁵³See Lugalla, op. cit., for a distressing account of street children in Dar es Salaam.

⁵⁴McCall, Michael. "Environmental and Agricultural Impacts of Tanzania's Villagization Programme." In Population and Development Projects in Africa, edited by Clark, J.I. et al, pp.123-140. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

⁵⁵Raikes, Phil. "Eating the Carrot and Wielding the Stick: The Agricultural Sector in Tanzania." In Tanzania: Crisis and Struggle for Survival, edited by Boesen, J. et al., pp. 105-141. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1986.

⁵⁶Samoff, Joel. "Theory and Practice in the Analysis of Tanzanian Liberalisation: A Comment." In Campbell and Stein, op. cit., pp.226-246.

⁵⁷Hughes, C.C. and J.M. Hunter. "Disease and Development in Africa." Social Science & Medicine 1970, 3:443-493.

agriculture, in the absence of effective public health services,⁵⁸ lead to new epidemics. Malaria spreads with large-scale cultivation of cotton, sugar and rice and the heavy use of pesticides to which malarial mosquitos become resistant. In the last decade, malaria has spread in the highlands of Tanzania. Epidemiologists attribute increased transmission to the active colonization of areas like the Usambaras, the intensification of agriculture, and the attendant terracing and leveling of land in and around villages, which increases the number of mosquito breeding places.⁵⁹ AIDS is another disease that can be linked to environmental destruction.⁶⁰

The medical literature typically portrays AIDS in Africa as a heterosexually transmitted disease, with many references to

⁵⁸I cannot here go into the many ways in which IFI policies have undermined public health services in Africa. See Lugalla, op. cit.; and Turshen, M. "Trends in the Health Sector with Special Reference to Zimbabwe." In Rebalancing Market, State and Civil Society for Sustainable Development, edited by M.R. Carter, J. Cason, and F. Zimmerman. Madison: Global Studies Program, University of Wisconsin, forthcoming.

⁵⁹Nájera, J.A., B.H. Liese, and J. Hamner. "Malaria." In Disease Control Priorities in Developing Countries, edited by D.T. Jamison, W.H. Mosley, A.R. Measham, and J.L. Bobdilla, pp. 281-302. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.

⁶⁰Usher spells out the relation of AIDS to ecological collapse in Thailand: "The increasing centralisation of the state, and the intensification of resource use for industrial development, is causing the gradual erosion not only of natural resources but also of people's customary rights to land, cultural integrity, local knowledge and sense of belonging. For people living in a weakened environment, the 'goods and services' that were derived to a significant extent from nature must now, increasingly, be replaced by the market. But purchasing food or drugs or cultural commodities (through television, for example) demands the exchange of items that have the equivalent outside market value, forcing people either to extract more and more from the ecosystem, or to leave the village altogether. In the extreme case, when nature is so degraded that it can no longer provide, one of the only remaining local resources in the community that has value on the market is the bodies of the young. In those places where adolescent women--and, to a less extent, men--leave home to sell their labour in the sex industry, AIDS, which appears to have infected a huge proportion of the country's half-million prostitutes, has become a physical manifestation of political dispossession." (Usher, Ann Danaiya. "After the Forest: AIDS as Ecological Collapse in Thailand." Development Dialogue 1992, 1-2:13-49).

individual sexual behavior but none to the economy, beyond the economics of prostitution.⁶¹ In Kagera Region, Tanzania, for example, researchers found a linkage between businessmen, young women, economic seductions, sexual transactions, and AIDS deaths among the Haya.⁶² Social sanctions, which regulated the lives of the young, effectively protected girls from sexually transmitted diseases before marriage. Today women recognize the failure of alternative networks in urban areas to protect young girls, in particular, from the sexual exploitation that carries AIDS.⁶³

One recent exception is an article arguing that social and economic forces play a critical role in promoting the spread of HIV and that IMF and World Bank structural adjustment policies create conditions favoring the spread of HIV.⁶⁴ Elsewhere I have made a similar argument, as have Sanders and Sambo.⁶⁵ It seems to me that AIDS is best understood as an environmental disease, embedded in the nexus of economic and social relations of power

⁶¹Standing, H. "AIDS: Conceptual and Methodological Issues in Researching Sexual Behaviour in Sub-Saharan Africa." Social Science & Medicine 1992, 34(5):475-483. The medical literature fails to indict development strategies such as tourism, sponsored by national governments and encouraged by international agencies as a solution to underdevelopment, which promote prostitution. There is considerable research on the links between tourism, prostitution, and the spread of AIDS in southeast Asia, but almost nothing comparable in Africa (Maurer, Mechtild. Tourisme, Prostitution, SIDA. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1992).

⁶²Weiss, B. "Buying Her Grave: Money, Movement and AIDS in North-West Tanzania" Africa 1993, 63(1):19-35.

⁶³Ankrah, E.M. "AIDS and the Social Side of Health." Social Science & Medicine 1991, 32(9):967-980; Bassett, M.T. and Mhloyi, M. "Women and AIDS in Zimbabwe: The Making of an Epidemic." International Journal of Health Services 1991, 21(1):143-156. None of these women advocate a return to traditional institutions of patriarchal domination.

⁶⁴Lurie, P., P. Hintzen, and R.A. Loew. "Socioeconomic obstacles to HIV prevention and treatment in developing countries; the roles of the International Monetary Fund and the world Bank." AIDS 1995, 9(6):539-546.

⁶⁵Turshen, M. "The Political Ecology of AIDS in Africa." In The Political Economy of AIDS edited by M. Singer, R. Carlson, and S. Koester. Amityville, NY: Baywood, forthcoming; Sanders, D. and A. Sambo. "AIDS in Africa: The implications of economic recession and structural adjustment." Health Policy and Planning 1991, 6(2):157-165.

and exploitation; it is an expression of political violence, labor migrancy, and poverty. In these high-risk settings for the transmission of HIV, individuals have little agency and few choices; individual sexual behavior is not at issue.⁶⁶ The underlying determinants of the spread of HIV are policies that undermine development and create structures that force the young out of their homes in search of work, destroying the social and familial networks that protect people from some types of disease experience.

Conclusions

What is the magnitude of the current crisis? Is it as great as the one a hundred years ago? Writing in the mid-80s, Raikes thought people were exaggerating.⁶⁷ Table 1 gives critical data summarizing changes over the past twenty years that seem to indicate an unparalleled crisis. Tanzania is now the poorest nation of the world, along with Mozambique.

The political economy of Tanzania changed dramatically over the 1980s as economic reforms designed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund failed to resolve the debt crisis. Agricultural intensification and the accompanying environmental deterioration caused more workers to migrate in search of work, disrupting family life and increasing the behaviors associated with the spread of disease. In several neighboring countries, economic instability led to political instability, disrupting life, dislocating populations, and sending many refugees into Tanzania. Reduced access to health, education, and other social services, a consequence of cutbacks and the privatization of public services which are part of structural adjustment programs, considerably increased poverty and the hardships of the poor, deepening the crisis for young people and their families in Tanzania.

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⁶⁶Turshen, M. "Societal Instability in International Perspective: Relevance to HIV/AIDS Prevention." In Assessing the Social and Behavioral Science Base for HIV/AIDS Prevention and Intervention. Workshop Summary and Background Papers, pp.117-128. Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1995.

⁶⁷Raikes, Phil, op. cit., p.139.

Table 1. Critical Indicators for Tanzania

Population in millions mid-1977....	16.4
Population in millions mid-1993....	28
GNP per capita \$ 1978....	230
GNP per capita \$ 1993....	90
Currency depreciation 1980-1990/91....	182.2%
World Bank ranking 1980....	25 ⁶⁸
World Bank ranking 1995....	2
Daily calorie supply 1986....	2,192
Daily calorie supply 1992....	2,021
Median age at death 1990...5 years ⁶⁹	
Population per doctor 1960....	21,600
Population per doctor 1976....	18,490
Population per doctor 1990....	24,880
Population per nursing person 1960....	8,300
Population per nursing person 1976....	3,300
Population per nursing person 1990....	5,470
Total health expenditure p.c. 1990...\$	4.00
<u>Percent of Total Central Government Expenditure</u>	
Health 1980....	6.0
Health 1987....	5.7
Housing, Social Security and Welfare 1980....	2.5
Housing, Social Security and Welfare 1987....	1.7
Education 1980....	13.3
Education 1990....	11.4
Defense 1980....	9.2
Defense 1987....	15.8

Sources: Various World Bank and UNDP reports

⁶⁸The World Bank ranks countries by GNP per capita in ascending order

⁶⁹Median age at death is the age below which half of all deaths occur in a year. The average figure for developed countries is 75 years.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THERAPEUTIC PLACES

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THE CONSTRUCTION OF THERAPEUTIC PLACES

Introduction

Medical geography, influenced by social theory, has been shifting its focus over the last several years. One particular emphasis within this shift is toward a renewed concern with place (Kearns and Gesler, forthcoming). This paper extends that concern to Africa by employing a theoretical framework previously used in the investigation of "therapeutic landscapes" (Gesler 1992; Gesler 1993). Research for this paper consisted of reading and re-reading material on disease and health in Africa, written by scholars from different disciplines, in light of that framework. In the spirit of this conference, I am trying to tie together ideas about illness and healing through the concept of place.

The paper begins with a brief look at two traditional ways used by medical geographers to investigate disease and health: cultural ecology and health care delivery. Then, more recent work in a "reformed" medical geography - approaches based on context and meaning - are explored in some detail. These discussions will be supported with evidence from the literature on health in Africa. Then, one example - Kung healing rituals - will be explored in some depth, as it illustrates the main themes of the paper.

Traditional approaches.

Cultural ecology. This approach is based on human interactions with the environment. It is probably safe to say that all societies attribute healing power to the physical environment, whether it be from medical plants (Ayensu 1981), isolation and quiet, or scenic beauty. Many believe that relatively untainted rural environments

are more conducive to health than cities which are spoiled by human habitation (Marx 1968). Certain natural elements have traditionally been associated with healing because of their material and symbolic properties. Primary among these is water, which accounts for the importance of sacred springs, the spa industry, and many healing rituals. Other environmental elements with perceived healing power include earth, trees, and stones.

Europeans since the early nineteenth century were interested in studying the environments of particular locations (in terms of soils, temperatures, rainfall, and so on) in order to determine which places were healthy or unhealthy (Curtin 1992). Continuing in this tradition, medical geographers and others trained in cultural ecology have had an important impact on the study of disease and health in Africa. Detailed and carefully researched studies include those on river blindness in Ghana (Hunter 1972), geophagy throughout the continent (Hunter 1973), schistosomiasis in Ethiopia (Kloos 1985), disease hazards in Ethiopia (Roundy 1978), sleeping sickness in different parts of Africa (Knight 1971), the interaction of migration and malaria (Prothero 1965), the diffusion of cholera (Stock 1976), and the impact of development on disease (Hughes and Hunter 1970). This research took place into account in the sense that particular sites were mapped out as the locations where disease agents, vectors, and human hosts with their accompanying characteristics and behaviors came together to create or mitigate disease. These studies were criticized, however, for being reductionist and for assuming the superiority and universal applicability of the biomedical model. What they lacked, for the

most part, was a consideration of political, economic, social, and historical context and the meaning and experience of illness in places (Stock 1986; Kearns 1993).

Health Care Delivery. The bulk of the work by European, North American, and African medical geographers in health care delivery followed the spatial analytic approach. Most of this work dealt with biomedical personnel and facilities, although some attention was paid to indigenous healing systems. Some representative examples follow. In the area of the spatial distribution of health care resources, Jackman (1972) mapped out areas served by the flying doctor service in Zambia, Iyun (1983) looked at hospital service areas in Ibadan, Lasker (1981) found that health care resources in Ivory Coast were placed in more productive areas, and Gershenberg and Haskell (1972) reported that six types of biomedical facilities had been located without careful planning in Uganda.

Turning to accessibility, we note studies by Thomas and Mascarenhas (1973) on distance to biomedical facilities in Tanzania, the advantage of being on or near feeder roads in Ghana (Ashitey et al. 1972), and Stock's (1981) demonstration that traditional health care resources in Northern Nigeria were more accessible than biomedical ones. During the 1980s, some medical geographers were beginning to think in terms of the political economic constraints on health care delivery. However, with some exceptions (e.g., Stock 1980, Okafor 1982), these kinds of studies lacked an emphasis on context and meaning. It is to these two considerations that we now turn.

Context

As social theory penetrated the social sciences of health from the 1970s onward, there was a concern for the wider context in which disease or illness occurs and how it is treated (Eyles and Woods 1983; Jones and Moon 1987). Of primary interest were the ways in which certain groups within society attempted to dominate others politically, economically, socially, and culturally, based on divisions such as race, ethnicity, class, or gender and how this hegemony affected health and disease. Within African medical geography, the seminal paper was Stock's (1986) review which strongly criticized previous work on health and development for largely ignoring political and economic themes. In Africa, control has mainly been exercised in both pre-colonial and post-colonial times by the industrial nations operating within a global capitalist system. Although the effects on health of this control varied over time and space, some factors were common: simplification of the food crop regime, a weakening of support mechanisms based on kinship, and inequalities in payment of social costs to different groups of workers (Feierman and Janzen 1992); alienation of large tracts of fertile agricultural and grazing land, forced labor and labor migration, low wages paid to workers, and the creation of an African consumer class (Onoge 1975).

The work by Turshen, Wisner, and others, shows how contextual factors led to health problems in African places. For a rural district in Tanzania, Songea, Turshen (1977) demonstrated how, among other things, German and British colonial policies decimated cattle populations and opened up tse tse habitats, forced labor migrations to plantations and mines by requiring taxes to be paid in cash,

restricted land use rights to peasants, and increased the birth rate in response to changes in the social relations of production. Land was left fallow for half the usual number of years, the women left behind on farms overcropped small plots, and soils became exhausted. This led to malnutrition and a higher toll of nutrition-related diseases. Turshen asserts (1977, p. 9): "There are diseases of affluence and diseases of poverty, but there are few 'tropical' diseases; that is, there are few diseases in which a tropical climate is the leading or determining characteristic or ecological factor, whereas the incidence, course, and outcome of most common diseases are affected by poverty." Poverty, in turn, is brought about by "... increasing cultural, technological, and economic dependency on the international capitalist system . . ." (p. 9).

Wisner (1980/81) has shown how colonial policies and the transition from a subsistence to a capitalist economy had serious consequences for the nutritional status of people living in Eastern Kenya. Land alienation forced agriculturalists onto marginal land and many were forced into wage labor. Farmers were marginalized politically, economically, and ecologically. Responses to drought conditions based on kinship reciprocity were drastically curtailed. Also in Kenya, Good (1987) looked at the impact on health of the introduction of a wage economy and European encroachment on African land. He shows how colonial governments and Christian missions disrupted indigenous medical systems and how capitalism produced a biomedical health care system which favored a small elite.

A major geographic manifestation of hegemonic control is segregation of populations, most often seen in urban places. Colonial authorities used ideas about disease and medicine to justify segregation. The idea was that Europeans and Africans should be separated in order to protect the former from diseases endemic among the latter (Curtin 1992). For example, in Leopoldville, the original European quarter was separated from the African quarter by a *cordon sanitaire* (SP?) comprised of a zoo, botanical garden, and golf course. Malaria, and what little was known about its ecology around the turn of the twentieth century, was used as a thinly disguised excuse for racial segregation. Thus, in Freetown, disregarding Ross' advice to clean up breeding sites for mosquitoes, the government of Sierra Leone built "Hill Station" 750 feet above sea level and four miles from the central town in order to protect a colonial elite (Frenkel and Western 1988). Medical justifications for segregation varied from place to place over time (Feierman and Janzen 1992). In Dakar, for instance, racial segregation was established to prevent the spread of plague, but it continued after the plague had ended, at least for poor Africans; those Africans who could afford to were allowed to build houses alongside the French. In short, "The racial ideas of the conquerors shaped their understanding of medical problems. Their medical ideas shaped the landscape, and with it the pattern of urban disease" (Feierman and Janzen 1992, p. 15).

Struggles for control have been investigated in health care delivery studies as well. One example is the history of the development of biomedical health care services in Nigeria (Ityavyar

1987). Here the British government and Christian medical missions established medical care that was focused on urban places and favored Europeans first and the Africans who worked for them next, to the exclusion of the majority of the population. This colonial hegemony was contested by both Nigerian physicians and native healers. Following independence, there was talk of expanding coverage and some progress was made in eliminating inequalities, but Nigerian doctors became a new controlling elite and regional, rural/urban, and class differences remained. For Zaire, Janzen (1978) has chronicled the attempts by different groups of healers - native Kongo *banganga* doctors, healing prophets, and those trained in biomedicine - to legitimize themselves and marginalize others.

Meaning

The humanistic perspective, which has, along with context, also played an important role in the investigation of health and disease, has brought to the fore what Good (1994) refers to as the meaning-centered model. People in all societies ask questions such as "What is this illness I am experiencing?", "What caused it?", "Why did this misfortune happen to me?", and "What can I do about it?" The answers, which might appear irrational to others, nevertheless have meaning for those who give them. Lay theories about illness causation, for example, take several overlapping forms, related to individual responsibility (e.g., diet, exercises), the physical environment (e.g., climate, pollutants), the social world (e.g., work stress, witchcraft), and the supernatural world (e.g., gods, spirits) (Helman 1994a). What is extremely important is that interpretations of illness raise questions about the meaning of much wider issues

such as life and death, what causes misfortune in general, what is evil, what is dangerous, and what is polluting (Feierman and Janzen 1992). When one looks at illness in this way, the alleviation of physiological symptoms may become less important than the alleviation of suffering as a human condition which comes from understanding an illness (Davis-Roberts 1992).

Meaning is derived from the experience of illness in at least two ways, which are clearly interrelated: ritual and language. Ritual, which Helman (1994b, p. 224) defines as "a form of repetitive behaviour that does not have a direct overt technical effect" celebrates, maintains, and renews one's world and deals with its dangers. It acts to maintain relationships between people, between people and nature, and between people and the supernatural, employing ritual objects such as talismans, items of clothing, and words and songs. Turner (1969) finds that ritual symbols cluster around two poles - a social and moral pole and a physiological pole - and acts to join them together. Thus, for example, a woman's achievement of womanhood (social pole) is associated with menarche (physiological pole).

Particularly important to us here are *rituals of misfortune* which are performed at times of crisis, including the onset of ill health. These rituals are intended to heal both the individual and society. They function in three ways: (1) psychologically, to lessen anxiety and to produce catharsis; (2) socially, to expose and then heal conflicts and to recreate values; and (3) protectively, to guard people against physical and mental dangers (Beattie 1967; Helman 1994b). There is, of course a rich literature on the use of ritual in dealing

with illness in Africa. Turner (1964), to take one example, has described how a diviner among the Ndembu of Zambia practices curative rituals.

Ritual often has transformative power. That is, it aids in changes in physiological or social status. Van Gennep (1960) has described three stages in rites of passage: separation, transition, and incorporation. Helman (1994b) applies this concept to healing rituals which are intended to transform the ill person into a healthy one. For example, the hospital in the biomedical system is intended to provide a setting for such a change. Davis-Roberts (1992) shows how illness narratives perform a transformative function among the Tabwa of Zaire. Ngubane (1977) explains how the Zulu of South Africa use the colors of medicines as an aid in the ill-to-healthy transformation. Black medicines (representing death, night-time, darkness, dirt, pollution, defecation, and danger) are given first; red medicines (representing a transition from black to white, growth, and association with blood) follow; finally white medicines (the good things of life, good health and good fortune, daylight, eating and social interactions) complete the order.

To discover the meaning attached to illness, it is important to pay attention to the language people use. Disease classifications reveal beliefs about etiology and causation: the Kamba of South-central Kenya use a taxonomy based on four systems: ultimate cause, mode of treatment, disease characteristics, and attributes of the afflicted (Good 1987). Naming a disease gives the namer power to say what creates suffering and thus shapes cultural ideas about misfortune (Feierman and Janzen 1992). Language is often part of ritual. Like

ritual, it joins the experience of illness and experiences of other aspects of life. The Tabwa of Zaire use words drawn from nature to describe pathology; an example is to talk about hunger and gestation in terms of the actions of two *nsakes* or insects that occupy the human body (Davis-Roberts 1992).

Particular types of language can be used to explore meaning. Metaphors, such as those used in describing cancer or AIDS reveal not only cultural attitudes toward those diseases, but also what people fear about other aspects of life such as the breakdown of society or the fear of invasions (Helman 1994a). Metaphors "work" because they are multi-vocal; that is, they have reference to different arenas of experience. Good (1994) has worked with the concept of semantic networks or words used from different realms of experience which can be linked to produce a core set of symbolic associations. Semantic networks are "a way of conceiving how diverse and apparently conflicting claims about the nature of a specific illness complaint could be synthesized and culturally objectified, formulated as an 'object' of personal and social awareness," (p. 171). Again, like ritual, these networks connect cultural events and physiological processes. The concept is used by Greenwood (1992) to show how a network based on the humoral paradigm connects natural science, cosmology, agriculture, nutrition, and medicine in Moroccan therapeutics. For example, foods are linked to environmental temperature, inner feelings, and illness by metaphor and metonymy through the ways in which they are classified.

In recent years, a great deal of attention has been paid to illness narratives which tell us how life's problems are created, controlled, and made meaningful; about cultural values; and about social relations (Kleinman 1988). In other words, when people are allowed to relate their experience of illness, they may reveal far more than the "facts" of the illness itself. They place the illness in the context of their life history and the values of the society in which they live (Brody 1987). "In Tabwaland, as elsewhere," Davis-Roberts (1992, p. 376) says, "the medical system exists and is experienced not as the discursive, analytic prose of the specialist or the observer, but rather as the narrative or saga of specific illness occurrences, episodes that cut to varying depths across the normal flow of life". He relates the story of the illness of a three-year old Tabwa girl and shows how a diviner used the narrative to bring together the illness itself, both as physiological symptoms and important life event, the personal histories of the child's parents and grandparents, and "a category of etiological agent that contains implicit within itself a prognosis and a nonbodily therapy" (p. 380).

Place

The description of places has traditionally been an important focus for geographic study. The quantitative revolution, which began in the 1950s, dominated geography in the 1960s, and is still a powerful force today, submerged place in its search for spatial regularities. Geographers tended to shut out the other social sciences. However, as Massey (1984) says, this could not last. Beginning in the 1970s, it was recognized that "There are no such things as spatial processes without social content" (p. 3).

Geographers discovered that there was a reciprocal relationship between the social and the spatial: the spatial was socially constructed and the social was spatially constructed.

As geography reached out to other disciplines, the qualities of place were rediscovered (Gesler 1991). Much was made of the idea of sense of place, how specific places provide identity, security, and aesthetic meaning for people. Places acquire personality, a spirit; they are loved or hated. People create places, but places also create people (Kearns 1991). These ideas are easily applied to health situations. As part of his healing practice, the Ndembu diviner gathers the relatives of the patient before a sacred shrine and publicly exposes previously hidden social tensions; the GPs consultation room creates a certain atmosphere through its display of such symbols as the diploma, a cabinet full of instruments, and a set of family photographs (Helman 1994b).

The work of Victor Turner often has a spatial or place orientation. Space, along with ritual objects and gestures, he asserts, stands for something other than itself. Symbols used in rituals have interpretive, operational, and *positional* meaning (emphasis added) (Turner 1968). "Through the wide range of reference possessed by a single symbol, almost all the things that matter can be concentrated into a small area of space and time, there to be re-endowed with value" (p. 21). *Where* rites are performed is important. For example, a ritual to cure a woman of infertility takes place at the hole or burrow of certain animals. Furthermore, the performance of this ritual, which includes digging pits representing life and death and

tunnels joining them, follows a carefully planned spatial structure, each part of which carries symbolic meaning (see Figure 1).

Feierman and Janzen (1992, p. 2) recognize the importance of place in African healing when they state that "What patients see, in Africa as in many other parts of the world, is a diverse, heterogeneous set of options for treatment--options that vary from place to place." This leads them to advocate a search for local coherences, to try and make sense out of the layers of medical conceptions and practices which become sedimented at particular locations. Thus one must consider the uniqueness of places. However, places share features common with other places and must also be seen in relation to other places. That is, we need to take both a centered and a decentered view of places; we need to examine the tension between particularizing and universalizing discourses (Entrekin 1991).

A study which very clearly brings out the importance of place is Janzen's recent work on what Turner termed the "rituals or cults of affliction". These cults are defined (Janzen 1992, p. 1, quoting Turner 1968, pp. 15-16) as "the interpretation of misfortune in terms of domination by a specific non-human agent and the attempt to come to terms with the misfortune by having the afflicted individual, under the guidance of a 'doctor' of that mode, join the cult association venerating that specific agent." Some cults or communities are called "drums of affliction" because drumming and rhythmic song and dance are an important part of the ritual. Janzen (1992) looks both at a regional view of the cult and its changing economic, political, and social context over time. Of particular interest here is the fact that

he examined eight aspects of the therapeutic dimension of cults of affliction in four urban settings: Kinshasa, Dar Es Salaam, the Mbabane-Manzini corridor, and Capetown, using a theoretical framework based on health, healing, and efficacy. Also of interest is Janzen's focus on the micro-geography of a healing space in each of his study sites. As an example, Figure 2 shows the compound of a healer in Kinshasa.

Thus far, our discussion of place has tended to emphasize meaning as opposed to context. Place, however, can also be thought of as part of the setting for medical interactions (Helman 1994a) and it can be argued that places tie context and meaning together. The unifying power of place can be expressed in several ways.

Structuration theory, advocated by Giddens (1976), Pred (1983) and others, develops the idea of an interplay between structure and agency within places. In Livingstone's words (1992, p. 357), ". . . it is the interplay of subject and structure that gives both character and texture to places because they are at once the medium and outcome of social reciprocity." We could also think in terms of the interaction between public power and private choice (Feierman and Janzen 1992), society and the individual, hegemony and self-expression, cultural norms and individual biographies. Perhaps most useful is to think of places as negotiated realities (Ley 1981). In terms of illness and health, patients and healers come together in places, influenced by context and seeking meaning, to be diagnosed and treated through negotiation. Cultural values, social relationships, individual experience, rituals, and language all play a part in the negotiation.

Healing among the Kalahari Kung.

The Kung, who dwell in the Kalahari Desert area of southwestern Africa, practice a type of healing that, in Katz's words (1982, p. 34), "seeks to establish health and growth on physical, psychological, social, and spiritual levels; it involves work on the individual, the group, and the surrounding environment and cosmos." On an average of four nights a month, a healing dance is begun around a camp fire. The dance activates *num* or spiritual energy and some of the dancers experience *kia*, an enhancement (not an alteration) of consciousness. Those in *kia* heal all those at the dance.

The context of Kung healing can be presented briefly. The Kung are a hunting-gathering people who live in a semi-arid environment. They survive in harsh climatic conditions through sharing collected food resources among allied bands. Although each subsistence space is bounded, territories are loosely defined and are not defended. Conflict is usually resolved either by groups breaking up or at a healing dance. The Kung are very egalitarian people with little disparity in wealth to divide them; there is a prohibition against "standing out" from others. This social, political, and economic organization is breaking down, however, under outside pressures. The Kung are being enveloped by an economy which is dominated by their black pastoralist neighbors, who in turn are succumbing to the penetration of a capitalist economy. The Kung enter this economy at the low end; some have become sedentary serfs and squatters at the margins of pastoral settlements. The old way of sharing is weakening, and the meaning of the healing dance is becoming altered. Kung healers are becoming more professionalized and are beginning to seek payment for their cures.

Among the Kung, sickness is thought to be an existential condition rather than a specific illness or symptom. Healing sickness both affirms the worth of an individual and creates meaning. The healing process expresses several meanings: it alleviates physical illness, enhances the healer's understanding, resolves conflicts, establishes proper relationships with the cosmos, and restores a balance between the individual, the culture, and the environment. Experiencing *kia* is similar to spiritual growth in other cultures; this growth is closely related to practical aspects of daily life. That is, ". . . healing is the application of spiritual knowledge to everyday life . . ." (Katz, 1982, p. 296).

The Kung dance obviously contains ritual elements: repetitive singing and dancing, "pulling out the sickness", and so on. The dancing is done to make the *num* boil and create a healing energy. Through language, boiling *num* is symbolically associated with other aspects of life, namely boiling water, meat cooked in boiling water, and ripened plant foods. All these items become powerful when boiled, cooked, or ripened. Language also plays a role during the dance when healers carry on extended dialogues with the gods and spirits.

Katz views healing as a process of transition toward meaning, balance, wholeness, and connectedness. Thus the healing dance can be seen as a transformative process. During the process, the healer locates and diagnoses sickness by "seeing properly"; then comes the act of "pulling out the sickness"; finally the healer "bargains" and "battles" (negotiates) with the gods and spirits over the sickness. To experience full *kia* is to die and be reborn. Healers take a journey

which they fear "through a territory of consciousness which can never become known" (p. 118). The community as a whole also goes on a transformative journey, resolving conflicts and tensions and growing spiritually along the way.

What is the role of place in Kung healing? The healing dance is performed around a camp fire. A community of people, living for a time in camps around a water hole gather within what can be thought of as sacred space. As they sing and dance, they create a setting in which *num* can boil and *kia* can be experienced. The fire itself "creates a special space in which *num* can boil." (p. 121). At the dance, people are in the same space for many hours, often in close physical contact. Each Kung group seems to favor its own fire; one healer says it is easier to *kia* when he is dancing at his own camp. The camp thus become a community healer. In sum, "In *kia*, they are acknowledging, in yet one more time and one more place, the nature of their universe as a whole and their place in it" (p. 210).

Conclusions

This paper has traced the history of changing approaches medical geographers have taken to the study of disease and health in Africa. Early work used the predominantly positivist approaches of cultural ecology and health care delivery. These studies made a substantial contribution, but they lagged behind new theoretical movements within the social sciences such as structuralism, humanism, and postmodernism. With some notable exceptions, Africanist medical geographers were slow to respond to new theoretical orientations. Meanwhile, pressures for a more theoretically informed medical geography of Africa arose from two sources: work by non

geographers and work by medical geographers dealing with other areas such as Britain, Canada, the U.S., New Zealand, and some Latin American countries. What I have tried to show here is that a focus on the very geographic notion of place can blend these two pressures in a useful way. Geographers have thought a great deal about place as context and meaning; non geographers, represented by several studies cited here, seem to be quite well aware of the importance of place as well. My call is for a more conscious grounding of African studies of disease and health in notions of place by all social scientists.

I realized as I researched this paper that the examples found were heavily biased toward traditional healing practices performed to alleviate chronic illnesses. Perhaps this indicates that the literature review itself was at fault. If not, then there seems to be a need to widen the scope of health-in-place studies to encompass acute illnesses and the biomedical system. This does not mean going back to the almost exclusive focus on biomedical health care which predominated, in medical geography at least, several years ago. Rather, it is a recognition that people experience both acute and chronic conditions and that they are pragmatic and will seek care from a variety of sources. Context and meaning can be imputed to the experience of illness and the practice of healing of all kinds, and pluralism occurs in places. We need to ask about the experience of the hospital as place as well as the diviner's hut. Which features of each place are, or are not, conducive to health?

Studies of health in Africa should also cover far more than physical health. As Africans, along with many non Africans have

long recognized, health and healing also have mental, spiritual, and moral components which are often difficult to separate out. In addition, as indigenous African healers know well, health and healing can not be separated from other aspects of daily life such as religion, commerce, and politics. That is why African healers so often successfully heal.

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DRAFT

**Health, Culture and Sexuality:
Rethinking Possibilities for Cultural and Medical Geographies of Africa**

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HEALTH, CULTURE AND SEXUALITY: RETHINKING POSSIBILITIES FOR CULTURAL AND MEDICAL GEOGRAPHIES OF AFRICA

Places of Geography & Places in Geography

Continuity & Change in Cultural and Medical Geography

- Tensions of Scholarship
- Valuing "Intellectual Properties"

Contemporary African Geographical Studies? An Interrogation

- Geographies of Africa

Landscapes of Culture, Sexuality, and Health: Ritual, Therapeutic, & Symbolic Features

Crises of Birth, Death, Initiation and other *rites de passage*

Disease & Illness, Preventive Health, Medical Pluralism & Therapy Management

- Historical Geography of Disease & Health

- HIV/AIDS: Can Life be a Choice?

- Traditional Medical Systems

The Sacred & Profane, The Role of Worship & Veneration

Spatiality of Sexuality

Conclusion

**HEALTH, CULTURE AND SEXUALITY:
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Charles M. Good

Place of Geography and Places in Geography

Geographers have typically viewed their discipline as a one of exceptional breadth and interrelationship with other fields. Like most we have long sensed that the minute bits and strands of knowledge we inherit, create and interpret are interconnected and part of a unified if invisible whole. Geography, we've said, is best defined by the kinds of questions we ask rather than by a ritualistic adherence to a preordained, body of static subject matter labeled "geographic."¹ Our eclectic leanings in teaching, research, and approaches to analysis and synthesis often demand more than just passing familiarity with the subject matter and debates of other disciplines. Lately, one senses that scholars, teachers and practitioners in some cognate fields seem less surprised or perturbed by the "nearness" of geographers, or by their constructs of interdisciplinarity.²

In 1996, this pre-postmodern vision of the field is for some merely prologue. Many geographers and others--perhaps most of those attending this symposium--have adopted philosophical positions that question and even reject the validity of disciplines. They are skeptical of holism as an ideal goal or value, and even dispossessed of its possibility. Barely a generation ago, in his essay "On the Merits of Holism in Understanding Societal Health Needs" (1973),³ John Hunter argued forcefully and convincingly that spatial and ecological analyses by medical geographers should be broad-based and attempt to examine all factors pertinent to a topic. In the 1980s some medical and cultural geographers in Britain, North America, and other Neo-Europes began to shift away from holism, foundationalism, and the so-called value-free paradigm. To my knowledge no one has stepped forward to help us interpret how deeply the alternative modes of thought have penetrated the field. This is a necessary task, but it is not my immediate purpose here.

This essay is at once self-interrogation--a grappling with thorny "So What?" and "Where Now?" questions--and partly a proposal that geographers can increase the understanding of Africa by applying their diverse strengths and perspectives to unconventional topics and themes. First, I raise a several questions about the implications of the post-disciplinary movement for cultural and medical geography. Second, I identify some of the challenges to the identity, social relevance, and continued existence of these sub-fields, and discuss strategies that could sharpen and increase their value. Finally, I describe several African examples of potentially fruitful research topics that geographers have generally avoided over the years. Curiously, these topics strongly invite geographical inquiry. Our locational, regional, ecological and other perspectives are pertinent here, and the kinds of questions that first attracted us to our field still need to be asked and answered. The themes I address involve health, culture, and sexuality, past and present. Specific topics include *rites de passage*, disease ecology and social relations, "missionary engineering" of demographic change, HIV prevention and development, the marginalization of African traditional healers, geographies of conflict resolution and peace, and geographical and sexual networking.

The topics noted above illustrate a need to enlarge our perspective of scholarship concerning social change and human welfare in Africa. They underscore the importance of longitudinal studies and interdisciplinary collaboration. They demand the admission of indigenous voices, and suggest possibilities for new constructs of knowledge that may substantially influence the validity of present and future interpretations of African peoples. There is probably only one certainty in this proposal: it will make little headway without the lead of African scholars.

Continuity & Change in Cultural and Medical Geography:

Modes & Purposes

Cultural and medical geography are dynamic *traditions*. Analogous to Leith's view of organized religion, they have "assimilated in a living way the wisdom of the past" and remain "open to the future."⁴ In this sense, to paraphrase Leith, we look cultural and medical geography as traditions, rooted in and built up from past thinkers, that continue to serve as key sources of vitality for contemporary scholarship. This characterization dramatically contrasts with the notion of *traditionalism*, which means a holding-on to essentially closed, fossilized ways of thinking that can only hasten the death of contemporary scholarship.⁵ My perspective of cultural and medical geography is one of closely-linked, open-ended, and interdependent bodies of living thought. Scholars in these fields can make valuable contributions to knowledge whether they use liberal, conservative, postmodernist, feminist, and other modes of scholarship. As we consider what is more valuable in the African context, I submit that geographers can optimize their future contributions to knowledge by expanding their purview to accommodate a more inclusive subject matter.

Trends in the humanities and social sciences have recently accelerated the process of bringing new ideas and constructs to cultural and medical geography. Like all fields, cultural and medical geography require conscious and continuous dialogue and outreach to remain vital and ward off stagnation. The new approaches have been energized by an infusion of ideas drawn from textual criticism, poststructuralism, feminist perspectives of power and gendered subjectivity, among others. This blossoming repertoire of new thought has been emerging for at least two decades, and its proponents brashly insist that geographers rethink their entire enterprise. For some, mass conversion is the goal. We must henceforth view reality through an all-encompassing Diversity and Subjectivity, or lose claim to legitimacy. The new ideas challenge us to extend our horizons beyond the ancient, resistant conventions, charters, and rules of our discipline. By now, proponents insist that it

“is illusory” for anyone to entertain the notion that cultural (and medical) geography can prosper *with* a disciplinary agenda, or that they should aspire to intellectual unity.⁶ Because such unity seeks to impose “hegemonic order” its goal “necessarily implies domination.”⁷

Postmodernist thinking has insinuated itself into geographic thought, and the diverse collection of ideas and perspectives we call social [or pluralist?] theory is undoubtedly here for an indefinite stay. In *The Geographical Tradition* (1992) Livingstone⁸ argues that classical foundationalism, in which the only rational beliefs or statements are those that are self-evident or incorrigible and verifiable by logic or science, has failed to provide the “epistemological certainty” imagined for it. The resulting “collapse” of ideas about rationality and scientific precision has helped usher in postmodernity. Foundationalism “had better be given up for dead,” he warns, and geographers need to admit that

warranted knowledge is relative to a body of beliefs, not to a body of certitudes. Pluralism in the geographical academy is thus an inevitability. We have no option but to live with positivist geography, Marxist geography, humanistic geography, Islamic geography, structurationist geography, Christian geography, a people’s geography, and on and on. Each will be within their cognitive rights to hold to theories that comport with their system of control beliefs. We now need to realize that non-foundationalist discourses --in the political, the affective, the moral, the artistic, the cultural, the aesthetic, the religious, and doubtless a host of other spheres--are as legitimate now as they were in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. . . .⁹

At issue is how best to benefit from the use of selected insights and tools of postmodernist approaches in African geographical studies without being drawn into the cacophony of “critical” voices whose work, reaching only a selected band of devotees, may get little notice *except* as a form of recreation. Is subject-matter expertise, as opposed to critical technique, a tenable category? Some desire that Geography should soon resemble a kind of postdisciplinary kaleidoscope. Postmodernism will contest the “modernist project of unity,” and we will see that cultural geography’s subject matter splintered into shards of “plurality and

difference, with multiple futures shaped by multiple pasts.”¹⁰ To paraphrase Geertz (1983), a new intellectual engineering is blurring our genres. In this process, cultural geography is expected to shed much of its identity as a common intellectual project or site and become more of an “institutional site containing significant epistemological differences.”¹¹

Tensions in Scholarship

Currently our new cultural and medical studies seem not to have reached general agreement concerning their primary audiences or ultimate purposes. Duncan’s recent redefinition of cultural geography as an “epistemological heterotopia” is but one example of the current disorientation and fascination with less than elegant language.¹² Is scholarship intended primarily to enhance the quality of course materials available to colleagues in and outside one’s discipline? Is reaching out to an audience beyond academic geography and post-disciplinarians left to chance? Will the article or book shed light on ways that standards of living and health in a place can be enhanced? Will it expand our appreciation of the culture(s) in a place? Where possible will findings be presented and critiqued locally, by the subjects? Is the work aimed at *cognoscente*, at general readers, or for younger scholars primarily intended to satisfy a promotion and tenure committee?

Not idle questions these. In his essay “What is Education For?”, historian Page Smith bluntly asserts that

the vast majority of so-called research turned out in the modern university is essentially worthless. It does not result in measurable benefit to anything or anybody. It does not push back those omnipresent ‘frontiers of knowledge’ so confidently evoked; it does not in the main result in greater health or happiness among the general populace or any particular segment of it. It is busywork on a vast, almost incomprehensible scale. It is dispiriting; it depresses the whole scholarly enterprise. . . .¹³

I submit that numbingly esoteric treatises, cast self-consciously in the dense prose of some “critical” method, already overpopulate our own and others’ academic

journals and monographs. Perhaps we can agree that intelligibility must be the center piece of a strategy to broaden our readership and listening audience. To accomplish this it is important that we refine skills that will enable us to distinguish between the explosion of *information* (data, words, paper) and the increase of knowledge and wisdom.¹⁴ This process cannot fail to pay large dividends toward improved dialogue among geographers, at least.

What is a sensible response to unproductive feuding with other scholars (including other geographers) over such layered territoriality? For many, social theory and its intriguing extensions have all the trappings of a universal religion, complete with controlled access to the order of liturgy and sacraments. Language that is pretentious, frothy, and mystifying may abound, leading one to suspect that the goal is intellectual recreation. One can hardly be faulted for thinking that Duncan's invocation of the term "epistemological heterotopia" suggests a compulsive fetish for overwrought language.¹⁵ His real objective is to find a term that captures cultural geography's identity and endowment within postmodernism. In that framework cultural geography is "not a single contested space of power/knowledge" . . . ; rather, it is in Foucault's sense "capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several sites that are in themselves incompatible."¹⁶

While I agree with Duncan that "entirely different objects of study" may occasionally call for the creation of new labels and a jettisoning of some traditional terms. However, such language is likely to remain "private and idiosyncratic" unless it is public and participatory both inside and outside academe. It is unfortunate that Duncan is so defensive on this issue. His strategy is to try to deflect criticism by alleging that those who question the new constructs of communication (i.e., words and their configurations) have the political aim of "marginalizing subgroups and disciplining difference."¹⁷ One could be forgiven for thinking just the opposite.

In a recent review, Zelinsky observes that until recently there was little competition among disciplines for ownership of "that pesky term 'culture.'"¹⁸ Since it has acquired academic sexiness and along with that proprietary skirmishing, one would think that possession of few good working definitions of culture and geography would help to get us on track. If *Re-Reading Cultural Geography* is a barometer, such self-help is apparently not yet in sight. Zelinsky does not appreciate what he sees, particularly the authors' resistance to the difficult but necessary task of defining culture. No mean wordsmith himself, he offers the following wry solution:

As a staunch believer in Truth in Labeling, may I propose that, in place of an unstable heterotopic galaxy of disparate constellations, those who style themselves 'new cultural geographers' should acknowledge their true colors and call themselves 'social geographers' or 'critical social geographers' if they prefer. After a friendly divorce, they could create the properly labeled textbooks, continue to publish anthologies with a degree of internal coherence, and finally form their own AAG Speciality Group or some such other congenial association.¹⁹

Valuing "Intellectual Properties"

Contemporaneously with our in-house debates, some new-breed scholars have set themselves as gatekeepers. They view geographers (and presumably other social scientists and humanists) as imbibers of privilege and denizens of "a terrain of entrenched disciplines."²⁰

Tiered battlelines have formed. Bartolovich's (1995) critique of Peter Jackson's *Maps of Meaning: An Introduction to Cultural Geography* (1989) and his *Constructions of Race, Place and Nation* (1994), edited with Jan Penrose, is a shot across the bow that illustrates confrontations now developing. A professor of Literary and Cultural Studies professor at Carnegie Mellon, Bartolovich announces that she and her colleagues have committed themselves to resisting "disciplinary structures."²¹ She is incensed by Jackson's et. al apparent use of texts that rely on a "trade" metaphor, which incorporate ideas of "traffic" and "debt" to explain the exchange of ideas and theories. Bartolovich derides "a tendency to view 'cultural studies' as a sort of theory warehouse for traditional disciplines [i.e., geography], and to see 'theory' as a

stockpile of portable commodities ('ideas and approaches') ready to be transported anywhere interchangeably."²² Thus geographers and their ilk increasingly seek to *appropriate*²³ cultural theory to help revitalize themselves without in any way questioning their own disciplinary integrity. In this process, she says, they are "in no way troubled by the functioning of traditional disciplinary boundaries."²⁴ She overlooks her own contradiction and portrays geographers as dangerous interlopers who lay the groundwork for the destruction of cultural studies.

In Bartolovich's reality, geography and the other "traditional disciplines" have not received a license to forage in the *terra nouveau* of postdisciplinarity. She implies that such debarring is appropriate because geographers are too content with "an inherited discipline, invariable paradigm, or fixed set of protocols."²⁵ In contrast, we learn that Cultural Studies is distinguished by disciplinary neutrality, achieved through "resistance" to and disinvestment in the constructed, invested agenda of traditional disciplines.²⁶

Bartolovich's critique reaches a crescendo when she lashes out at the authors' consistent use of the term *race* in "scare-quotes", calling this "one of the more egregious examples of [their] . . . sanctioned ignorance at work."²⁷ Her turf mania and other excesses diminish the value of whatever legitimate criticisms she has of *Constructions*.²⁸ If such unrelieved despair²⁹ epitomizes the general ethos and contribution of postmodernist criticism, it will ultimately prove maladaptive. Though a mixed bag, prophets and gatekeepers in this profession will be assured of ephemeral influence. As cultural and medical geographers we will do well to ponder the value of focusing on fashion over usefulness.³⁰ Orr is correct to urge that we learn the difference between intelligence and cleverness in order to benefit from that crucial distinction³¹

Contemporary African Geographical Studies? An Interrogation

To date North Americans and Europeans have been the primary agents of postmodernist/postdisciplinary work in geography, with a focus primarily outside Africa. Lucy Jarosz' thoughtful and well-written essay, "Constructing the Dark Continent: Metaphor as Geographic Representation of Africa,"³² is among the exceptions. She maintains that "the metaphor of Africa as the Dark Continent continually (re)makes and represents the continent as Other. A place which is simultaneously incorporated and excluded as a negative reflection of the West" (p.105). She describes the persistence of the "Dark Continent" metaphor in many places and mindsets. Jarosz also links it to assertions about the Africans and the AIDS epidemic, and takes the opportunity to critique the way some geographers (and others) have engaged in potentially harmful speculation (e.g., origin hypotheses) over an issue so bound up with "xenophobia and racism."

Unfortunately, as with so many literary assessments of the epidemic, Jarosz' contribution takes on an unappealing smugness. All energy is concentrated on slaying the dreaded monster of Foreign Ignorance, Intrigue, and Conspiracy. Describing what is inappropriate, what has gone wrong, and what is harmful imagery is an essential function so long as it does not become just another useless cottage industry within the profession of criticism. Given all that has been written about HIV/AIDS--good, bad, and indifferent--would it not be a more productive strategy to suggest ways that academics might help to slow the transmission and ameliorate the social, economic, and ecological effects of this disastrous epidemic. Relevance and shelf-life are key concerns here. Distant observers and literary critics will still be needed for balance. Is such an agenda feasible, even thinkable, for postdisciplinary cultural and medical geography? Presumably, African and Africanist geographers are deciding whether these approaches have viability in terms of their scholarly activities, teaching, and expectations concerning practical applications of their work. How will their craft support calls upon and within the university for work that is applied, useful and development-oriented? For the sake of strategy, should they not translate some of their work into political capital? Can

they create viable niches in the policy environments of today's African State, and keep their souls? Proponents of postmodernism and postdisciplinarity may criticize the attempt to serve 'higher ends' as "screwing a utilitarian handle onto the imagination. ..."³³

What, then, can be expected from African geographical studies? What ideas will prevail in the near and long term, and who will light the road? Careers of geographers such as Professor Akin Mabogunje of Nigeria exemplify the extraordinary intellectual influence that can be brought to bear in terms of shaping national and regional policy. As the life and broad influence of American geographer Gilbert White attests, real influence on developments at the regional and global scale is possible but even more exceptional.

Geographical research and scholarship on Africa that is thematically and methodologically bold, solidly substantive, *and* instrumentalist remains the best hope for real contributions to knowledge, intellectual pleasure, and social relevance. Esoteric discourse on ubiquitous conspiracies and dominions involving the powerful/disempowered (Foucauldians), Lacanian visions of the phallus, whites oppressing people of color (postcolonialists), and male oppressors of women and gay/lesbians is not necessarily *useless*³⁴ However, respect for geographical approaches to African issues will grow in proportion to their perceived relevance to different constituencies in Africa. The latter include secondary and higher education curricula, research institutes, non-governmental organizations, and ministries of health, social services, and economic planning.

Temporal, ecological, spatial, political-economic, regional and other approaches offer opportunities for complementary work and fruitful co-existence among geographers and other scholars.³⁵ Those whose orientation is primarily historical or cultural have important opportunities to inform the work of those whose focus is applied geography. There must be a sizable space at center-stage for scholarship, teaching, and consulting that is both instrumental and free of political interference.

A key issue is whether cultural and medical geography be configured so that they become part of a flow of positive change leading to more equitable and just societies and sustainable environments in the region. The case of Ogoni-Nigeria-Royal Dutch Shell is one of many that quickly come to mind.³⁶

Geographies of Africa

As in other disciplines, geographic inquiry was long constrained by ancient conventions of turf and predisposition. For instance, a systematic review of the writings and course syllabi of Africanist geographers will undoubtedly confirm that *ritual, therapeutic, and symbolic* landscapes and behavior rank among those topics least likely to attract their attention. Because of this redlining we have overlooked, ignored, and simply missed *whole layers of life* simultaneously lived geographically, sociologically, anthropologically, spiritually, and so on. These layers of unseen and unaccounted-for-behavior and symbolic space *are* significant elements of the geography of African societies in their own right. Moreover, they also reveal striking and *essential* connections to the themes and systems that have preoccupied us up to now.³⁷ Here I refer to our abiding interests, at all scales, in African livelihood systems, including food production and supply; how people access and manage their natural resources; the cash economy; population mobility; urbanization of societies; and sustainable development.

A cursory examination of textbooks on the geography of Africa published over the past 25 years reveals a striking lack of attention to topics such as the *social* basis of rural and urban settlement patterns, ethnicity, the geography of imperialism and resistance, traditional religion and health care behavior, and biological and cultural exchange. A more inclusive perspective is now predicated on the capabilities and influence of a new generation of African and Africanist geographers. Robert Stock's *Africa South of the Sahara: A Geographical Interpretation* (1995) exemplifies the reassessment that has begun. More than any earlier text, Stock treats such non-conventional topics as ethnicity, religion, and social class. He integrates previously exotic topics such as gender, women in development, and the social (and medical?)

geography of female circumcision. Stock devotes an entire chapter to “Social Policy: The Health Sector,” examining and demonstrating the interconnections among colonial practices, the early post-Independence decades, and present-day policy issues such as the organization of primary care. He also addresses the recent discovery of ethnomedicine, the social roles of traditional healers, the challenge of AIDS, and health planning concerns. Anyone familiar with previous African geography texts will recognize the departures from the *status quo ante* in Stock’s book. He does not neglect the familiar, enduring topics of interest such as the physical environment, resource issues, and urban economies and societies. These themes also incorporate insights made possible by the use of a more conceptual and political framework.³⁸

New approaches in geography often seem to exclude considerations of cultural, aesthetic, and ecological quality.³⁹ Yet who will dispute the inseparable connections of these factors to the health of places and people in them? In a similar fashion, we must ask again whether our new cultural and medical geographies have purposes beyond academic conversation and recreation. For instance, when all is said and done, will it be possible for any of us to say, and others to confirm, that our scholarship helped stem the loss of cultural diversity and social and environmental support systems once associated with rural and small town landscapes? Diminution and disappearance of the “special skills, products, human qualities, and traditions”⁴⁰ in these places must be counted among the grievous losses. Such losses include the choices of where and how to live, whether on the Great Plains or the increasingly commodified and commoner-exclusive, or degraded, real estate of rural Africa.⁴¹

Landscapes of Culture, Sexuality, and Health: Ritual, Therapeutic, and Symbolic Features

I have outlined below four clusters of topics that cultural and medical geographers might consider as possible entrances (among many) through which we could achieve a new level of effectiveness in terms of defining geography’s contribution to the field of African studies. Conventional geography has rarely attempted to systematically address any of the topics selected. In our *traditionalism* we concluded

that engaging them would carry us beyond the pale of our real commitments. Also, there was a sense that we would infringe too far into the mystified compartments of these intellectual properties and their accepted owners such as anthropology, sociology, theology, and public health. Alternatively, the topics were possibly seen as dispensable “frills” that lack relevance to the task of understanding the interplay of society, culture and space in Africa. Unlike the study of livelihood systems, resources management, or rural-urban migration, we long ago decided that topics such as *rites de passage*, traditional medical systems, religions as organizing principles of society, and sexuality are exotic or peripheral rather than *central* features in the web of human-environmental-spatial relations.

Surely, freedom of individual scholarly interests and orientations must be acknowledged in discussions of this nature. With that understanding beyond all doubt, geographers must still address the issue of their methods and the end-uses of new knowledge in African studies. Also, it can only be counterproductive if medical and cultural geographers continue to neglect the many “gut-level” issues that await their attention. The remainder of this essay sets out examples of such topics.

Crises of Birth, Death, Initiation and other *rites de passage*;

Investigating these topics should not be confused as the stuff of an archaic, colonial-voyeuristic, or atavistic anthropology. Rather, they reflect concerns of significance to virtually all populations and classes in Africa, and wherever they may live outside the continent. For instance, the practice of female circumcision (FC)--a term coined in the colonial milieu--has now been discovered and taken on global notoriety. It is often labeled female genital mutilation (FGM) by feminists and other activists.⁴² Some feminists also reject the notion that clitoridectomy can be compared to male circumcision. They neglect the subtleties of the various forms of FC, and suggest that a better analogy “would be between clitoridectomy and penisectomy where the entire penis is removed.”⁴³ This equation leaves little space for evaluating the regional subtleties of FC. As an ancient *rite of passage* for

tens of millions of modern-day African women, FC has significant implications for the stability of extended family life, ethnic and class identity, and the quality of sexuality, health, and spirituality. Outside Africa, female circumcision has often generated unfavorable images of indigenous cultures and of relations between African women and men.

The zone of FC extends, discontinuously, from the Nile Delta and valley south through Sudan to Kenya and the Horn, and also across parts of the rainforests and savannas of West Africa to the Atlantic in Senegal. In Nigeria the Fulani and Nupe peoples do not practice it, but the Hausa, Yoruba, and Ibo do. Female circumcision is customary among Kenya's Kikuyu, Embu, and Meru peoples, but not among the huge Luo group near Lake Victoria. Today some of its symbols have been appropriated by outsiders for and it no longer belongs completely to Africans.⁴⁴ Female circumcision exemplifies a "constructed", highly charged, and now globally politicized practice. It is variously interpreted as an issue of African self-determination and identity, of women's development and equity, and of health and human rights. Following its recent "discovery" it has also become a fashionable source of intellectual recreation. Today, news of contemporary African families in North America conflicted by the expectations surrounding FC has recently been highlighted by the mass media.⁴⁵

Historically, FC in Kenya offers a well-documented case-study of how early African nationalism manifested itself in break-away resistance to coercive cultural change. By the late 1920s European Protestant missionaries and some African converts whose numbers varied by congregation and location, had decided that baptism and FC could no longer co-exist. A period of cultural crisis rapidly emerged, sustained in part by the Kikuyu Central Association's (KCA)⁴⁶ goal of grassroots political mobilization against white domination. FC also further inflamed African nationalist passions over the colony's already heated land problem. A belief spread (among an "overwhelming majority", Kenyatta said)⁴⁷ that Europeans would try to

marry uncircumcised Kikuyu girls in order to grab even more Kikuyu land and thus complete the destruction of their social order.⁴⁸

In Kikuyu society FC linked the generations through a consultative process involving the mothers, fathers, grandfathers and other elders of the uncircumcised girls. Regardless of how little or how much genital cutting (i.e., *irua* --the term refers to institutionalized circumcision of both sexes) was involved "the operation itself was embedded in a deeply symbolic set of rituals. It was associated with much singing and dancing, and held a profound significance for the initiates and their families."⁴⁹ Each adult group thus had a degree of authority over the young girls entering maturity, and each had to approve their moving into this next stage of life.⁵⁰

Contrary to female circumcision's central position in the ritual life, marriage, and social organization of the Kikuyu, Embu and Meru peoples, the missionaries concluded that even the "minor" form was abhorrent and irreconcilable with Church dogma. The Church of Scotland Mission (CSM), which conducted its work from four main stations ranging from Kikuyu outside Nairobi to Chogoria, 150 miles to the north on Mt. Kenya, moved to drop and ban from church membership all individuals and families who supported clitoridectomy.⁵¹ Other mission societies, including the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and Africa Inland Mission (AIM), but not the Roman Catholics, followed suit. CSM members had to deposit their thumb-print on a document and swear their loyalty to the Presbyterian position against FC or be dropped from church rolls. The CSM gambled on the power of public pressure and private sentiment to break down resistance to its theological imperialism. Those who refused to support the policy became known as *aregi* ("defiers"), while those who offered their thumbprint were *kirore* (loyalists). This period of intense crisis in the churches and communities was called the *Kirore* era.

Kikuyu leaders in and out of the KCA proceeded to manipulate the power of both indigenous and imported rituals and symbols, at considerable cost to personal and family life. They altered the geography of worship and education by establishing separatist churches and schools. This strategy was intended to enable these functions to proceed relatively free of missionary and colonial interference. Independent churches and schools formed the movement's primary weapons, and many of the latter eventually received limited government recognition until their closure at the outbreak of the Emergency (Mau Mau) in 1952. About ninety per cent of the southern Kikuyu on the official membership rolls of the CSM-Kikuyu and AIM-Kijabe left the church in the first month after the ultimatum.⁵² Just over half of the children enrolled in CSM schools (temporarily) dropped off the rolls.

The ideological and physical upheaval left some families painfully divided. Radical symbols of change and choice, the independent churches and schools created another layer of place-identity for a society whose core values and mores were under assault from without and within. Separate churches and schools also became living symbols of resistance to white hegemony, nurturing political awareness. FC also captured the attention of Parliament and the Colonial Office by 1929. Officials in London took a dim view of the missionaries' political stupidity and their potential for stirring up even greater African discontent. Also in 1929, Jomo Kenyatta, KCA President and leading Kikuyu activist, visited England where he proved himself a frustrating enigma to the colonial authorities.⁵³ From *kirore* onward Kenyatta's political skills would become increasingly and distressingly evident to officials in London and in Kenya's settler society.⁵⁴

Undeniably, the fall-out from the *kirore* events contributed decisively to the processes leading to Kenya's political independence in 1963. Predictably, the missionaries' crude attempts to force an end to female circumcision ended in failure. It was revived and widespread by the 1940s, and Kenya's colonial government could do little about it. Overall, the rift created between the missions

and the Kikuyu people in 1929 would come to be seen as a crucial turning point in Kenya's history,

“comparable with Henry VIII's breach with the Church of Rome on the greater matter of his divorce. Both were seen as 'sexual' confrontations with an alien authority.”⁵⁵

The FC crisis was primarily but by no means exclusively confined to Kikuyu districts. Chogoria, the CSM's northernmost station and the last to open (1922), offers a fascinating case-study of this phenomenon. Isolated and far from the cradle of the conflict, Chogoria's Mwimbi population was nevertheless deeply divided by the Church's insistence that FC, a “pagan procedure”, be renounced. When presented with the *kirore* ultimatum, or “promise paper”,⁵⁶ on September 20, 1929, the “overwhelming majority” of Africans (Mwimbi and neighboring Chuka peoples) in the Church refused to provide their thumbprint. Instead they became *aregi*.⁵⁷ The missionaries had made a stunning miscalculation. Only fourteen out of about 50 Christian men and women at Chogoria took the oath.⁵⁸ Many who broke away, called “the anti-Mission faction” by the CSM, received a sympathetic reception from local representatives of the nationalist Kikuyu Central Association. This linkage energized a movement to found independent churches and schools and thus the beginnings of a new (still undeciphered) social map.

At Chogoria the upheaval touched aspect of mission life: “all the staff” and “every hospital dresser deserted”, teachers left (but “came out best”), and houseboys walked away from their employers.⁵⁹ The CSM responded to this repudiation by closing “all out-schools.” Twenty-five Mwimbi did return to the Church in the following month. “Only fear of persecution, ostracism, and ridicule keep a large number back,”⁶⁰ proclaimed the Mission head.

Soon after *Kirore* itinerant, foreign “prophets” arrived from Kikuyu districts in the south. Considered anti-European and refusing to use European clothing,⁶¹ (and reportedly reviving “an old scare that the missionaries and their followers are head-

hunters”), they invoked the Holy Spirit through feverish shaking and baptized followers “promiscuously.” Within two years local Mwimbi prophets had entered this changing scene.⁶²

Although some *aregi* continued to drift back to the Chogoria Church, mission policies had at least temporarily damaged its credibility and divided the community. Soon it was alleged that political opposition to CSM schools had withered. Yet within five years the “anti-Mission faction” managed to establish seven independent schools. By 1939 the recession in church membership had been reversed throughout the CSM sphere. Bolstered by new converts and re-entrants, Chogoria’s membership rolls increased to 761 communicants.⁶³ Female circumcision continued, above and below- ground.⁶⁴

In Mwimbe and elsewhere FC was simultaneously part of a larger set of factors operating to broaden the cultural and demographic consequences of foreign religious and civil intervention.⁶⁵ For example, the CSM also undertook to promote the co-habitation of married persons. Desirous of reshaping the indigenous society to curb its sinfulness, not least its decidedly un-Scottish co-habitation practices, the missionaries, inadvertently aided by colonial administrative policies, instigated dramatic changes in settlement patterns and demography that reverberate to the present day in Mwimbe. These changes included a marked rise in fertility and, later, a high level (for Africa) of modern contraception among local women.

Customarily, a younger married Mwimbe man (usually over 30 years old) lived in the all-male *gaaru*, a warrior’s barracks centrally located in each settlement. Designed as a permanent guard to protect against raids, the social organization of the *gaaru* also contributed to the well-developed set of strategies the Mwimbe had evolved to regulate fertility. Circumcision of girls occurred several years after the onset of puberty, while circumcision of males was delayed until the mid-twenties. Intercourse and pregnancy before circumcision were forbidden and subject to powerful taboos and sanctions. In addition to practicing child spacing at intervals of

3-4 years, late marriage of warriors and their separate existence living and sleeping in the *gaaru* helped to depress fertility. For warriors sexual intercourse served an instrumental purpose. In some cases a warrior who desired to sleep with his wife ("to seek a child") required the permission of his barracks' chief. These customs started to erode under the British colonial administration and CSM policies. Taxation speeded the decline of barracks life, which in turn contributed to a relaxation of social controls, greater sexual license, and a steep increase in the pregnancy rate of uncircumcised girls. By 1933 abortion had become the District's "most serious social problem", and the Administration pushed to lower the circumcision age for both girls and boys.⁶⁶

For indigenous families in Mwimbe, joining the Church meant that they were expected to reject customary taboos, including those that strengthened birth-spacing. The CSM pressured husbands and wives to sleep together as well as reject female circumcision. As Greeley observes, traditional Mwimbe society was organized to "achieve a desired small family size, and spacing." While the British and the CSM favored a degree of population expansion, the ultimately excessive results of the interference far exceeded expectations. In the 1930s the effects of colonialist and CSM actions on population were reinforced by those of the Italian Catholic Mission established several miles away from Chogoria. The ultimate result was "a widesweeping pronatal effect" on local society, including ecological repercussions such as the clearing of formerly conserved forest lands, swamp drainage, and the diversion and drying up of streams on Mt. Kenya.

Globalized discourses on female circumcision generally reflect feminist agendas concerning patriarchy and domination. These have their place, but up to now they seem to reveal a shallow appreciation of FC's remarkable resilience, and its deeply embedded cultural symbolism and social functions. To date there has been little interest in *comparative* studies of FC. This seems shortsighted (although some may view such inquiry as merely a means of reinforcing the oppression). Certainly the total and particular experiences of millions of Kenyans, Sudanese, Somalis,

Nigerians, and Malians, and others, must not be discounted. Systematic analysis of *available* records that document some of the health consequences of FC also seem to have been neglected. Is this not a knowledge concern of the first order, particularly in societies and areas where surgery is “radical”? *African voices* (speaking through oral histories) remain muted and undocumented. This gap is as true for the 1990s as the 1920s, whether the untold stories are those of *wananchi*⁶⁷ or the elite.

These examples concerning FC and the dynamic of fertility regulation testify to the importance of a holistic and historical approach to understanding present day geographical patterns.⁶⁸ Whether we choose to look through or away from a particular “disciplinary” lens, FC is a living, not vestigial, phenomenon. The realities and metaphors of FC (and fertility) clearly extend to religion, health, and village- to global-level politics. Issues range across a spectrum ranging from nationalism, resistance, and self-determination to ethnic identity and cultural survival, human rights, and gender inequality. Female circumcision’s centrality has made it a unique contributor to the definition and uses of space and place, and to the relations of society and environment.

Disease & Illness, Preventive Health, Medical Pluralism & Therapy Management. One does not require a manual to recognize the significance of these themes in public health and policy, and private life. More hidden and less appreciated is how the themes manifest: 1) “layered” places and landscapes that integrate potent symbolism (e.g., manipulation of witchcraft paraphernalia in support of politicians or feuding families); 2) powerful social constructs of health and health behavior (e.g., epilepsy and mental illness; and class, ideology and “topology” in hierarchies of resort to care); and 3) complex spatial processes and patterns. Examples of the latter include the process of therapy selection and mapping courses of therapy in time and space).⁶⁹ The extraordinary impact of AIDS on the economic capabilities and social cohesion of families, households, and communities is a practical, potent example of these factors.⁷⁰

Historical Geographies of Disease and Health.⁷¹

Past geographies of disease and health provide connections that are necessary to achieving a satisfactory understanding of today's patterns of ecology, social relations, and health. A classic example is missionary and government malaria control policies. Was the real or alleged segregation of African and European settlements a mean-spirited, racist use of the *Anopheles* threat? Geographers Frenkel and Western studied colonial malaria policies in Sierra Leone. Their finding that mosquitoes served the interests of racism by providing an excuse for residential segregation provokes, and warrants, attention.⁷² However, it is misleading to generalize too quickly from the attitudes and actions of Freetown's colonial officers. Granted, irrefutable evidence of ethnocentrism and racist attitudes on the part of Europeans in Africa is easily documented. Yet the case of malaria is by no means conclusive. For example, the Anglican missionaries sent out to Nyasaland in the 1880s by the Universities Mission to Central Africa (UMCA) believed that it was most important to live simply and *intermingled*⁷³ with Africans. Despite malaria, residential segregation was certainly not the prevailing practice among missionaries in these pioneering days. Dr. Robert Howard, the UMCA's Medical Officer from 1899-1909, observed that in Bishop Smythies' time (1883-92) "it was assumed, as a matter of course, that the Mission station would be right in the middle of the native village."⁷⁴ Whereas malaria was a constant threat to the health of all missionaries (and most worked in the lakeside settlements), its mode of transmission remained poorly understood until Ross' proved the *Anopheles* link in 1898.

A change in the residential pattern of UMCA missionaries began in the 1890s. This was due in part to new knowledge about malaria transmission and professional *medical* and UMCA concerns regarding hygiene, sanitation, and the missionaries' poor health. By 1904, Dr. Howard had carried out comprehensive studies of malaria ecology in the lakeside settlements adopted by the mission. He concluded that the public health value of residential segregation of Africans and Europeans was "an

unmixed benefit." His meticulous field studies, maps, and proposals for malarial control, set out in *Report to the Medical Board of the Universities Mission (1904)*⁷⁵ became UMCA policy. The new construction of malaria stipulated that in order to prevent or reduce contact with infected mosquitoes, Mission stations should be built a half-mile, at least, from any place where *Anopheles* breed and a similar distance from an African village.

In the end, Howard admitted that missionary attitudes toward residential segregation of Africans had changed "a good deal" during the two previous decades. He noted "some degree of isolation from the village with its beer and dancing, and heathen life, is an advantage, even from the Mission point of view, and would probably now be advocated by most missionaries."⁷⁶ By this time a Cambridge man-of-the-cloth who identified too closely with a simple African lifestyle was viewed as resisting peer norms. Fellow missionaries labeled him an eccentric, an oddball who listened to a different drummer.⁷⁷

HIV/AIDS: Can Life Be a Choice?

Many other examples illustrate how the combined perspectives of medical and cultural geography can help foster greater understanding, and perhaps even contribute toward effective applications that serve the interests African societies. One case concerns an alternative prevention strategy that could help lower the incidence of HIV in Africa (also lower-income populations in other regions). To date no one has offered an acceptable explanation of why huge numbers of people *should* or *must* die from AIDS simply because their home is Sub-Saharan Africa. The general framework I propose focuses on *incentives* for those who voluntarily commit to remain HIV-free and participate in a locally-tailored "prevention-with-development" project. The idea is to encourage people to create social covenants or *contracts* that will help *predispose* and *enable* them to reject (primarily) sexually-related behaviors that pose great risks to personal, family, and community health in the broadest sense. Incentives to change come in the form of a promise and delivery of tangible, cost-effective, *cash-equivalent* benefits (goods or services) to participants

and their families who fulfill the terms of the social contracts.. An example of a potential benefit accruing to parents and children in one project design is the removal of financial and patronage barriers to school attendance, in exchange for negative-HIV test results.

In the incentive strategies public, private, and NGO support is marshaled for specific, sustainable projects. School vouchers, innovative forms of health care, and the building up of infrastructures for villages (bore holes), trade (loans), women entrepreneurs (ownership of savings & loans banks), dairy cooperatives, and urban jobs are examples of potential alliances and partnerships for HIV reduction and development. Teenagers in and out of school, mineworkers, herders, truck drivers, football clubs, businesses, fishermen, police, and the military are just some of the more obvious sectors and groups that could participate. Details of this proposal will be found in Good (1995).⁷⁸ Issues concerning the overall philosophy and structure, specific patterns of project implementation and management, and ethical implications (e.g., reliance on voluntary HIV-testing, community-regulated sanctions) range across the social sciences and humanities.

Traditional Medical Systems

On balance, health care in Africa is less effective than it could be because Ministries of Health generally choose not to include traditional healers in primary health care programs. After twenty years of rhetoric and fashionable posturing by international and national health agencies and NGOs, traditional healers (THs) still remain on the outermost margins of prevention, management, and professional discourse. Ironically, they also still have a disproportionately large share of all “provider-patient” contacts in Africa. Their nature of THs’ case-loads reflects the huge and striking contrast between what the biomedical system actually offers and what the masses require. The duality of popular legitimation of THs and professional/administrative exclusion has fostered adaptive responses in public and private places. It is well known, for instance, that for its more affluent patrons traditional medicine tends to operate behind closed doors, not in the sunshine.

Considerable evidence has been collected concerning the varied kinds of knowledge and expertise possessed and applied by African THs.⁷⁹ KAP studies have been done, extensive emic material has been gathered and sifted, and “pluralist” workshops and training courses have been held. Professional journals have published some of the results. For example, extensive knowledge systems concerning sexuality and sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs) have been identified in Mozambique, Swaziland, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and other localities.⁸⁰ Given the importance of STDs to the management of HIV/AIDS it would seem cost-effective to bring interested THs into district and national prevention schemes. That this has not happened is of continuing interest. Is it unlikely that such an obvious opportunity for cooperation will ever be valued by African health professionals (gatekeeper) context? Why does the fact that THs could enhance the quality of health care at the village level equate with an acceptance of second-class care? Is this a colonial holdover? What is the quality of government health care in the same villages(s)? Perhaps *African* cultural and medical geographers could shed some light on this topic. It is more than intellectual recreation.

The Sacred and Profane, the Role of Worship and Veneration.

Africa south of the Sahara is now the world’s greatest arena for Christianity’s expansion. Significantly, this Christianity is intensely African in its many religious, demographic, and social expressions. Islam too, paralleling and in some places woven into the same social fabric as Christianity, remains a dynamic missionary religion. In many zones Islam strongly competes with African Christianity for numeric and symbolic dominance. *Muezzins* call Muslims to prayer not only from from minarets in Khartoum, Mombasa, and Kano, but also in Kampala, Accra, Durban, and Lilongwe, as well as from remote rural areas near Lakes Malawi, in Tanzania, and interior Zaire.

By its very nature Islam may be the more deeply insinuated cultural force in terms of regional, transnational, and global political geographies. Nowhere are the

complexities of this Muslim (and Christian) presence more forcefully or dramatically illustrated, or perhaps more incompletely understood, than in the never-ending tragedy of Sudan. Considering the inseparability of religion from discussions of African culture, health, politics, and sexuality, etc., geographers have been strangely unmoved to address religious issues--whether by more conventional methods or by using the tools of "critical discourse." For example, we have done little if anything to facilitate conflict resolution and peace-making, or to improve the lot of millions of displaced Christians, Muslims, and other Sudanese now living as displaced persons (in the wretched camps of Greater Khartoum, and southwest Sudan) and refugees (e.g., Nairobi and northwest Kenya).⁸¹

Spatiality of Sexuality

As *professionalized* geographers we have mostly steered around the sexuality theme. Perhaps conditioned by a "tabu", the study of sexuality has been treated as something frivolous or even voyeuristic and risky. Considering the future, it is imperative to address the issue of whether Africanists can expect to understand *and interpret* contemporary social change, cultural geography, and health patterns if we do not acknowledge the broad and deep implications of sexuality. Issues include the modern expansion of geographical and sexual networking, with its significance for the economy, structure, and survival of African families of all classes in the 1990s and 21st Century.

In a stimulating paper entitled "The Effect of Urbanization on the Spread of AIDS in Africa"⁸², Konde-Lule discusses four hypotheses related to HIV/AIDS and the difficult tasks of effective intervention and management. He exposes sensitive social and cultural issues, and many of his points are controversial and provocative. Each hypothesis suggests numerous opportunities for creative collaboration between cultural and medical geographers.

First, the existence of an "urban" place in Africa is not a matter of population size or space, nor is it necessary to have services and amenities such as piped water or

electricity. The key functional qualities include population concentration, level of exchange/commerce, and "lifestyle", the latter including bars, hotels and restaurants, trade, and social acceptability of commercial sex work. Konde-Lule alludes to what is paradox for some, irony for others: that "urbanization may not, as a matter of course, bring with it Western conjugal lifestyles in which spouses always eat together, sleep in the same bed or room, and go out together."⁸³

Second, Konde-Lule asks whether the sexual mobility observed and documented in Africa a product of modern urbanization? He argues that the roots of this contemporary mobility "lie deep in rural society" and thus in traditional society. In particular, he singles out including polygyny, post-partum abstinence, extra-marital but discrete sexual networking, and cultural constructions of maleness.⁸⁴ Some of these institutions and their associated values and behaviors transcend Africa's enormous cultural diversity. A pan-African expression of sexuality has materialized from these common elements.

Third, African urbanization has contributed to the decline of sexual networking within (traditional) extended family systems. Meanwhile, commercial sex has greatly expanded. Not only have sexual networks expanded, Konde-Lule argues, but they show considerable overlap with each other (non-kin and anonymous individuals and networks intersecting the extended family circle). People in these (only partially discernible) networks [including most adults and many elderly] thus have a greatly elevated risk of contracting a STD or HIV.⁸⁵

Finally, a primary consequence of African urbanization is the social acceptability of a female who supports herself as a prostitute or bar girl.⁸⁶ This phenomenon is more recognizable because commercial sex most often seems rooted in the poverty-gender syndrome. Generally this form of livelihood is not stigmatized. Others indicators of legitimation include society's acceptance and legitimation of the material gains a woman may obtain through selling sex, and the openness that has been documented among focus groups answering questions about sexual behavior.

CONCLUSION

This symposium on space, culture and society in Africa has been organized in part with a view to drawing inspiration and direction from the seductive yet problematic nature of postdisciplinary perspectives and methods. In this context, my essay has examined the changing context, expectations and opportunities for cultural and medical geography, with special reference to Africa. On the one hand, choosing to ignore the post-disciplinary scene may bring only temporary relief. One can hardly go wrong with a position of "live and let live", and may the "fittest" ideas survive. Also, who will argue with the view that geographers will be more effective if they engage fully in these debates and help to refine, translate, and *transmit* new knowledge and perspectives in ways that contribute to the common wealth.

On the other hand, a caveat is in order before making a decision to "sell the store", or for that matter go with the flow. It is prudent to resist the assumption that "postdisciplinary practice"⁸⁷ will enjoy a long and prosperous future. Such an assumption will please devotees, but it places an unmerited measure of faith in the new ideology's capacity to eclipse the dynamism and cumulative value of "traditional" modes of scholarship. A crucial point is whether postmodernist and other approaches to culture, space, and society in Africa can be translated into knowledge that is useful for people, for the sake of their heritage and pleasure as well as development. Above all, the question is what are research and education *for* in the African context?

In the final section I identify several research topics within the themes of health, culture, and sexuality. These areas represent societal issues that have been largely neglected across the history of geography. I stress that these kinds of themes and topics remain important "places" for geographers to make contributions, *regardless* of their philosophical and theoretical approaches. As geographers we also acknowledge an intellectual debt to our colleagues bivouacked in other traditions and administrative camps. Risking the chauvinist label, I also believe that

geographers have contributed much less to social and cultural studies than could be expected at this point. Regionally, this lacuna may be greatest for Africa.

END NOTES

>I wish to thank Bon Richardson and Laurie S. Good for their helpful editorial suggestions for this paper.

¹ Most geographers have probably been accused of practicing academic imperialism at least once in their careers. Someone expresses their perception that we have overstepped our "rightful" disciplinary and scholarly frontiers. The alleged misdeed and the complaint normally do little harm.

² Paradoxically, some "core" disciplines appear as quaint if not increasingly irrelevant organizational structures for both teaching and scholarship. Indeed, today the most fertile soil for producing and communicating new knowledge is situated not in the core but on its hybrid peripheries and edges. By definition, scholarship pursued and nourished in these borderlands always reveals significant articulation with the peripheries and cores of other fields. Such cross-disciplinary work commonly excites the most passion and offers the greatest scope for the creation of new knowledge and understanding. Many geographers long ago discovered the intellectual excitement and other rewards that can materialize once they venture into such frontier zones. Unfortunately, considering the political, philosophical, and ethical atmospheres in which we toil, such efforts at innovative work offer us little immunity from devaluation by policy-makers in the academy and the legislature.

³ *The Centennial Review* 17 (1973), 1-9.

⁴ Leith, John. *Introduction to the Reformed Tradition*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1978, 31.

⁵ Leith(1978), refers to tradition as a source of the church's vitality while traditionalism is the occasion of its death. All traditions must be received with both gratitude and critical judgment. In contrast, "traditionalism is the dead faith of living people". P.31.

⁶ See J. Duncan, "After the Civil War: Reconstructing Cultural Geography as Heterotopia," in K. Foote, P. Hugill, K. Mathewson, and J. Smith, *Re-Reading Cultural Geography*. Austin; University of Texas Press, 1994, 407. Cited in W. Zelinsky in review of *Re-Reading*. . . in *Annals, AAG* 85,4 (1995), 750-753.

⁷ Duncan (1994), 405.

⁸ Livingstone, D. *The Geographical Tradition*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1992. See pp. 113 & 343-346.

⁹ Livingstone (1992), 345-346.

¹⁰ Duncan (1994), 402.

¹¹ Duncan (1994), 402

¹² Duncan (1994), 405.

¹³ Smith, *Killing the Spirit*. New York: Viking, 1990, 7. Cited in D. Orr, *Earth in Mind*. Washington, DC: Island Press, 1994, 10.

¹⁴ Orr (1994), 9.

¹⁵ Duncan, J.S. "After the Civil War: Reconstructing Cultural Geography as Heterotopia." In *Re-Reading Cultural Geography*. K. Foote, P. Hugill. K. Mathewson and J. Smith. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994, 401-408.

¹⁶ Duncan (1994), 402.

¹⁷ Duncan (1994), 405.

¹⁸ Zelinsky, W. Review of *Re-Reading Cultural Geography* (see note 13), *Annals, Assn. of Amer. Geographers* 85, 4 (1995), 752.

¹⁹ Zelinsky (1995), 753.

²⁰ Bartolovich, Crystal. "Have Theory ; Will Travel: Constructions of 'Cultural Geography.'" *Postmodern Culture*, 6, 1 (September, 1995), 2. (Internet).

²¹ Bartolovich (1995), 2.

²² Bartolovich (1995), 1.

²³ My emphasis

²⁴ Bartolovich (1995), 5.

²⁵ Bartolovich (1995), 5.

²⁶ With more smugness, we also learn that scholars in Cultural Studies aim to be “scrupulous in interrogating their own positions and interests.” Bartolovich, 5. *Constructions of Race, Place and Nation*. . . (1994) allegedly does little to advance constructs of race and racism because it lacks “critical consciousness.” It follows “a general practice of ‘application’ [of importing theoretical necessities and possibly a few methodological luxury goods from the exotic land of *cultural studies*] rather than interrogation.” Consequently, writes Bartolovich, the book “fails to consider what it might mean to move theory from something it calls ‘cultural studies’ and make it serve the interest of something it called ‘cultural geography’” (p.5).

²⁷ Bartolovich (1995), 5. The following 65-word sentence captures her argument : “Not only does the thoughtless, knee-jerk universal typographical privileging of the category of race in *Constructions* fall far wide of developing a site-specific set of strategies for theorising race matters, it also weirdly distances the reader and writer from dealing with race rigorously once the scare quotes are relied on to do the work of ‘calling attention’ to the constructedness of the category”.

²⁸ In her parting shot, Bartolovich (p.6) insists that “the import/export logic of books like *Constructions* needs to be persistently critiqued if a more worldly politics is to emerge in an institutional space where, currently, disciplines defend their perceived boundaries more often than they imagine other spaces, other ways of seeing, other worlds.”

²⁹ For the specific application of this description of postmodernist discourse I am indebted to my colleague Charles Goodsell, Professor of Public Administration & Policy at Virginia Tech.

³⁰ This general point is made by W. Kendrick, “Critics and Their Discontents,” *The New York Times Book Review*, Dec. 24, 1995, 12.

³¹ Orr (1994), 11, writes that “True intelligence is long range and aims toward wholeness. Cleverness is personified by the functionally rational technician armed with know-how and methods but without a clue about the higher ends technique should serve. The goal of education should be to connect intelligence with an emphasis on whole systems and the long range with cleverness, which involves being smart about details.”

³² *Geografiska Annaler* 74B (1992), 105-115.

³³ Siegel, L. “How to Raise a Good Liberal.” Review of Greer, C. and H. Kohl (Eds.), *A Call to Character*. in *The Atlantic Monthly*, January, 1996, 107.

³⁴ See Kendrick, 1995, note 30.

³⁵ Scrutiny of our writing and speaking styles cannot be overemphasized. Garnering a reputation for clear and convincing communication of complex and simple ideas could become a hallmark strength and major source of intellectual influence for geographers who venture into so-called critical postdisciplinary practice. A campaign to root out jargon and mystification, thereby improving one’s chances of “getting read,” would be a winning investment welcomed alike by “big players” and journey people.

³⁶ In January, 1996, a well-publicized petition to cancel Shell’s patron status came from within the membership of the Royal Geographical Society.

³⁷ In his *The Cultural Geography of Health Care* (1991), Wil Gesler has produced a pioneering book that bridges a surprising swath of the territories claimed by cultural and medical geography, and social theory. While not focused on Africa it is highly relevant to African research. The study is written in an accessible language and style, insuring that it can be read without difficulty by upper division undergraduates and thoughtful lay persons. Gesler's goal is merely to explain, integrate, and apply major concepts from the "traditional" (e.g., culture, systems, region, diffusion, ecology) and the "new" cultural geography (e.g., language as myth, metaphor, and semantic network; symbolic landscapes; and cultural materialism) with a focus on health care. His aim is to help us understand the cultural complexity and spatial contexts of health systems and health behavior, and he succeeds. Using prose of admirable simplicity and economy, he clearly articulates many of the current theoretical issues *and connects them* to practical and humanistic concerns. For example, any attempt to understand the wrenching social costs of health services privatization in Africa or the United States is inadequate without recognizing the impinging calculus of political economy, social space, and effects of social construction. Also, interactions of place and health produce "negotiated realities": thus the sorts of rootedness alcoholic people establish with particular places and spaces has important implications for their treatment.³⁷

³⁸ Shortcomings in the geographic perspective of Africa are often shadowed by similar lacunae in the works of other disciplines. Arguably the best general "African studies" texts currently available include P.M. Martin and P. O'Meara (eds.), *Africa*. Third Edition. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995; A.A. Gordon and D.L. Gordon (eds.), *Understanding Contemporary Africa*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Pub., 1992; and Bohanan and P. Curtin (eds.), *Africa and Africans*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1988.

³⁹ Orr (1994), 166.

⁴⁰ Orr (1994), 175

⁴¹ A 1990 Gallup poll of Americans indicated that if they had an option, over half would choose farms or small-town living over urban areas. I think it safe to say that many communities in rural Africa, particularly those within a few hours commute of large towns, are also experiencing losses that reflect changes broadly similar to those found in parts of the rural United States. Certainly many of the specific processes and consequences in Africa are different; yet the end result is rural decay, loss of self-sufficiency, and the creation of dependency.

⁴² First use of this term is unknown. In 1931 the head of the CSM Chogoria in Kenya wrote that "the excitement about female mutilation was a political stunt, and a very successful one, for it has hit the Church hard." Dr. C.A. Irvine, "Politics at Chogoria," *Kikuyu News*, No. 116, June, 1931.

⁴³ Sarkis, Marianne. 1995. sarkis@luna.cas.usf.edu Rev. 950929. P.1. Internet.

⁴⁴ E.g., Hosken, Fran P. *The Hosken Report: Genital Sexual Mutilation of Females*. 4th Ed. Lexington, MA: Win News, 1993; and Walker, Alice. *Possessing the Secret of Joy: A Novel*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1992.

⁴⁵ I have not investigated its first documentation in North America. Presumably evidence of this (arrival of circumcised women, if not the rites) existed by the 17th Century. Clitoridectomy was introduced in Victorian Britain and the USA from 1858 by Dr. Issac Baker Brown, a Fellow of the Obstetrical Society. It was used to treat "excessive masturbation" " nymphomania" and sometimes epilepsy and hysteria. Widely criticized, the operation was not performed in Britain after 1872. It was available in the USA at least until 1904, and possibly until 1925. See R. Hyam, *Empire and Sexuality: The British Experience*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990, Chapt. 8: "Missionary Confrontations," 182-199. See note 20.

According to one report at any given time today some 8 to 10 million women and girls in Africa and the Middle East are "at risk" to some form of genital mutilation. For the USA an estimated 10,000 girls are at risk. Organizations allied against FC (and in some cases male circumcision) in the USA include the National Organization of Circumcision Information Resource Centers (NOCIRC), The Washington Metro Alliance Against Female Genital Mutilation. In addition, H.R. 941, Feb. 14, 1995, the "Federal Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation of 1995", originally proposed by Patricia Schroeder and not yet passed. Sarkis, M. sarkis@luna.cas.usf.edu Rev. 950929. P.1. Internet.

⁴⁶ KCU President, Johnson Kenyatta, made a highly publicized visit to England to lobby for Kikuyu rights, including FC. Ann. Report, Kikuyu Province, 1929. PC/CP/4/1/1, p. 6. KNA.

⁴⁷ Kenyatta, Jomo. *Facing Mt. Kenya*. New York: Vintage Books, 1962, 130.

⁴⁸ Strayer, Robert W. *The Making of Mission Communities in East Africa*. London: Heinemann, 1978, 136-152.

⁴⁹ Strayer (1978), 137.

⁵⁰ Presley, Cora A. *Kikuyu Women, the Mau Mau Rebellion, and Social Change in Kenya*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1992, 90.

⁵¹ In some locations excision also included the labia minora and/or part of the l. majora. Europeans "socially constructed" the custom into "minor" (excision of the clitoris) and "major" forms. In contrast to the Kikuyu at the southern end of the CSM's sphere, the Mwimbe and neighboring Chuka peoples of eastern Mt. Kenya reportedly practiced an extreme form of cutting that could leave a hole large enough to receive half a golf ball. Hyam, R. *Empire and Sexuality* (1990), 190.

⁵² Hyam, R., *Empire and Sexuality* (1990), 193.

⁵³ By 1929 Kenyatta was already seen as "the tool of men not friendly to Britain." Hyam (1990), 198-90, note 35. Kenyatta's skilful use of allegorical speech and the double entendre reportedly provided him with a potent tool throughout his political career.

⁵⁴ Hyam, R., *Empire and Sexuality* (1990), 198-99, note 35.

⁵⁵ Hyam, R., *Empire and Sexuality* (1990), 196.

⁵⁶ The CSM Chogoria version of the *kirore was*, "I promise to have done with everything connected with the circumcision of women, because it is not in agreement with the things of God, and to have done with the Kikuyu Central Association, because it aims at destroying the Church of God." "Chogoria Letter, Dr. A.C. Irvine, 28th September", *Kikuyu News*, No. 110 (Dec., 1929), 14.

⁵⁷ From its founding the CSM Chogoria adopted Kikuyu rather than the KiMwimbi language for all its activities.

⁵⁸ *Kikuyu News*, No. 110, 15; and PCEA, "Jubilee at Chogoria. . .1922-1972," in C. Irvine, "The Church at Chogoria", p. 2. Kenya National Archives (KNA). Reverends Kabii and Bundi identify 18 (not 14) who signed the oath. "Centennial History and Report of PCEA Chogoria Presbytery 1991," 25/3/91. Mimeo.

⁵⁹ *Kikuyu News*, No. 112 (June, 1930), 35.

⁶⁰ *Kikuyu News*, No. 112, 34.

⁶¹ In 1991, near Chogoria, I was shown an old man who was one of those who long-ago adopted the anti-European protest mode as a lifestyle, including rejection of European clothing. While a curiosity, certainly no one called him "insane" or antisocial. Habitually he wears only a blanket for clothing. Through intermediaries he rejected a request for a brief interview with my Mwimbi associate (a well-known Presbyterian clergyman) and myself.

attention to Puerto Rico, notably spatial aspects of TB and water quality. He has produced outstanding graduate students, and he has set a strong example of high quality fieldwork. Hunter meticulously crafted papers are distinguished by their erudition, provocative hypotheses, and strong reliance on geographic methods to stimulate fresh insights. Robert Stock (one of Hunter's former students) recently published a wide-ranging agenda entitled "'Disease and Development' or 'The Underdevelopment of Health: A Critical Review of Geographical Perspectives on African Health Problems,'" *Social Science & Medicine* 23 (1986), 689-700. His paper attacks Africanist geographers' failure to give systematic attention to social theory across a wide range of research issues.

⁷² Frenkel, S. and J. Western. "Pretext or Prophylaxis? Racial Segregation and Malarial Mosquitoes in a British Tropical Colony: Sierra Leone," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 78, 2 (1988), 211-228.

⁷³ My emphasis

⁷⁴ Howard, R. *Report to the Medical Board of the Universities' Mission on the Health of the European Missionaries in the Likoma Diocese*. London: UMCA, 1904, 45. Rhodes House Library, Oxford.

⁷⁵ See above

⁷⁶ Howard (1904), 75. Perhaps familiarity did eventually breed a some contempt.

⁷⁷ The UMCA's Archdeacon William P. Johnson is illustrative. See C. Good, The 'Steamer Parish': Technology and Health on An African-Missionary Frontier. MS in process.

⁷⁸ Good, C. "Incentives Can Lower the Incidence of HIV/AIDS in Africa." *Social Science & Medicine* 40,40 (1995), 419-424.

⁷⁹ E.g., Good, C. *Ethnomedical Systems in Africa*. New York: Guilford Press, 1987; Warren, D.M. et al., "Ghanaian National Policy Toward Indigenous Healers: The Case of the Primary Health Training for Indigenous Healers (PRHETIH) Program." *Social Science & Medicine* 16, 1873-1881. Anyinam, C.

⁸⁰ E.g., Green, E.C.

⁸¹ Religion is of course only one important part of the context of the Sudanese conflict.

⁸² Konde-Lule, Joseph, *African Urban Quarterly* 6, Nos. 1 & 2 (Feb. & May, 1991), 13-20.

⁸³ Konde-Lule, 15.

⁸⁴ Cf. Ankrah, M. "AIDS and the Social Side of Health," *Social Science & Medicine* 32, 9 (1991), 967-980.

⁸⁵ See, e.g., Orubuloye, I, Caldwell, J. and Caldwell, P. *Sexual Networking and AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Health Transition Series, No. 4, Australian National University, Health Transition Centre, 1994.

⁸⁶ cf. Kloos, H. and A. Zein, "AIDS and Other STDs in Ethiopia: Historical, Social and Epidemiological Aspects," *African Urban Quarterly* 6, 1 & 2 (Feb. & May, 1991), 36-44.

⁸⁷ Bartolovich (1995), 2.

**ETHINOMEDICINE, SACRED SPACES, AND ECOSYSTEM
PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION IN AFRICA**

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ABSTRACT

Links between religion and current environmental crisis have received much attention in recent years. Much of the discussion concerning ecology and religion has, however, tended to focus on links between ecology and Christianity and other major religions. Very few analyses have explicitly focused on the relationships between indigenous religious beliefs and practices and the current ecological problems facing developing countries. More so, very limited research has been undertaken to investigate relationships between the natural environment and the practice of ethnomedicine which is intricately intertwined with the practice of indigenous religion in Third World countries. The paper is an exploratory one and focuses mainly on the role that ethnomedical practices in Africa, particularly the creation of sacred spaces, play in the conservation and preservation of local ecosystems.

INTRODUCTION

Links between religion and current environmental crisis have received much attention in recent years. The debate going on in recent discourse concerns the various challenges to traditional Enlightenment values. Whether the challenges are dubbed "postmodernism", "deconstruction", or "multiculturalism", they have generated much interest in the literature [Rockefeller and Elder, 1992; Bowman, 1990; Carmody, 1983; Hargrove, 1986; Knudtson and Suzuki 1992]. In 1990, for example, over one thousand scientific, religious, and political leaders gathered in Moscow to discuss the problem of environmental deterioration around the world. A footnote to the conference issued before the discussion began was a statement by a distinguished list of American scientists who asserted that efforts to safeguard and cherish the environment need to be infused with a vision of the sacred, because

problems of such magnitude, and solutions demanding so broad a perspective, must be recognised from the onset as having a religious as well as a scientific dimension. [New York Times, 1990: 21]

The surprising feature of this message is the explicit acknowledgement of several scientists of the need to couple scientific knowledge with religious conviction in the current search for solutions to the increasing environmental crisis facing humankind. For years, science has been disdainful of religion especially when it appears to restrict the development and distribution of modern scientific principles and technology. This statement by a group of scientists shows that scientists have learnt, perhaps the hard way, that religion may in fact incorporate sophisticated environmental practices or keep the interplay between humans and nature in balance [Stevens 1994].

Anthropologists have long appreciated the interaction of religion and management of the environment, especially in agricultural systems. Some of these studies have shown how agricultural scientists plunged headlong into projects without regard for existing indigenous practices which, may at their base, be scientific, although the knowledge is dispersed through religion [Stevens, 1994]. Some have demonstrated the folly of ignoring local religious practices and shown the benefits that can be derived if scientists will swallow their prejudices and carefully examine the scientific reasons behind rituals concerned with nature.

Much of the discussion concerning ecology and religion has, however, tended to focus on links between ecology and Christianity and other major religions. Very few analyses have explicitly focused on the relationships between indigenous religious beliefs and practices and the

current ecological problems facing developing countries. More so, very limited research has been undertaken to investigate relationships between the natural environment and the practice of ethnomedicine which is intricately intertwined with the practice of indigenous religion in Third World countries. The fact that indigenous medical practices are intimately related to biotic and abiotic environments, makes it imperative that a discussion of the links between religion and environmental degradation, as well as ecological conservation and preservation should include that of ethnomedicine. In the existing literature, explicit discussion of ecological dimensions of ethnomedical practices is almost non-existent even though, to a large extent, the practice of ethnomedicine is an important vehicle for understanding indigenous societies and their relationships with nature [Anyinam, 1995]. To ignore indigenous religious traditions in ecological discussions is ultimately self-defeating.

The links between ethnomedicine and ecology is exemplified by a long tradition of healing powers associated with the earth's natural systems, whether this entails medicinal plants and animal species, the ambient salubrious air, spring water, or the natural scenery. The pharmacopoeia of folk societies and professional medical systems like Chinese, Ayurvedic, Unani, and biomedicine contain thousands of medicines made from leaves, herbs, roots, bark, animal, mineral substances, and other materials found in nature. As well, practitioners of ethnomedicine employ methods based on the ecological, socio-cultural, and religious background of the people to provide health care.

The study of links between indigenous religious practices and of current ecological crisis requires, on the one hand, investigations into how environmental characteristics influence the practice of ethnomedicine, and, on the other hand, how traditional medicine affects the quality and sustainability of natural systems [Anyinam, 1995]. Both ecology and culture evolve and change and each produces alterations in the other. Recent decades have seen significant changes occurring within several aspects of ethnomedicine as a result of environmental degradation and tremendous changes in modern social and economic systems. As well, over the years, the practice of ethnomedicine has had both positive and negative impacts on local natural ecosystems. An exploratory discussion of these two-way relationships in developing countries was recently highlighted by Anyinam [Anyinam, 1995].

This paper is limited in scope as it explores one aspect of these relationships in the context of African ethnomedicine. The paper focuses on the role that ethnomedical practices, particularly the creation of sacred spaces play in the conservation and preservation of African ecosystems. This discussion is very exploratory and relies on materials scattered in existing literature on African

ethnomedicine because of the lack of any systematic research and hence lack of data on the issue. The paper argues that loss of respect for nature in the contemporary world is a contributory factor for the estrangement of modern societies from nature and their consequent abuse of it.

The paper begins with a review of the concepts of 'ethnomedicine' and 'sacred space'. This is followed by a discussion of the links that exist between ethnomedical practices and local ecosystems. How African belief and value systems, as well as the utilization of sacred spaces contribute to the conservation and preservation of the ecology of certain geographic areas will be illustrated. The paper concludes by emphasizing the urgent need to take into consideration both the scientific and religious dimensions of the issue of environmental degradation, conservation, and preservation.

DEFINING 'ETHNOMEDICINE' AND 'SACRED SPACE'

It is pertinent to define the terms "ethnomedicine" and "sacred space" as they are employed in the paper. There is not much consensus in the definition of ethnomedicine. One view expressed by Charles Hughes defines ethnomedicine as those beliefs and practices relating to disease which are the products of indigenous cultural development and are not explicitly derived from the conceptual framework of modern medicine [Hughes, 1968]. For Fabrega, ethno-medicine is the study of medical institutions and of the way human groups handle disease and illness in the light of their cultural perspective [Fabrega, 1979]. Charles Good provides a wider meaning of an ethnomedical system. His definition integrates "in variable configurations, all of a people's strategies, beliefs, conscious behaviours and relations with the habitat that pertain to disease, its management, and health status [Good, 1980]. Thus, according to Good, an ethnomedical system "is the entire approach of a community to its health problems, organised spatially and changing over time" [ibid]. In this sense, an ethnomedical system incorporates all health care strategies acceptable by the community, including biomedicine.

In this paper, following Foster and Anderson, ethnomedicine is employed here to denote the totality of health knowledge, values, beliefs, skills, and practices of indigenous people, including all the clinical and non-clinical activities that relate to their health needs [Foster and Anderson, 1978]. The term is used here in a more restricted sense than Good's definition. Ethnomedical practitioners are, therefore, the indigenous healers recognized by their communities as qualified or competent to provide health care services, employing plant medicine, animal parts, and mineral substances as well as methods based on the ecological, cultural, social, and religious background of the people [Good, 1980]. They employ the prevailing knowledge, attitudes, and

beliefs of their communities regarding physical, mental, and social well-being and the causes of disease and disability [ibid].

One of the prominent geographical dimensions of ethnomedical practices is the notion of "sacred space". The concept of sacred is one of the topics discussed in Malinowski's well-known essay, Magic, Science and Religion [Malinowski, 1948]. The classical view of the nature of the sacred is, however, associated with the name of Emile Durkheim and his influence has continued to dominate much of the anthropological writing on the sacred. Jackson and Henrie offer a useful definition of sacred space. They define it as

that portion of the earth's surface which is recognized by individuals or groups as worthy of devotion, loyalty, or esteem. Space is sharply discriminated from the non-sacred or profane world around it. Sacred space does not exist naturally, but is assigned sanctity as man defines, limits and characterises it through his culture, experience, and goals. [Jackson and Henrie 1983]

As Yi Fu Tuan has elaborated, the true meaning of "sacred" goes beyond stereotype images of temples and shrines, because 'at the level of experience, sacred phenomena are those that stand out from the commonplace' [Yi Fu Tuan, 1978]. He puts emphasis on qualities such as separateness, otherworldliness, orderliness, and wholeness in defining what is sacred. Isaac also emphasizes the significance of awe and wonder in the experience of the holy and points out that 'on almost all levels of culture there are segregated, dedicated, fenced, hallowed spaces. The holy or hallowed, means separated and dedicated' [Isaac, 1964].

There is abundant evidence from many cultures that the notion of sacred space is deep-rooted and long-lived. Early pagan cultures had their own definition of sacred space that controlled where people went, what they did and how they did it [Park, 1994]. Many religions designated certain places as holy or 'sacred'. This designation puts responsibilities on religious authorities to protect them. Various studies have discussed reasons for defining some places as sacred and what implications such designation have for the use and character of such places. Eliade's work in 1959 has been very influential. In his book, The Sacred and the Profane, Eliade explored how ordinary (profane) space is converted into a holy or sacred one. He suggests that such a conversion reflects the spiritual characteristics associated with both the physical features and the deeper, abstract implications delimiting a particular site as sacred [Eliade, 1959].

Many religions, particularly historic ones, have designated different dimensions of the natural world as sacred and have worshipped all or part of it. Many have done so through the belief

that nature is the dwelling place of the gods. Examples can be found in many cultures and throughout history. The Romans and Britons believed that various natural features of the landscape had divine association, either as homes of gods or as gods in themselves [Blagg, 1986]. Nature spirits continue to play a central role, for example, in the Chinese and Korean Buddhist practice of geomancy, which is used to select spiritually appropriate sites for houses, villages, temples, and graves [Yoon 1976].

Particular environments are venerated in some religions. Hindus designate the River Ganges as holy [Gopal 1988]. Pre-Christian religions often regarded caves as holy places. Holy status is bestowed upon particular stones in some religions, an example being the famous Black Stone at Mecca which Muslims believe was sent down from heaven by Allah [Jordan and Rowntree, 1990].

Mountain peaks and other high places have been also regarded as holy sites (often as home of gods) since ancient times. Good examples include Mount Olympus in Greece, believed to be the dwelling place of Zeus and other gods; Mount Fuji which is sacred in Japanese Shintoism. Forests were often seen as the haunts woodland gods. Ethnic or tribal religions of the ancient Germans, Slavs, Celts, and Greeks venerated trees and forests. Yew trees, for instance, were worshipped as sacred trees in pagan Britain [Wallace, 1992]. As well, heavenly bodies - the sun, moon and stars - were widely worshipped throughout the pre-Christian world and impressive ceremonial structures survive in some places.

Not all sacred sites have equal status or perceived holiness, even among believers. Jackson and Henrie suggest a typology for categorising sacred space at three broad levels based on their study of Mormon culture in the USA. They are: "mystico-religious sites" (shrines, cathedrals, sacred groves, mountains, or trees); Homelands (representing the roots of each individual, family or people - sacred only to believers); and the lowest level of sacred space is the "historical sacred sites that have been assigned as a result of an event occurring there [Jackson and Henrie (1983)]. The concept of sacred space as a "mystico-religious site" is employed in the paper.

The religious expression of sacred space varies also greatly through space and time. The areal extent of "sacred spaces" varies from infinite to a finite point. As well, the cared view or esteem associated with them varies according to their roles. The relative permanence of a sacred space is also a function of the event associated with its recognition as a unique place and the permanence of the ideas which gave rise to the perception of its sanctity. Thus, while certain sacred spaces have lost their sacredness due to loss of belief in the efficacy of the 'spirit world',

often the combined effects of modernization, Christianization, and formal education, others remain to function in respective cultures as "places" or "spaces" of reverence and worship.

Designation of particular places as sacred can be a mixed blessing because while special status normally makes such places top priority for preservation and protection, it also encourages large numbers of visitors who can damage the very thing they want to see and experience. There is evidence of sacred spaces which have been carefully managed and have made significant contributions to the preservation of local landscapes. For example, most of the islands in Japan's Setonaikai (Inland Sea) have been extensively developed in the post-war period, but some have been preserved as sacred islands [Kondo 1991]. The preservation of Ikishima Island as sacred island is encouraged by local legends that foretell insanity for anyone who cuts a tree on the island. Such legends also guarantee local fishermen's catches so long as the area remains sacred.

Temple forests in India provide another example of sacred places that also benefit wildlife and landscape. Worship of trees and plants has been part of the religious practice in India since about 600 CE, although it has recently declined. Hindu theology requires people to worship deities in order to appease them (the Vanadevi deity is believed to be responsible for forests), and the very act of planting of specific plants and trees is considered to be an act of worship in itself. Chandrakanth and colleagues describe a variety of different temple forest types in India [Chandrakanth et al. 1990]. There are, however, examples of some sacred places suffering from degradation because of intense utilization. For example, Buddhist sites in India are visited by many Indians and growing numbers from South-east Asia and face mounting pressure from government-guided tourism development [Orland and Bellafiore 1990].

With this brief background, the paper now focuses on ethnomedical practices and ecology in the African context. The links that exist between ethnomedical practices, sacred spaces, and local ecological systems are first identified.

LINKS BETWEEN ETHNOMEDICINE, SACRED SPACES, AND ECOSYSTEMS IN AFRICA

There are close links between ethnomedicine and ecology. Plant and animal species are used for medicinal purposes. As well, they are of cultural and religious importance, especially for rituals and festivals. Humankind, from time immemorial, has depended on plants in treating all forms of ailments. Probably the region that makes the widest use of herbal preparations is Africa where people reputedly depend on plants, via ethnomedicine, for as much as 95% of their drug

needs [Iwu, 1993]. Like many other Third world countries, spiritual or magico-religious healers, herbalists, technical specialists (eg. bone-setters), and traditional birth attendants in Africa employ diverse forms of herbs, roots, leaves, bark, mammals and birds in the preparation of medicine [Odu 1987]. Wild animals and their by-products (hooves, skins, bones, feathers and tusks), for example, form important ingredients in the preparation of curative, protective, and preventive medicine. More importantly for some, they are used to perform rituals and invoking and appeasing gods and witches [Ajayi, 1978]. Belts, necklaces and bangles made of wild animal by-products (eg. skins of leopards, lions, gorillas, and monkeys) embedded with herbs are commonly utilized in some societies for preventive and protective measures against witches and for immunity from bad luck, diseases, and enemies. Wildlife species and their parts are also utilized for aphrodisiacs and potency purposes. In addition, a variety of wild animals form an integral part of cultural and religious festivals and ceremonies, some of which seek to promote the good health of local people and their communities [Adeola, 1992]. During the performance of some rituals and festivals, for example, certain specific wild animals may be sacrificed. In some communities, parts of animals (eg. feathers of parrots) are used as special "tools" for making masks for masquerades. Tusks and skins of elephant, lion, and leopard are used for the installation of traditional rulers and are worn during cultural festivals in some parts of Africa.

Apart from ethnomedicine's reliance on flora and fauna of local ecosystems, since ancient times, Africans have believed in a wide variety of deities which reside in all sorts of natural phenomena. These natural features have religious significance to local people and practitioners of ethnomedicine. The magico-spiritual and religious aspects of ethnomedicine have particularly had much impact on space in areas where people assign religious values to natural phenomena. In many societies where the practice of ethnomedicine is predominant, the local people assign sanctity to certain portions of their natural landscape and regard them as worthy of devotion, loyalty, dignity, and worship.

Some natural objects and their surroundings are personified in gods, deities, and spirits and such ecological features are believed to emanate power. There are spirits of forests and trees. All trees are thought to have souls of their own and some are regarded as the dwelling places of other powerful spirits which take temporary abode there. Many villages have a sacred tree. For example, the iroko tree is held to be sacred in most places. Among the Yoruba, the iroko tree is believed to be inhabited by very powerful spirit. People fear having the tree near their dwelling place or to use it for furniture. The tree cannot be felled unless special rites are performed. Important meetings are believed to be held by witches at the foot or top of the iroko tree. Other trees believed to be the abodes of certain spirits include the silk-cotton tree and African satinwood. Baobab trees are

regarded as sacred and are often believed to be the abode of spirits or the "meeting place of witches". There are, as well numerous animal spirits and sacred snakes. Many forest animals are considered sacred by different ethnic groups. There exists taboos with regard to the killing such animals as leopard, python, duiker, crocodile, and elephant in some societies. Certain types of animals symbolise the vitality of their ancestors.

There are spirits of rivers, streams, and lakes. Wells, springs, rivers, lakes, and the sea are believed to have spirits dwelling in them and in some places great cults are made of these naiads. The greatest nature god of the Ashantis in Ghana is Tano river whose fame spreads far and wide. It has many priests and temples. Some lakes like Lake Bosomtwi in central Ghana and Lake Bamblime in the Camerouns are considered sacred. The Sea is the home of very powerful gods. The Yoruba sea god, *Olokun* is represented by one of the famous Ife bronzes. The Mende of Sierra Leone believe in nature spirits which are associated with rivers and forests. The Yoruba believe that there are spirits dwelling in rivers, lagoons, and the sea. *Yemoja*, for example, is believed to be the goddess of waters generally and from her body, according to the people's belief, all rivers, lagoons, and the sea flow out. Today, she is associated with the Ogun River and is given elaborate worship in those areas through which it flows, particularly, in Abeokuta [Awolalu, 1979]. *Oya* is the goddess of the River Niger. *Olukun or Malokun* - the lord of the sea or divinity that is in the sea - is given prominent worship in Ugbo and Iigbo-Egunrin in Okitipupa Division, in Itebu-Manuwa, and in some parts of Lagos State and Ile-Ife [Awolalu, 1979]. *Olisa* is the spirit of the lagoon and is worshipped in Lagos and other towns and villages close to the lagoon. Gods of the storm are divinities in full right in many parts of West Africa. There is also the Yoruba God, *Shango*, god of lightning and thunder [Parrinder, 1962].

Spirits may also have their abode in mountains and other physical landscapes. Hills and outstanding rocks are likely haunts of powerful spiritual forces and many villages which nestle under these hills take the hill spirit as their principal deity. The town of Abeokuta in Nigeria is built "under the rock. The sacred cave of the hill spirit (called *Olumo*) survives. At Ibadan, the tutelary divinity of the city is a hill goddess (called *Oke-Ibadan*) in whose honour an annual festival is held. Throughout the Southern Lake Tanganyika region, there are a number of recognised territorial spirit shrines which are located at various natural phenomena, including caves, mountains, large rocks and trees and waterfalls, some of which are believed to be inhabited by pythons.

In number of places, the earth is revered but has no regular cults. The Ashantis believe that the earth is animated by a female whose sacred day is Thursday and so the spirit is called "Thursday earth" (Asase Yaa). Yet the earth has no priest and is not consulted by divination in

time of sickness as are other gods. But among the Yorubas and Ewes, the earth has a powerful cult. The earth is venerated in Yorubaland because it is believed to be inhabited by a spirit.

In various parts of Africa, features of the landscape are selected as natural shrines. Shrine cults in Zambia, Ghana, Uganda, Kenya, and many other African countries tend to have a strong ecological emphasis and hills, imposing trees, caves, streams, falls and rapids become associated with invisible entities and become objects of veneration [van Binsbergen, 1978]. The personification of such objects in the physical environment and the intuitive rapport which both practitioners of ethnomedicine and lay people establish with their natural landscape are the way in which the ecology becomes clothed with some divine qualities still displayed in many communities in Africa and other developing countries. In some cases, these natural shrines are accentuated by the erection of man-made shrines. There usually exists more than one type of shrine in any one area, each type with its own features. Richard's description of Memba shrine religion in Zambia distinguishes 6 types of shrines: (i) individual's hut; (ii) the village shrine; (iii) villages of deceased chiefs; (iv) natural phenomena; (v) chiefs' groves; and (vi) relic shrines containing the chiefly paraphernalia [Richard, 1939]

A large number of active shrines continues to receive attention of local people in African countries [Werner, 1978]. Sacred-healers, in particular, live as close as possible to these features which they regard as "sacred spaces" and where they communicate with their gods and obtain greater access to supernatural powers for the purpose of medical practices. This kind of devotion and loyalty to natural objects is termed by Wright as "geopiety" [Wright, 1966].

Besides localised active shrines, there are a few complex territorial shrines which receive more than just local attention, because in addition to being used by the local people, they are in some way involved in ritual activities concerning the region's kingships. Territorial cults are one of the most prominent religious institutions in Central African societies. They occupied a central position in the moral and religious system; they are an important ecological factor and they represent a source and system of authority which is a direct parallel to secular authority. Watson has written about some Mambwe territorial shrines of this sort [Watson, 1959]. Robert has described others in Ufipa [Robert, 1949]. The Bemba chief Mwamba has such a shrine at Chishimba Falls as does the Tabwa chief Nsama at Chansa Ngulu in Zambia [Robert, 1949].

PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION OF NATURE: THE ROLE OF ETHNOMEDICINE AND SACRED SPACE

The ecological crisis the whole world is witnessing is indebted generally to certain conceptions of the natural world. These have been categorised as: (a) the anthropocentrism of the Greek and the biblical tradition that assumes humans superiority over nature; (b) the mechanism of the scientific revolution of the 17th and 18th centuries that affirms the complete passivity of nature (c) the utilitarianism of the technological revolution of the last two centuries [Rutledge 1993].

Greek philosophers accepted that human beings were essentially, by virtue of their possession of reason, superior to all other forms of life. This was affirmed by Herodotus, by both Xenophon's and Plato's Socrates, by Aristotle and by the later Stoics [Glacken, 1967]. Contemporaneous with the earlier phase of Greek philosophy, the prophets, priests, and poets of ancient Israel were fashioning their literary account of God's dealings with humanity and the first episode in that story records God's creation of the "heaven and earth". It is the 26th verse that we find the crucial words:

Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth" [Gen 1: 26].

In his now-famous speech before the American Academy for the Advancement of Science in 1967, Lynn White pinpointed this verse as the origin, the first cause, of the economic crisis [White 1967]. In a subsequent verse man and woman are told to "multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over every living thing that moves upon the earth" [Gen 1:28]. Even though there are countervailing messages in the scripture, no later message from God retracts this command and it takes little imagination to see how Western culture might use these verses to justify a boundless exploitation and conquest of nature. The combination of the Greek and Christian conceptions of anthropocentricity produces habits of mind whose effects are still with us - that other living things exist to meet our needs; that subjugation and domination are not only permitted but mandated [Rutledge 1993]. The contemporary environmental movements, especially discussions of environmental ethics, have sharply criticized this "human-centeredness". Undoubtedly, both Greek and Hebraic forms of anthropocentrism are logically flawed.

As well, the "mechanical" conception of nature has shaped our way of dealing with the natural world. The mechanical view began with Galileo and Descartes and was further developed

in the writings of Hobbes, Gassendi and Mersenne [Burt, 1954]. The mechanism of the scientific revolution of the 17th century describes nature in terms of passive materiality. Thus, the core of the conception rested on a single, fundamental assumption "matter is passive".

The "mechanical" conception is reinforced by the utilitarian attitude of western societies. Central to the "utilitarian" attitude is the assumption that nature exists for the purpose of serving human needs. The utilitarianism of the industrial revolution of the 19th and 20th centuries applies these earlier notions to the use and control of the natural world for human benefit. Contemporary developments have put in the hands of human beings instrumental means to put their ideas of superiority into practice. Bacon held immense influence in propagating the idea of a systematic investigation of nature as a boon to social development. When coupled with the mechanical model of nature, the utilitarian drive to harness nature provided a powerful ideology to support the activity of progressive western governments in extending their control over nature as well as the social environments [Rutledge, 1993].

While modern societies are characterised by the anthropocentric, mechanistic, and the utilitarian attitudes to nature, the various traditions within indigenous societies have intricate relationships with nature which reflect a keen sense of the interdependence of human culture and nature and involve a holistic ethic of respect for nature. Unlike the beliefs of the Judeo-Christian humanistic tradition which generated the view of the universe that sharply separated God and the world and humanity and nature, encouraging, thus, attitudes of conquest and exploitation in relation to nature, the religious aspects of ethnomedicine generally encourage indigenous people to relate to natural phenomena with reverence and dignity. This conception of reality is a form of world view in which most indigenous people structure their world and experiences.

From the ecological point of view, sacred spaces are jealously protected from any forms of human pollution and environmental degradation and thus, contribute to the preservation of nature. In some areas of Africa, the landscape is never completely humanized - certain places remain which have never been subjected to man's ecological transformations or which, once used, have been abandoned again. These places are of great significance: they tend to represent the hidden forces on which humankind draws for its survival. Mountains, hills, imposing trees, caves, streams, falls, and rapids that are associated with invisible entities and thus have become objects of veneration are usually natural objects which are outside the cycle of ecological transformations and do not serve any direct utilitarian purpose for the people concerned.

In typical rural settings, the bonds existing between people, the bio-physical environment,

and spiritual world exercise some restrictions on where to engage in such activities as farming, hunting, and fishing. Charles Good notes that in Ukambani in Kenya, cultivation, grazing and fuelwood collection in the hills have left little of the natural vegetation undisturbed, except the familiar fig trees whose large dark-green canopies often mark the location of sacred grooves. In the Kilungu Hills, fruit species like mango and wild fig (the latter is a common marker of the remaining sacred groves) are prominent among the few remaining trees in the Kilungu Hills [Good, 1987].

Local spiritual healers may become a powerful force in the control and management of resources. In Africa, cult organizations in some areas have made tremendous contribution to the preservation of nature. In their studies of indigenous people, Schoffeleers and van Binsbergen have argued that shrine activities and ecological processes are mirror images of each other [Schoffeleers, 1978; van Binsbergen, 1978]. As Schoffeleers reports of the Malawians, the indigenous people maintain "a ritually directed ecosystem". Cult organizations regulated significant practical activities of the people. Large areas of wilderness were, for example, ritually protected from burning. Cults issued and enforced directives with regard to a community's use of its environment [Schoffeleers, 1978].

Cult mediums could, at times, compel people to plant particular crops and restrict fishing and grazing so as to protect fragile resources. In the 1930s, it is reported that the Mbona cult pressured part of the population of the Lower Shire Valley to emigrate in order to relieve conditions of overcrowding [ibid]. In many African societies, cults which function for the whole community, what Schoffeleers calls "territorial cults" are known to perform rituals which they believe could counteract droughts, floods, blights, pests and epidemic diseases [Schoffeleers, 1978].

There is also an existence of a plethora of spirit beings or 'divinities' with special moral and practical functions satisfying human natural needs. In some indigenous societies, prohibitions on the use of certain species of wildlife exist to protect animal species. Squirrels, for example, are considered sacred to the Afana people [Messenger, 1971]. The religious aspects and belief systems related to ethnomedicine tends also to instill some fear in local people about certain natural landscapes or spaces. In Uganda, for example, among some lowland communities, certain mountains are feared because they are believed to harbour supernatural spirits and diseases brought about by the spirits of the mountains. In such areas, mountain resources are consequently often left unexploited [Messenger, 1971]. In the Kwahu district of the eastern region of Ghana, an inselberg in the local landscape whose surroundings were thickly forested was very much revered by the inhabitants of the area because it is regarded as the 'home' of one of the most powerful

gods in the district. This peak and its surrounding forest remained unexploited for decades until relatively recently [Anyinam, 1987]. There are several other examples in African environment where fears of certain physical features have tended to influence the use of such natural resources as rivers, shorelines, and forests.

Among the Shona of Zimbabwe, there is still great respect for the spirit mediums. An Association of Zimbabwe Traditional Ecologists has been established and one of the founders, Lydia Chabata, is a spirit medium. This organization operates from Masvongo, some 300 kilometres south of Harare and is centred on the protection of sacred areas such as the Matopo Hills, home of the High God cult and the "*rambakutemwa*" - sacred forests where spirits reside. More than 700,00 seedlings of indigenous trees, including baobab, mahogany, as well fruit trees such as oranges, mangoes, pawpaws and avocados have been planted by this organization [Tandon 1994].

A good example is the role played by voodoo priests in environmental management practices in Benin, West Africa. Here, in shallow freshwater lakes fed by the annual delta floods, voodoo healers administer the commands of a deity. After the floods recede in the dry season, the lakes are no longer replenished by rain. At that time, priests forbid fishermen to use weighted nets in the lakes which have thick, soft muddy bottoms. The priests say the nets disturb the deity who will kill the fish. In scientific terms, the weights stir up the mud which releases iron oxide which is usually not toxic to fish when the lakes are receiving plenty of oxygen-rich rainwater, but it is deadly in stagnant water.

Benin boasts of the most productive lagoon fisheries in the world. Lake Nokoue, the largest lagoon in the Oueme River delta produces more fish per acre than other West African lagoons [Stevens, 1994]. In recent years, the lagoon has been invaded by "*Eichhornia crassipes*", a water hyacinth that threatens to suffocate the fishery. Listed as one of the world's ten worst weeds, one plant can multiply to cover 350 acres in one year [ibid]. To control these weeds, another type of hyacinth which is infested with beetle no larger than a head of pin is being used. They weaken the hyacinths by eating the surface layers of leaves, on which they lay their eggs. The beetle larvae hatch and kill the plants by devouring the centres of the leaves and stems.

The new hyacinths were often ripped out the infested water by the local fishermen to protect their fishing areas. But, to be effective, the insect-laden plants must grow without disturbance for several months until the beetles multiply and spread to other plants. The experts called upon the voodoo priests for help. The priests proclaimed the area where the infested water

hyacinths have been released as off-limits, the home of deities who cannot be disturbed upon penalty of serious harm. Fearing the wrath of vengeful deities, the local people left the water hyacinths alone. The project shows signs of success. The beetles have spread many miles from where they were originally placed [Stevens, 1994]. This is an example of how science and religion can work together for the sustainability of the ecology. In some sense, as Reichel-Dolmatoff rightly puts it, indigenous priests play the role of an "ecological broker" [Reichel, 1976].

That the practice of ethnomedicine can safeguard natural phenomena is undeniable, though the resultant conservation and preservation advantages may be limited in their geographic scale. It is also worth noting that with increased population pressure and economic hardships, the protective tendencies of ethnomedical practices and indigenous culture in general are being weakened.

LOSS OF SACRED SPACES AND ESTRANGEMENT FROM NATURE

In several parts of Africa, the physical world has been progressively "despiritualized". Many shrines have fallen into disuse. There are some which have been forgotten altogether. Many sacred lands have been desecrated and their spiritual value destroyed. Desecration of spiritual spots, sacred spaces, and groves has tended to reduce the dignity of such 'landscapes' and to encourage their abuse.

Forest enclaves which traditionally served effectively as "sacred spaces" used by religious healers and consequently were prevented from extensive utilization and exploitation, have been cultivated, wiping away the dignity, devotion, and fear usually attached to such symbolic landscapes. The desecration of such landscapes tends to dispell their sacral aura, resulting in a new relationship that usually leads to severe abuse especially by a large percentage of the new generation of population which has little or no knowledge of such hierophanes in their localities. In such cases, the fear of local gods has been "extracted" from the natural environment.

Thus, in the Shire Highlands of Malawi, where several important townships developed and large tracts of land were alienated, the territorial cults collapsed. Much the same can be said of the Chewa area in Malawi and Zambia where by the 1930s almost the entire Chisumphi organization had broken up. What survived in Malawi were the Mbona cult, some isolated shrines of the Chisumphi cult, and a number of chiefdom cults. Cult healers have been at a greater risk of extinction.

The real challenges of these territorial cults have been the combined forces of world

religions, modern technology, and the bureaucratic state. The result of that confrontation has been the collapse of some cults and the decline of many others. During the colonial period, the concept of territorial cults came to be challenged and the breakdown of an ideational and organizational complex which had sustained African societies for many centuries was initiated. More directly, the challenges came from the Christian churches which questioned the religious basis of the cults and from the colonial administration which became intermittently involved in sharp conflicts with the religious leadership.

A more radical threat came from other factors, one of which was the application of a rationalist interpretation of ecology in the form of modern forms of land conservation and animal husbandry. This affected the moral and communal basis of the cults. As well, the bureaucratization of the chieftainships considerably weakened the political support of the cults. The alienation of land also drastically changed the structure of social organization and settlement.

The decline of sacred spaces and their religious symbolic importance is attributed to several factors. European missionary activities led to the rejection of traditional beliefs, rituals, and other non-Christian observations which form integral part of ethnomedicine and designation of sacred spaces. This seriously undermined the prestige accorded ethnomedicine and the influence wielded by its practitioners. Over time, Christian teachings and Western civilization created new attitudes, value systems, and expectations among potential adherents of ethnomedical principles, and African traditional religion in general. This has led to significant shifts in traditional beliefs of both the literate and illiterate in Africa.

The denigration of folk cultures and the disappearance of indigenous medical practitioners not only pose a problem for the future practice of ethnomedicine, but also the protection of biotic communities which serve as sources of indigenous medicine. Loss of indigenous cultures as well as indigenous knowledge has had much impact on the role of sacred spaces. Suzuki is right in his observation that once the indigenous people have disappeared, their body of priceless thought, medicinal knowledge, and value systems painstakingly acquired and built over thousands of years, will disappear forever [Knudston and Suzuki, 1992].

CONCLUSION

It is undeniable that culture influences the way people perceive and use the resources of their environment. The practice of ethnomedicine as an integral part of the culture of indigenous people in many parts of Africa has a close interface with local ecosystems. The continued

adherence of indigenous people to traditional cultural principles and values of ethnomedical systems contributes to the preservation and conservation of several biotic communities.

While ethnomedicine, especially its religious elements, generally do shape the value systems, attitudes, and behaviour of indigenous people towards a positive relationship with nature, modern developments appear to be steadfastly eroding the "core of respect" that is bestowed on nature. Indigenous cultures are increasingly being fragmented and threatened by development pressures. Folk knowledge, painstakingly acquired over thousands of years is also steadily disappearing. Threats to, and desecration of, sacred sites and spaces are destroying their spiritual value. The sacral aura of these 'places' are dissipating, resulting in a new relationship with nature that threatens the future sustainability of ecosystems upon which the practice of ethnomedicine is dependent.

In some cases, ethnomedical practices do contribute to the process of environmental degradation and disruption [Anyinam, 1995], but the preservation of the world's indigenous cultures and practices may contribute to the preservation and conservation of the remaining undisturbed forests and other biotic communities. It is very encouraging that, in the last few years, the issue of religion and ecology has become a 'respected' academic topic worthy of investigation. The news media, the publishing 'world', and academics have begun to promote indigenous knowledge and culture and their relevance for the sustainability of the earth's ecosystems.

Increasingly, the roles that indigenous cultures (and their ethnomedical practices, in particular) could play in the preservation of nature are being investigated. The recent conference on the need for the conservation of medicinal plants by World Health Organization, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and World Wildlife Fund is a step in the right direction. This international consultation on the conservation of medicinal plants brought together leading experts in different fields to exchange views on the problems, determine priorities, and make recommendations for action [Akerle, O. et al., 1991].

It is remarkable that environmentalists have tended to admire the values of native North Americans, Australian Aborigines and rainforest dwellers. This paper is a contribution to that effort and the purpose here is to highlight links that exist between ecology and a particular cultural practice. The ideas and thoughts of indigenous African societies are worth studying because they have, over the years, contributed to the preservation and conservation of nature. As African societies have developed from small scale hunter-gatherers through agriculture to manufacturing their value systems have also changed and their impact on local ecosystems has generally been

negative.

Hopefully more detailed empirical studies will be undertaken to shed more light on the broader question of the relationship between culture and ecology in Africa. Our estrangement from nature is caused in part by the anthropocentric attitudes which still seem to guide human-nature relationships. Humanities have a crucial role to play in bringing the cultural tradition to bear on the ecological issue. Without doubt, there is much to learn from the sacramental views of nature which is found among indigenous people.

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"STRAY WOMEN" AND "GIRLS ON THE MOVE":
GENDER, SPACE AND DISEASE IN COLONIAL ZIMBABWE

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On an evening in October 1928, Southern Rhodesia's Medical Director, Dr. Andrew Milroy Fleming, addressed a group of concerned white citizens and public officials at the Bulawayo City Hall. The off-color nature of the topic, the colony's venereal disease problem, resulted in the presence of only one white woman at the gathering. Dr. Fleming's custodianship of Southern Rhodesia's public health had commenced back in 1896. Revered as a medical official and fellow settler, his words carried weight. His finger was on the pulse of white Rhodesia, both literally and figuratively. So, when he advised his audience that the *root* cause, or at least the primary variable of the venereal disease problem was the presence of "stray women spreading disease all over the colony," the audience took note.¹ Other experts and regulators of African bodies, like Fleming, blamed the problem on "girls on the move" and "traveling prostitutes" who wandered around the country and changed their names.² All agreed with one main equation: mobile/uncontrolled black women, "stray women," were dangerous, pathological, and had to be checked.

A note on *Strayness*

By applying the word "stray" to these women, Dr. Fleming suggested that they had

¹National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ), Public Health, File no. S 1173/221.

²NAZ S1173/220. Conference on Venereal Diseases, Bulawayo, October 6, 1928. p.12.

deviated from some "right place" on the spatial and social maps of the colony. The word implies disorder, it implies lack of social agency. In fact, the adjective is more commonly applied to domestic animals than humans. However, to the colonial mind, this was not dissonant as African women were placed in close proximity to domestic animals. Thus, these women did not *leave* one place to *go* to another; but rather *roamed*, *wandered* and *strayed* from boundaries. In essence, "stray woman" served as a metaphor for the transgressive relationship between African women and official colonial space. This metaphor helps to explain why relations to space factored so centrally within designations of pathology in African women.

This paper is about two focal points of colonial anxiety: mobile and uncontrolled women and mobile and uncontrolled pathogens. It takes place in colonial Southern Rhodesia. As stated above, in the colonial discourse on venereal disease, the two became one and the same scourge upon the citizenry and native male labor force, and they were treated as such. This paper explores the ways in which mobile African women and their mobile genitalia were targeted for surveillance and regulation by the colonial state. It explores the medicalization of power over black women's bodies or, the role of medical discourses in inscribing and circumscribing African women within colonial space. I argue that this process constituted and was constitutive of a climate in which African women's access to certain spaces hinged upon what lie between their legs.³

While my focus is the colonial period up to 1949, I will briefly discuss the contemporary, post-independence, phenomena which led to this inquiry. In the latter part of 1983, I witnessed

³This region had long been the focal point of European males attentions towards black women. The example of women like Saartjie Baartman alias The Hottentot Venus, illustrate the ways in which what began as a purely prurient interest in the African woman's genitalia was, during the nineteenth century, transfigured into credible science.

a series of "clean-up," "round-up," crackdown and/or "blitz" campaigns in the towns, cities and "growth points" of Zimbabwe.⁴ Several years later, on another visit to the country, I witnessed several more of these campaigns - one preceding the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in 1991 and one preceding the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) meeting that same year.⁵

These campaigns were ostensibly targeted at prostitutes, squatters, hawkers, beggars and petty thieves, and used the anti-vagrancy laws only slightly revised from the colonial period.⁶ Yet, it appears that any woman who was young, single and black, showed evidence of earning her own living, and had no visible male escort, who wasn't carrying a marriage certificate, was a potential target.⁷ Indeed, the marriage certificate became a kind *de facto* town pass for black women after sunset.⁸

At the same time that independent black women were being criminalized, they were being

⁴See, for example, *The Herald*: "Police Image Discredited, 12/4/83; "Innocent Blitz Victims Freed," 11,28,83; "Prostitution and arrests," 1/28/83; "84 Women Held in Gwanda as Blitz Continues," 11/21/83 and in *The Sunday Mail*: "Hundreds Held in New Swoop on Prostitutes," 11/13/83 and "Women Speak out on round-ups," 11.20/83.

⁵ See, for example, *The Herald*: "Police Launch Massive Clean-up Before CHOGM" and "Women Criticize Police Operation," 6/14/1991 and "Don't Keep Streets Safe Only for CHOGM," 6/15/1991.

⁶*The Sunday Mail*, December 11, 1983, "Blitz on vagrants raises key issues of Rule of Law."

⁷Susie Jacobs and Tracy Howard, "Women in Zimbabwe: Stated Policy and State Action" in Haleh Afshar (ed.) Women, State and Ideology: Studies from Asia and Africa, (London: Macmillan Press, 1987) p.42)

⁸I am indebted to Teresa Barnes for this analogy. See her "Differential Class Experiences amongst African Women in Colonial Harare, Zimbabwe, 1935-1970", presented at the Conference on Women & Gender in Southern Africa, University of Natal, Durban, Jan. 30th -Feb. 2, 1991, p.19.

pathologized as the central and most dangerous vector of HIV/AIDS. Reports from epidemiologists focused on single mothers, and as Mary Basset and Marvelous Mhloyi have written, these women were construed as "contaminated vessels bearing condemned babies."⁹ "Single mother" was virtually synonymous with HIV transmission in the press media.¹⁰

From 1988 on, the Ministry of Health began its AIDS Education Campaign. Educational posters, at least in the early part of this campaign, consisted of images and messages which warned men and indicted women. One such poster depicts two black women wearing thigh length boots, mini-skirts and smoking cigarettes. The women are propped up against the entrance of a long, dark tunnel and the caption reads: "Choose your partners wisely."¹¹ Clearly, the intended beneficiary of this warning is male, while the diseased escort into the tunnel of death, is female.¹² Other media images include a comic image which ran in *The Herald* newspaper in which a woman

⁹ Mary Bassett and Marvelous Mhloyi in "Women and AIDS in Zimbabwe the Making of an EPIDEMIC", *International Journal of Health Services*, Vol. 21(1), 1991, argue that the lack of a special "risk group" or "risk factor" in African HIV transmission, points to the need "to examine the social context in which the epidemic has taken hold and is spreading." Specifically, the consequences of the migrant labor system, rapid urbanization, wars with high levels of military mobilization, landlessness, and poverty.

¹⁰An example of this tendency is found in article by Never Gadaga, "AIDS: What Others Say," *Sunday Mail*, 9/15/1991.

¹¹Through conversations with members of the Aids Counseling Trust (ACT) in Zimbabwe, particularly Helen Jackson (6.11.91), I have learned that this poster is not representative of the current approach of the anti-AIDS campaign literature which is less blatant in the scapegoating of women. This poster still seems to represent the view of the illness held by many Zimbabweans, however.

¹² Indeed, AIDS is commonly referred to, along with a variety of sexually transmitted diseases, as "woman's disease." This appellation has a long history as African men referred to venereal diseases as "woman's disease" in the 1940s and possibly earlier. See Michael Gelfand, *The Sick African*, (Cape Town: Juta and Co., Ltd., 1957 edition, first published in 1943).

with permed hair, platform shoes, large hoop earrings and the obligatory mini-skirt is pictured chasing a fat, suited man. Her lips are puckered, her arms outstretched. The caption in this case reads, "...it [is] indeed possible for AIDS to be transmitted by saliva."¹³ (see illustration B) Note that the agency of the male in linking the prostitute and the wife/mother of diseased babies, is not signified.

These and many other anecdotal and official representations of, and responses to mobile black townswomen, their conflation with sexually transmitted diseases were the inspiration behind this paper. While my main purpose is to explore the colonial background to these phenomena, I will also attempt to elaborate broadly on the relationship between black women's bodies, colonial space, and metaphors of disease. Moreover, I will also discuss the areas of contestation and collaboration between the colonial and the native patriarchies and their impact on the constructions of black women.

In his book, Difference and Pathology, Sander Gilman discusses ways in which "the Other" is seen as a sexualized being, and in association with the image of illness.¹⁴ He discusses how the black woman is represented as both damaged and damaging within western art and discourses on the human sciences, she both threatens and is disorder.¹⁵ However, Gilman's is

¹³Cartoon by Stephen Mazere in *The Herald*, February 18, 1992, Harare, Zimbabwe. Examples of articles and editorials which scapegoat women in HIV transmission include two articles written by Never Gadaga, "AIDS: what others say," *The Sunday Mail*, September 15, 1991; "Anatomy of Aids in Mashonaland," *The Sunday Mail*, September 8, 1991. One could write an entire paper simply analyzing the titles of these articles.

¹⁴Sander Gilman, Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race and Madness, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), p.23.

¹⁵Sander Gilman, 1985, p. 23.

a psychoanalytic perspective and he presents these phenomena outside of any material or social conditions. Everyone projects what is threatening onto a bad "Other." There is no model of differentiation, no way to explore, for instance, the situation of black women in Southern Rhodesia who were the Other's other. This paper is about the construction of a threat, the mobile/uncontrolled African woman. It is about the process by which the colonial state and capital alliance, and traditional African male authority all employed metaphors of disease in efforts and negotiations for control over them, their mobility and sexuality.¹⁶

The Historical Construction of Problem Women

The colonial conception of problem black women was not constant or linear. In the early years of the colony, when the colonizers, and particularly the missionaries were speaking in terms of emancipating native women, the problem women were those who stood in the way of change. During the initial stages of conquest, the occupiers worked aggressively to undermine traditional

¹⁶For an elaboration on this theme of the collusion of interest between the colonizer and colonized (male) around issues of control over African women see, for example, George Chauncey, "The locus of Reproduction: Women's Labor in the Zambian Copperbelt, 1927-1958," Journal of Southern African Studies Vol (2), 1981; Nancy Folbre, "Patriarchal social Formations in Zimbabwe" and Jane Parpart, "Sexuality and Power on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926-1964", in Patriarchy and Class: African Women in the Home and the Workforce, edited by Sharon Stichter and Jane Parpart, (Boulder, 1988); Janet Bujra, "Women 'Entrepreneurs' of Early Nairobi", Canadian Journal of African Studies, Vol. 9(2), 1975; Lynette Jackson, "Uncontrollable Women in a Colonial Town" Bulawayo Location, 1893-1958", Masters Essay, Columbia University, 1987 and Cheryl Walker, "Gender and the Development of the Migrant Labour System c. 1850-1930: An Overview," in Cheryl Walker (ed.), Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945, (Cape Town: David Philip, 1990).

institutions and authority structures. Like the French colonizers in Algeria who were, according to Frantz Fanon, quite obsessed with the notion of "emancipating" the Arab woman from her veil, the missionary/colonizers of Southern Rhodesia fashioned themselves the saviors of an oppressed black womanhood from a reputed domestic slavery.¹⁷ Legislation was passed which gave African women and girls channels of appeal against traditional patriarchal authority. In 1901, for instance, the Native Marriages Ordinance outlawed child pledging and required a prospective bride's consent before betrothal.¹⁸

Diane Jeater argued that the colonial state was taking over the role of the lineage head whose power was largely derived from control over marriage and bride payment and over sexual identity.¹⁹ Jeater described a shift from "answerability to the ancestors and the lineage to answerability to the State" and how this had major implications for the authority of "big men" over their dependents.²⁰ For African women as with young men, colonial occupation, along with

¹⁷One can draw an interesting parallel with Fanon here in terms of the possible motives of the colonizer, e.g., the belief that a society can only be truly domesticated once you've taken over their women, brought them on the side of the colonizer. To Fanon, the veil, interestingly, was a metaphor for native resistance. See Frantz Fanon, A Dying Colonialism, (New York: Grove Press, 1967 edition) pp. 35-67.

¹⁸See W. Peadar, Missionary Attitudes to Shona Culture, 1890-1923, (Salisbury, 1970) p.22; and Elizabeth Schmidt, 1990, pp. 624,625.

Diana Jeater, Marriage, Perversion and Power: The Construction of Moral Discourse in SR (Zimbabwe) 1890-1930 D. Phil., Oxford, 1990. p. 120.

²⁰Diana Jeater, Marriage, Perversion.. 1990, p. 124.

hardship, offered certain new opportunities to evade control. For instance, some took their male guardians to colonial courts rather than accept an arranged marriage to someone they disliked.²¹

"Big men" argued that their women and girls were getting out of control, attempted to prevent missionaries from taking in fleeing girls, and asked the state to prohibit women and girls from obtaining passage on rickshas and trains. The initial colonizer response to these pleas was to ignore them. In fact, the colonizer/missionaries encouraged African girls to escape from African patriarchal control. One report from a missionary, Reverend Cullen Reed in 1903, represents a common attitude of the missionary during this period:

The heathen are realizing that a girl who learns the love of Christ will not submit to polygamy, and as nearly all the girls of the Makalanga are promised in infancy, this naturally produces strife...the result is that they do their best to prevent their girls coming to us, and even beg us to drive them away if they come.²²

This example not only illustrates the missionary view of Christian devotion and female virtue, but reflects what the missionary felt of traditional African manhood and patriarchal forms. In essence, African women and girls were actively encouraged to abandon African forms of patriarchy for European forms. It was not uncommon for African manhood to be questioned during this period. A 1902 editorial in the *Rhodesia Herald* illustrates this point and the ideological importance of images of African men as lazy and corresponding images of African women as domestic slaves. According to the editor, "the African had to learn that men and not women were designed to go

Elizabeth Schmidt, 1990, p. 625.

²²Rev. Cullen Reed, Report of the London Missionary Society, year ending March 31, 1903. Special Collections Library, University of Zimbabwe.

out to work" and to "stop living off [their] connubial slaves."²³ Further, it was said to be the duty of the European, as the more civilized, to impose taxes and other such inducements on the African man to sell his labor. The discourse on African male idleness was drawn upon frequently, particularly when the need to legitimize land plunder and theft and to generally sanction interference in African institutions not amenable to colonial capitalist expediency arose.²⁴

During the first three decades of colonial rule, the colonizers' version of the bad woman was not the woman who escaped from parental control that would come shortly; but the one who stood in the way of "progress," who represented tradition. She was invariably an older woman, like grandmothers who prevented young girls from attending mission schools, wives and mothers who objected to the migration of husbands and sons, or the adherents of indigenous religious cults.²⁵

The Dangers of Mobility

The dominant image of the traditional African woman was to change and the fiend of the

²³*Rhodesia Herald*, March 1, 1902 cited in Enetia Vassilatos, "Race and Class: The Development and Influence of White Images of Blacks in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1939" doctoral dissertation, University of Rhodesia, 1977, p.75.

²⁴See Anne McClintock, "Maidens, Maps and Mines: King Solomon's Mines and the reinvention of patriarchy in colonial South Africa," in Cheryl Walker (ed.), Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945, (Cape Town: David Philip, 1990), p. 110 for a discussion on the "invention of idleness."

²⁵Ngwabi Bhebe, Christianity and Traditional Religion in Western Zimbabwe 1859-1923, (London: Longman, 1979) p.123.

traditional order came to be replaced by the pathogen of the colonial capitalist civilization, the "stray" African woman in the towns. The colonial economy, premised on the steady flow of single male labor migrants to the mines, discovered that there was much value in pre-colonial gender relations. The challenge was to discover a way to simultaneously destroy and retain the old social order, accumulate capital and maintain social control at as low a cost as possible. It became clearer and clearer to colonial capitalists that, in order to keep down the cost of labor, its reproduction had to take place in the rural areas. And, for this to occur, female labor had to remain there. Increasingly, in the colonial mind, production was gendered male, and reproduction gendered female.²⁶ :

This realization lead European officials to apply a modified form of "indirect rule" to Southern Rhodesia whereby control over African female productive and reproductive powers was again left to African men. This was also an important way by which the colonizers sought to stave off African male resistance and political mobilization. Though, of course, the colonizer's preferred to frame their policy in more paternalistic language. During the 1910 Native Affairs Commission of Inquiry they spoke of issues such as the deleterious effects that civilization was having upon native morality. The Committee expressed special concern for the growing lack of respect for parental and tribal authority, and the sexual immorality of women, both married and

²⁶Margot Lovett, "Gender Relations, Class Formation and the Colonial State in Africa," in J. Parpart and K. Staudt (eds.), Women and the State in Africa, (Boulder: Reimer Publishers, 1989) p.27. See also Harold Wolpe, "Capitalism and Cheap Labor Power in South Africa: From Segregation to Apartheid," Economy and Society, Vol.1 1972 pp. 425-56 and Carmen Deere, "Women's Participation in the Capitalist Periphery," in The Review of Radical Political Economics, Vol. 8(1), 1976. The latter are earlier versions of this thesis of reproduction of male labor in the rural "capitalist periphery." Wolpe and Deere do not, however, focus on the social control function this sector performs for capital and the state.

single, in the vicinity of mines and other industrial centers posing "a growing danger to the future welfare, both moral and physical, of the native races."²⁷

By way of a solutions, the committee sought to reinvent indigenous gender relations and reconstitute patriarchy. These European men decided that the rural African man was not as lazy as previously thought and the African woman (in her customary role) was therefore less oppressed than previously supposed.²⁸ Perhaps more to the point, it was deemed that her continued subjugation to African male authority was for the benefit of all. This "about-face" was followed by the decisions to slow-down the process of female "emancipation." Notions of black women and girls as inherently inferior to all, including their men, gained currency. Opinions like: "her brain is not sufficiently balanced to allow her to think and act for herself,"²⁹ or that black women were "centuries behind [their men] in civilization" and "absolutely unfit to be granted any measure of freedom for the present as their instincts are almost purely animal" are abound in the archival records.³⁰ After this transformation in the colonizer's perspective, it was a criminal offence for a mission to accept any girl or woman without the prior consent of her parents or guardian.³¹ While in theory, this meant that African male control over the mobility

²⁷Native Affairs Committee, 1910-11, (Salisbury: Government Printers, 1911), p.2. NAZ SRG410

²⁸Ibid., Section 23, p.5.

²⁹NAZ S138/150, Native Commissioner, Hartley to Superintendent of Natives, Fort Victoria, March 26, 1924.

³⁰Ibid. Native Commissioner, Sinoia to Superintendent of Natives, Salisbury, February 23, 1924.

³¹Native Affairs Commission of Inquiry, 1910/11, Section 37, p.5. NAZ SRG4/10,

of their women gained support from the colonial government, in practice, increasing numbers of African women found their way to mines and urban centers.

The period under analysis overlapped the expansion of the independent urban migration of African women and girls.³² To understand these developments, a picture of the broader economic and social environment is necessary. During the 1930s, the economic and social status of the majority of Africans was in decline. African reserves were devastated as the colonizers averted the consequences of the Great Depression onto the African peasant and worker.³³ The African's access to land, to skilled and higher paying jobs, and to agricultural markets, were restricted through a series of legislative acts: the Cattle Levy Acts of 1931 and 1934; the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1934, the Maize Control Acts of 1931 and 1934 and the Land Apportionment Act of 1930. The Maize Control Acts depressed prices paid for African maize to subsidize the prices received by white farmers. The inequity was such that Africans received from one to six shillings per bag of maize submitted to the Maize Control Board, while Europeans received eight

³²There has been an abundance of literature written on the independent urban migration of African women and the patriarchal anxieties which this produced. The best works on the phenomenon in Southern Rhodesia from the 1920s through the 1940s include: Teresa Barnes, "The Fight for Control of African Women's Mobility in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1900-1939," *Signs*, Vol. 17 (3), 1992; Elizabeth Schmidt, "Negotiated Spaces and Contested Terrain: Men, Women and the Law in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1890-1939," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 16(4), 1990; and Diana Jeater, Marriage, Perversion, and Power: The Construction of Moral Discourse in Southern Rhodesia 1894-1930, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), Chapter 9.

³³For a good discussion of the European war on the African agricultural competition see: Robin Palmer, Land and Racial Domination in Rhodesia, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), pp. 195-230. For the best discussion of the impact of these changes on African women specifically, see Elizabeth Schmidt, Peasants, Traders, and Wives, (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1992), chapter 3.

shillings per bag.³⁴ This resulted in a dramatic increase in maize production by wealthier African farmers, and the increased migration to the towns by others. It also resulted in the heightened exploitation of female labor in the rural areas, particularly the labor of junior wives.³⁵ The increased acreage under production due the Maize Control Act combined with the absence of plow oxen. African women were required to hoe much larger areas of land.³⁶

In addition, fathers grew more dependent upon the economic value of lobola/roora.³⁷ By the mid-1930s, the average price of lobola was £17.10.³⁸ The gravity of this amount will be understood when the average male wage for this period is factored. In 1932, male servants received between thirty to thirty-five shillings per month, or approximately one and a half pounds. Male agricultural laborers received approximately twelve shillings and mine workers, twenty-five shillings.³⁹ Thus, many men had to labor for several years before they were able to accumulate enough money to purchase lobola/roora cattle for marriage. Women and girls found themselves in a bind. Fathers became more dependent on lobola for their own financial needs and to supplement the resources of their sons seeking marriage. Some husbands, no doubt, began to

³⁴Ian Phimister, An Economic and Social History, p.185.

³⁵Cite Elizabeth Schmidt.

³⁶*Report of the Chief Native Commission 1935.*

³⁷Lobola or roora is the payment made by the groom or the family of the groom to the bride's family. While this was traditionally a payment in cattle and goats, by the 1930s, it increasingly involved the exchange of cash payments as well.

³⁸M.C. Steele, "The Economic Function of African Owned Cattle in Colonial Zimbabwe," *Zambesia*, Vol. 9 (1), 1981, p.35.

³⁹Paul Mosely, the Settler Economies: Studies in the Economic History of Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1963. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 159.

expect more and more, and to give less and less to the wives for whose labor and services they paid so dearly. Thus, while rural men were more determined than ever to control the labor and sexuality of wives and daughters, wives and daughters were more inclined to flee.

In addition to the turbulence created by Government policy, were the problems of nature. In 1935 and 1936, an "unprecedented drought" befell the colony and resulted in the loss of thousands of cattle, particularly in the southern districts of the country. The absence of vegetables in the diet caused scurvy to be widespread in places like Gwanda, Gatooma and Que Que.⁴⁰ These were generally unhealthy years and a rise in infant and child mortality due to measles epidemics added to the denigration in the status of many women.⁴¹

Between 1929 and 1936, the African female population of the Municipal African Location of Bulawayo grew from an estimated 750 women (and 4,500 men) to 1,237 woman (and 6,077 men). In 1944, the estimated population was 2,012 women (and 6,816 men).⁴² This meant that the percentage of women in the Location's total adult African population increased from 16% in 1929, to nearly 30% in 1944.⁴³

Much displeasure was expressed by the African male guardians of these women. In the

⁴⁰Report of the Superintendent of Natives, Chief Native Commissioner and Chief Agriculturist, 1936 (check this reference)

⁴¹Ian Phimister, An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe: Capital Accumulation and Class Struggle, (New York: Longman, 1988), p. 205.

⁴²NAZ S235/394. *Commission of Inquiry on the Control and Welfare of the Native Population of Bulawayo*, 1930, p.3; Percy Ibbotson, "Report on a Survey of Urban African Conditions in Southern Rhodesia," *Africa*, Vol. 16 (2), 1946, p. 74.

⁴³This increase was in part due to the postwar increase in the European population and secondary industries and thus the rise in labor demand.

Chief Native Commissioners' annual reports, there are frequent references to male fears that their women were getting out of control. In 1932, for instance, CNC Charles Bullock reported that the "new freedom of women" was "repeatedly brought up at meetings of the district native boards."⁴⁴ In one example reported by the CNC in 1932, a delegation of Mfengu notables complained:

The results of the emancipation of native women under our laws are not all to the good... [They asked] for Government control or assistance to enable them to keep their women at home alleging that modern conditions, especially motor transport facilities, are causing a serious increase in immorality. ⁴⁵

In response, the colonizers developed policies to contain the potential disaffection of native "Big Men." One such strategy was to put a provision within the Native Registration and Accommodation Act of 1936 dealing with the "influx of young women who evaded parental control."⁴⁶ Other responses were official and unofficial controls instituted by the colony's various location superintendents. Mr. Collier who was the Superintendent of the Bulawayo Native Location, told the 1932 Domestic Labor Committee that his policy was to return minors, suspected of traveling without parental consent, to their rural homes.⁴⁷ Collier admitted that the policy was largely ineffective as they would merely return again and there was very little that he

⁴⁴See, for example, *Report of the Chief Native Commissioner for the Years 1932*, p. 1.

⁴⁵*Report of the Chief Native Commissioner, Year 1932*. p. 2.

⁴⁶*Report of the Chief Native Commissioner 1932*, p. 2.

⁴⁷NAZ S235/594. Native Domestic Labor Committee, 1932. Evidence.

could do about this.

The anxieties over the control of mobile and "emancipated" African women and girls, coincided with other developments. As in much of the world at this time, social problems were being transferred from the realm of morality, to that of biomedical science.⁴⁸ Southern Rhodesia joined countries like England and the United States in conflating notions of social order and social welfare with notions of science. Recent works in the fields of American and British social history have stressed the ways in which perceived social disorders like single motherhood and female sexual assertiveness, were increasingly perceived as pathologies appropriately addressed through practices of "objective" sciences.⁴⁹ In Southern Rhodesia in the 1930s and 1940s, as in the United States during the period, science became the encompassing idiom for "policing black women's bodies."⁵⁰

As stated previously, there were contradictions inherent within the objectives of capital accumulation, involving the active dismantling of traditional authorities and institutions thought to hamper the flow of male labor onto the mines, and the objectives of social control, requiring the continued presence of African women in the rural areas and a smattering in the urban area to

⁴⁸Steven Humphries, The Secret World of Sex, (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1988); Regina Kunzel, Fallen Women, Problem Girls: Unmarried Mothers and the Professionalization of Social Work, 1890-1945, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993)

⁴⁹R. Kunzel, 1993; Steven Humphries, 1985. See also Jane M. Ussher, Women's Madness: Misogyny or Mental Illness, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1991), Chaps. 4 & 5; Elaine Showalter, The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture, 1830-1980, (London: Penguin Books, 1985), Chap. 8.

⁵⁰Hazel Carby explores this concept in the context of the first half of the twentieth century in America. See. H. Carby, "Policing the Black Woman's Body in an Urban Context." *Critical Inquiry*, 4 (Summer 1992)

reproduce male labor at no additional expense to industry. The urban African woman's role in the "daily reproduction"⁵¹ of the migrant male labor force was being recognized as were the benefits of their presence on and near the mine compounds in attracting and stabilizing male wage laborers. Thus single women were allowed to live on the labor compounds.⁵² Hence, these "stray women" were neither marginal nor superfluous from the point of view of colonial capital, nor were they unequivocally undesirable. In other words, the state and capital were hesitant to totally prevent the migration of African women. Economic movement was another matter, however, and women were relegated to the illegal spaces, and subject to whims and wrath of numerous groups, and were progressively marginalized from legality and respectability.⁵³ They increasingly found themselves the objects of colonial medical discourse as well.

The Medicalization of Urban African Women

As in South Africa, the "Sanitation Syndrome" was in full force in Southern Rhodesia from its beginnings, and the metaphor of contagious disease was cited as justification for numerous

⁵¹See Luise White, "The Colonial State and an African Petty Bourgeoisie," in F. Cooper (ed.), Struggle for the City, (London, 1980).

⁵²Charles van Onselen, 1977, p.48.

⁵³Lynette Jackson, "Uncontrollable Women...(.)"

policies and actions disadvantageous to the urban African.⁵⁴ In 1899, for instance, the Mayor of Bulawayo, speaking on behalf of the town's ratepayers, appealed to the Governor for the application of the 1885 Contagious Diseases Act of the Cape Colony to Southern Rhodesia. This Act provided for the compulsory registration of alleged prostitutes. It was not applied in Bulawayo, however. This was perhaps because it was feared that the Act would drive these non-respectable women out of the municipalities where it was in force, a prospect which the mining industry and the Town Fathers recognized as undesirable, albeit perhaps for different reasons.⁵⁵ As stated above, mining capital and the state were interested in the continued presence of single women in towns and compounds for the daily reproductive services that they would provide to the male labor force. The Town Fathers and ratepayers, on the other hand, may have been more interested in what was the perceived role single black women played in preserving white womanhood from the "Black Peril."⁵⁶ Some years later, the Chief Native Commissioner did not

28Maynard Swanson, "The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic Plague and Urban Native Policy in the Cape Colony, 1900-1909," Journal of African History, Vol. 18, 1977, pp. 387-410.

⁵⁵Charles van Onselen discusses how sex workers plied their trade further afield when the Act was applied to Cape Town. See his Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand, 1886 - 1914: 1 New Babylon, (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1982) p.106.

⁵⁶ See CNC to SON, Salisbury, March 17, 1921 re: Influx of Foreign Native Women. NAZ N3/22/6. For general discussion of the "Black Peril" fear/anxiety (of African males raping or attempting to rape white women see: John Pape, "Black and White: The 'Perils of Sex' in Colonial Zimbabwe," Journal of Southern African Studies, vol. 16 (4), 1990, p. 700; Dane

mince words acknowledging that "the presence of these women" did have the effect of "minimizing the danger of black peril cases." He cautioned, however, that while these advantages must be acknowledged, "a question [of] whether the unchecked influx might not lead to serious problems..."a serious spread of venereal disease or syphilis" should not be overlooked.⁵⁷

The fear of infectious diseases, particularly venereal diseases, elicited a sustained murmur and occasional hysteria among the colonial authorities and settlers of Southern Rhodesia. The annual *Reports on the Public Health* presented regular accounts of the extent to which Africans were infected with venereal diseases, responding to persistent queries from the public and local administrators. This was the case even though the Medical Director consistently stated that "they [venereal diseases] have not the hold that has been popularly supposed" and that, many of the diseases being labeled as syphilis were actually other forms of "skin eruptions and superficial sores," or were actually non-venereal yaws or framboesia.⁵⁸

In 1911, the establishment of a lock hospital was proposed to deal with Natives suffering

Kennedy, *Islands of White: Settler Society and Culture in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1939*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987); and Charles van Onselen, "Witches of Suburbia" in *Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand*, Vol. 2. (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1982) pp. 51,52.

⁵⁷Report of the Chief Native Commissioner, (check date)

⁵⁸Southern Rhodesia, Report of the Medical Director and Medical Principal Medical Officer of the British South Africa Police. Year Ended 31 March, 1901, pp. 4,5.

from syphilis who were brought into contact with Europeans. This project was shelved, however, due to lack of funds.⁵⁹ In 1913 the District Surgeons continued to reported on the prevalence of venereal disease and its spread among the mining centers "to an alarming extent." He warned that "a grave danger undoubtedly exists with natives suffering from this disease being brought into contact with Europeans." According to the Medical Director, "the position could to some extent be combated by legislating for the better supervision and control of native women, particularly unmarried women, residing within or in the vicinity of mining compounds."⁶⁰

Concern over "venereal natives" reached a fever pitch in 1917, and a deputation of Salisbury notables, including the Salisbury Mayor and Town Clerk, appealed to the Administrator of the colony to seriously consider the compulsory detention and medical examination of Africans seeking employment.⁶¹ In 1918 the amended Native Registration Act was passed containing a clause providing for the:

compulsory vaccination and medical examination of natives applying for certificates of registration under the "Native Registration Ordinance, 1901," or during the period of employment under such certificates, for the prevention of natives entering or

⁵⁹Southern Rhodesia, Report on the Public Health, 1912, p.15.

⁶⁰Report on the Public Health, 1914, p. 16.

⁶¹Town Clerk's Office, Salisbury to the Department of the Administrator, 11 May, 1917. NAZ H2/9/2.

remaining in employment when found to be suffering from such contagious or infectious diseases as may be specified by such regulations, and for the care and treatment of natives found to be so suffering."

Like so much of Southern Rhodesian legislation, however, it failed to stipulate how the implementation of these new regulations was to be paid for.⁶²

African women, their control, remained an area of contestation and negotiation between colonizing and colonized men. While the colonizers periodically took action and then moaned about its expense, African men expressed their concerns about mobile women. The Loyal Matabele Patriotic Society (LMP) was formed in Bulawayo in 1915. Next to the restoration of the Ndebele monarchy, the most important single issue for this society was the problem of single African women in the towns.⁶³ These men appealed to the Administrator to prevent the movements of women facilitated by train and ricksha, complained about single women being the main occupants of stands and huts in the Bulawayo Location and warned that the policy of examining African men entering domestic employment for venereal diseases was of little use if these women were not stopped.⁶⁴

While the Ndebele men located most of the problems facing the Ndebele nation that were not caused by the white man, squarely at the feet of the black woman, a group of Christian

⁶²Town Clerk's Office, Bulawayo to Medical Director, Salisbury, 7 September, 1920. NAZ H 2/9/2.

⁶³T.O. Ranger, The African Voice in Southern Rhodesia, (London, 1970) p.39.

⁶⁴NAZ N3/3/21/1-10, Letter from L.M.S. to H.M. Jackson, Native Superintendent, Bulawayo, March 4, 1916. See also NAZ S235/440

African men from Falcon Mine had this to say in 1921:

For some time we have considered that there is something wrong with a people to give rise to the great amount of quarreling, fighting and burning of houses, and also the vast amount of venereal disease. All those happenings are interfering with the morals and welfare of the man in employment and the only cause of the trouble is the number of loose women, who are permitted to roam about without hindrance...Men have evil communication with them, the result is that the men are stricken with foul disease.

To give their argument added strength, they warned that "many of these loose women are decaying the white people when they take on as nurses to white babies."⁶⁵

The "Inspection," or African Woman's "Town Pass"

Rather than stave the flow of female migration as the different delegations had requested, the colonizers decided to regulate the bodies of migrant. In 1922, a motion was put forward in the Legislative Council at the request of the Chamber of Mines to deal with what was said to be the increase of venereal diseases among African workers. It called for immediate steps to impose compulsory medical examinations on the mines and "treatment of all native men and women found

⁶⁵"Appeal from the Leaders of the Christian Mission at work at Falcon Mine and the Township of Umvuma," sent to Medical Director on 21 April, 1921. NAZ A 3/12/7-10.

to be infected." According to the Medical Officer at the Globe and Phoenix Mine, "the disease is undoubtedly due to immoral native women plying their trade in the big compounds." As there were no compulsory medical examinations of these women, if expelled, they would simply spread the disease further afield. Evidence was presented to the effect that where examinations were conducted, such as on large mines like the Falcon and Shamva mines, the disease was found to decrease. On the Falcon Mine, African men and women were "medically inspected" and women were required to carry a medical certificate with them or risk arrest and re-examined. The Shamva mine conducted similar "inspections" of males upon engagement, and females, when "seeking permission to live in the compounds." These women were "examined by a committee of native women."⁶⁶ Charles van Onselen has suggested that "the failure of the state or industry to take decisive action encouraged African attempts to deal with venereal diseases themselves."⁶⁷ Van Onselen attributed the process of screening new-comers to the social agency of compound women themselves. Whether or not this was the case, it is likely that some women would find participation in these regularized exams preferable to more erratic raids and expulsions at the hands of compound police.

In an attempt at regularization, a new Public Health Act was passed in 1925. Part three, section 47 of the Act made it an offence for any employee with a venereal disease to knowingly continue in employment:

in or about a factory, shop, hotel, restaurant, house or other place
in any capacity entailing the care of children or the handling of food
or utensils intended for consumption or use by any other person.

⁶⁶Southern Rhodesia, Legislative Council Debates, May 30, 1923.

⁶⁷Charles van Onselen, Chibaro, (London: Pluto Press, 1977) p. 51.

An employer who knowingly employed or continued to employ a person with a venereal disease was also committing an offence. Section 52 (3) of the Act authorized medical examinations of inhabitants in areas where venereal disease was believed to be prevalent. "Any person who refuses to comply with such order or with any lawful instructions" shall be guilty of an offence."⁶⁸ The last section, section 54, stated that all examinations of females (African females being implied) should be performed by female practitioners if possible.

The Chamber of Commerce of the City of Bulawayo was to find fault with this legislation as they felt that too much of the burden was placed upon the employers of labor and that the pass officer should bear more. In other words, the pass officer should ensure that Africans seeking employment were in possession of a valid health certificate (issued within the last 6 months) before granting a pass. The Chamber of Commerce did resolve that "no native female servant be allowed to accept a post as general servant, housemaid, nurse or children's attendant except she be in possession of a clean bill of health signed periodically by a suitable medical attendant."⁶⁹ But, as the pass laws did not include African women, this was difficult to enforce. The Secretary of Public Health, Dr. A.M. Fleming responded by advising that the employer should simply

⁴³These sections of the Act have remained unaltered until the present, however it is currently being rewritten so as to be less punitive and more educative. Timothy Stamps, the current Minister of Health, stated recently: "We do not achieve anything by punishing people suffering from VD, because some of them contract the disease innocently, and do not deserve to be punished for it." See "Ministry sets up body to rewrite Public Health Act," The Herald. Friday August 18, 1991, p.3.

⁶⁹ File on "Anti-Venereal Disease Clinics in Urban Areas," 1929.NAZ Public Health S241/531.

refrain from employing a servant without a valid medical certificate.⁷⁰

The Superintendent of the Bulawayo Native Location, Mr. Collier, complained that he had no means of controlling the African women who were constantly "drifting" into town. In the year 1931 alone, an estimated 135 "girls" arrived on the Bulawayo Location. He and his police sent them back but most returned. As women did not come under pass law regulations, location superintendents and compound inspectors resorted to periodic raids whereby "unmarried native women" were rounded up and examined by "a coloured nurse." Some fifteen to twenty women were sent to the hospital for treatment each month. According to Collier, the "native women do not object to this."⁷¹

Whether or not the "native women" objected to these exams is certainly not a matter that Collier was qualified to judge. African members of the Native Welfare Society did complain about the indiscriminate application of the medical inspections on urban African women.⁷² At a meeting in May 1925, the Rhodesia Bantu Voters Association Women's League, led by Martha Ngano, protested the examinations and suggested that the authorities subject their own women to such compulsory examinations to see how they liked it.⁷³

Throughout the 1930s and early 1940s, the situation of non-wage laboring African town dwellers was precarious as they, along with their rural, non-wage laboring compatriots, felt the

⁷⁰ Dr. A.M. Fleming to Secretary of Department of the Colonial Secretary, May 6, 1929. NAZ Public Health files, S241/531.

⁷¹Native Domestic Labor Committee, 1932. Evidence. NAZ S 235/594.

⁷²Native Welfare Society, vol. II. NAZ, CNC Correspondence, S2584/85/2.

⁷³Superintendent, CID, Bulawayo to Native Commissioner, 17 May, 1925. NAZ S 138/37, I am grateful to Randall Smith for this reference.

brunt of the legislation passed during the depression years, 1930-1938, to rebuild the white economy and white economic advantage, stave off African economic competition and, as Robin Palmer writes, "divide the country into non-competing castes."⁷⁴ Following WWII, however, the settler government once again reconsidered its "Native Policy" due to the growing African and European urban population, the rise of secondary manufacture and colonial capital's desire to restructure the reproduction of the African wage labor force through stabilization. The first response was to make regulations on the urban African population tighter and, for the first time, and to formally integrate African women within the colony's formal influx control discourse. In 1949, Bulawayo was declared a proclaimed area under the Native Urban Areas and Accommodation Act (as amended) of 1946. This Act required that all women not in employment or seeking work, except those who were wives, submit to medical examinations. An African woman had to obtain a pass, verifying that she was not suffering from a venereal or other communicable disease, and that the officer who issued the pass did not suspect her of immorality and/or of seeking to avoid parental authority, before she was permitted to enter the mine compounds or to gain access to Location housing. Throughout the 1940s and into the 1950s, single African women, nannies, food handlers and other African women dangerously positioned in terms of disease transmission, were subject to sporadic raids (in the case of single women) and routine examinations for venereal disease.⁷⁵

In Matabeleland, African women called these examinations "Town Pass" according to Mrs

⁷⁴See Robin, Land and Racial Domination in Rhodesia, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1977) and Ian Phimister, An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe, 1890-1948, (London: Longman, 1988), pp. 171-218.

⁷⁵NAZ S 51/5, Discussion of the application of the Native Registration Act, 1936 found in "Extracts from Mayor's Minutes," Salisbury, 1944-1952.

Ncube, a sadza maker at the Mashumba Beer Garden in Mzilikazi who has lived in Makokoba (Bulawayo Location) since the late 1940s. Whether women objected to the exams or not was quite besides the point. According to Mrs. Ncube, the white man's town, one did what the white man said."⁷⁶ Another informant, Mrs Mabengegwe, who lived in or near Shabani (Zvishavane) asbestos mine compounds during the same period, all women who entered the area were forced to go into the showers, disrobe, lay down and part their legs. The examination was called "chibeura" meaning, to rudely and forcibly open something. Some women found the examinations humiliating and frightening and refused to enter the towns. Others submitted to them but were embarrassed by the way the compound police would walk through the compounds on the appointed day yelling: "chibeura, chibeura, madzi mai (all mothers), chibeura."⁷⁷

The Willcox Report

By the late and post WWII period the colonial state was in a state of high anxiety over the "urban African problem." The Howman Report of 1943 described the appalling living conditions of the urban African and warned of the disastrous consequences that such conditions could have upon industrial efficiency. The Report suggested that more consideration be given to encouraging family life among the urban African, as wives played a major role in the stabilization and

⁷⁶Personal Communication with Mrs. N. Ncube at Mashumba Beer Garden, 23 July, 1991. Interpreter, Elizabeth Ncube.

⁷⁷Personal communication with Mrs. Mabengegwe, 16 July 1991. Interpreter, Elizabeth Ncube.

efficiency of the industrial workforce.⁷⁸ In 1946 Percy Ibbotson was to echo these points.⁷⁹ But, while the grass continued to look greener for some, primarily, married African women,⁸⁰ the marginalization of unmarried women continued, or perhaps even gained momentum. As the wife became a blessing to capital and state, the unmarried urban woman, always suspected of prostitution, became even more of a curse.

Among surveys into social and health problems of the post WWII period, was a 1949 study of venereal disease among the African population of Southern Rhodesia (Willcox Report).⁸¹ Willcox's report is an interesting document in that it very clearly illustrates how, in the mind of this colonial "expert," the patient really did become the disease. He referred to prostitutes near the Zambian border as "the venereal filter of labor entering the country"; to alleged prostitutes in general as a "reservoir of infection" and to "girls on the move [who] frequent the road camps and infect the transport drivers while in transit."⁸² By way of solution, Willcox recommended that more coordinated raids be conducted on locations and industrial sites so as to round up as many of the human pathogens as possible. He stressed the importance of taking advantage of those

⁷⁸Southern Rhodesia, Report of the Select Committee to Investigate Urban Conditions in Southern Rhodesia (Howman Commission), 1943.

⁷⁹Ibbotson, Percy, "Report on a Survey of Urban Areas in Southern Rhodesia," Africa, (1946).

⁸⁰As a result of the Recommendations of the Report of the Urban African Affairs Commissions (Plewman Commission), 1958, African women would henceforward be included under the term "native" and would be extended the rights of freehold tenure in village settlements. It should be noted, however, that the regulations applicable to unmarried women were still in force.

⁸¹R.R. Wilcox, Report on Venereal Diseases. Survey of the African in Southern Rhodesia., Presented to Secretary of Health, (Salisbury: Department of Health, Oct. 1949)

⁸²R.R. Willcox, Report on Venereal Disease, p.46.

times when these women came under the "official eye." as for vagrancy and trespassing offenses, to compulsorily examine them.

African women who were unmarried were subjected to raids and compulsory exams under the justification of Public Health. African men were also subject to venereal and T.B. examinations before being given employment, and those in domestic service, food handling, or child care, like the women, were subject to periodic examinations.⁸³ So, why focus on African women? The difference is that they were literally defined by their suspected disease. The colonial Public Health files contain abundant correspondence to and from Inspectors and Medical Officers on mines and large farms attesting to the fact that African women were represented as dangerous vectors for the transmission of venereal diseases. African men contracted the disease from African women. Single African women contracted the disease from their own immorality and became inseparable from it. Representations of married African women, on the other hand, allowed more flexibility and they were sometimes described as recipients of venereal disease from their urbanized husbands.⁸⁴

To conclude, it is clear that discourses of disease have been employed as a regulatory tool, a way of keeping African women out, or keeping those inside in a precarious state. The inspection of African women's genitalia was one of the indignities endured to gain a degree of passage into colonial town. This realization that they had been relegated to the status of

⁸³NAZ S51/5.

For instance, The Matabeleland Landowners', Farmers and Cotton Growers' Association to D. MacGillivray Esq., Bulawayo, 1929, NAZ Public Health S241/53. Various farmers filed reports on the prevalence of venereal diseases at their farms and, without exception, in the column headed: where disease contracted, a woman's name or else "unknown native prostitute" was written.

pathogenic organism must have impinged upon their self-image.

Whether or not African women were constructed as disease carriers by the Shona or Ndebele peoples is not addressed here. While mention has been made of the elements of collaboration between European and African patriarchy's concerning the physical, social and economic mobility of African women, this question deserves further discussion. With respect to future work, I am very interested in identifying those voices that can share and express the consequences of knowing that only by opening their legs could they gain a very restricted access to the colonizers' world and economic opportunities.

I'd like to conclude with this image shared with me by Mrs. Mabengegwe, my informant on venereal disease examinations. On one of her visits to Zvishavane in the 1970s, Mrs. Mabengegwe ran into one of the old coloured "nurses" who had performed chibeura on her. The woman told her that after these inspections stopped being compulsory, she and the other "nurses" were given gum boots and sent to clean the toilets. Underneath Mrs. Mabengegwe's laughter when relaying this story, was her desire for others to know the levels of degradation that were part of the price of African women's admission into colonial urban space.

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PROSE: EQUIANO AND ACHEBE, SOYINKA
AND GATES

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SELF AND PLACE IN AFRICAN AND AFRICAN-AMERICAN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PROSE: EQUIANO AND ACHEBE, SOYINKA AND GATES

Introduction

A case could be made for analyzing Things Fall Apart as an auto-biographical fiction, however, the primary reason that Achebe's Things Fall Apart, a novel, has been included in this study of autobiographies, is that close observation reveals numerous parallels between it and The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Oluadah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African.¹ Both Equiano and Achebe come from the same Igbo ethnic culture and geographical location of Nigeria, but more important, both adopted similar stylistic strategies to portray the Igbo culture as a representative African culture and in response to the challenges of slavery, in the case of Equiano, and colonialism, in the case of Achebe. What specifically these strategies are, will soon become evident because their analysis constitutes a major focus in this essay. Indeed, Achebe might have consciously modeled his novel after the manner of Equiano or has been greatly inspired by the latter because Things Fall Apart in many respects the fictional elaboration of the first two chapters of Equiano's Interesting Narrative.

The similarities between Wole Soyinka's memoir, Ake: The Years of Childhood, and Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s Colored People: A Memoir are equally striking. Indeed, the biographical details selected for portrayal and the style in which they are portrayed are so close that it seems the former memoir has directly influenced the latter. Both are written in the mode of the bildungsroman, except that Soyinka's remains consistent throughout with the perspective of the growing child, since his story ends with the character still in childhood. Specifically, the story terminates as the young Wole is about to leave home for a boarding secondary school at the early age of eleven years because of a precocious academic maturity. Gates, on the other hand, frequently editorializes his childhood narrative from an adult perspective, because he does not wish to limit the interpretation of

things portrayed to the naive child's point of view, since, after all, the child's history transcends his years of childhood. Young Henry's story stops at the point when he leaves home to enrol in a university. Aside from this and some other stylistic differences, the two works closely echo each other, beginning with the emphasis on the place of birth and growing up--Ake, for Soyinka, and Piedmont, for Gates, both of which are located on picturesque hilly terrains. The evocative description of these hilly towns, the close attention paid to both the paternal and maternal sides of the families, the similar roles played by the mother, the father, and maternal uncles, the character of childhood education under paternal guidance and at school, the precocious excelling in academic learning, the childhood infatuation with grown-up women and the manner of recording the infatuation, the precocious interest in the contradictions of adult life, the love of physical nature, the early awakening of social and political consciousness and involvement in politics--these and many others are details that have been given similar treatment in both works.

And just like Equiano and Achebe, both Soyinka and Gates wrote each of their memoirs as an intellectual response to a contemporary socio-political reality. The social implication of Soyinka's emphasis on dynamic individuality and informed political leadership which characterizes Ake (as almost everyone of Soyinka's works, especially the plays), is to be considered in light of prevailing atmosphere. Corrupt leadership and political dictatorship by an unenlightened military, with consequent political disorder, social chaos, and economic poverty, prevailed in the Nigeria of the late 1970s and early 80s when Ake was written. Similarly, Colored People appeared in 1994, a time in America when the gains of the civil rights movement were actively been rolled back, when the Black family began to be under incessant attack for supposedly lacking in family values, when economic hardship, artificially created by the downsizing of business, is blamed not on the greedy multinationals, but on the Black poor who are supposedly sucking the economy dry through welfarism; when , in short, resurgent racism has become

so rampant in the society that the jury system has become the standard mirror for reflecting the collapse of the social contract. It is against this background that Gates intends his audience to read his memoir and its implicit message about the need for informed and dynamic leadership which would socially engineer the return of sanity to race relations.

The Subtlety of Narrative Strategies

Any reader can be easily lured away into the false belief that these four works were written solely to provide aesthetic pleasure for their audience, and this feeling is the strongest for the deft manner narrative competence has been deployed in each case to maximally enhance the pleasure of reading. Equiano knew his time quite well; so, he adopted the prevailing, and for that reason, captivating genre of the adventure story. He wasted no time but proceeded immediately to whet the appetite of his eighteenth century audience, who were in love with the primitive, by plunging them straight into the exotica of a sociological description of his homeland in the dark continent--a ticket that was sure to be a winner since it has the advantage of being the first by a native and, therefore, fascinating for its authenticity. At the appropriate time and before audience attention wanes, Equiano varies the modes of his ostensible tale of adventure by constantly alternating the narration from the details of a merchant ship voyages to those of man-of-war military expeditions, each of which guarantees excitement because of inherent danger.

Equiano does not disappoint his audience in providing this pleasure, frequently and grippingly describing the dangers that regularly attend his travels at sea during shipwrecks, pirate attacks, military engagements, and accidents. Thus, as occasion demands, Equiano alternates his identity between that of a native providing exotic sociological details about the primitive people populating "the heart of darkness," that of a seasoned sailor on merchant voyages, that of a courageous aide-de-camp on military campaigns, and that of the member of an audacious crew on a scientific expedition to locate a sailing route from

the Atlantic Ocean through the Attic to India and the Pacific Ocean. When Equiano tells his audience, as he constantly does, that the sea is already in his blood and that he cannot rest until he is at sea, he is credible because he has so pandered to the taste of his audience that his story appears to have no other purpose than to satisfy the audience's thirst for adventure. This impression is all the greater because the details of his personal experiences as a slave and the harsher experiences of his fellow African slaves, bitter and excruciating as they are and as he portrays them, they always come in a language of diplomacy calculated to show that he recognizes his place as an obedient subordinate to his superiors, that there is nothing he would not accommodate to maintain this decorous subordination to the superior culture of his white masters, that his only quarrel is with those trying to defame this superior culture by perpetuating the nefarious slave trade, and, finally, that this is all the more regrettable since trade in agricultural and industrial goods would be far more profitable than the objectionable trade in humans, particularly since the latter offends against the tenets of Christianity.

Thus, with his manners perfect and his protests decorous, as befits a British Christian gentleman, all of which he has become by the time of writing his narrative, and with his tale maximally and exotically exciting, no one could claim that Equiano is gainsaying when he qualifies his narrative as "interesting" because the way he tells it makes it genuinely so. Nor could anybody effectively object to his strongest condemnation of the barbarity of the slave trade since it is understood that this is merely a removable blemish in the otherwise superior culture of the white race. Moreover, as interesting as his story might be, Equiano has not been so pretentious as to dream of imposing himself on his superiors if it were not for the hope that it could afford some satisfaction to his "numerous friends, at whose request it has been written, or in the smallest degree promotes the interest of humanity" (32). This quotation reveals the vintage Equiano style at its most subtle, if it is observed that the actual reason that has motivated the writing of his narrative is understated: "promote the interest of humanity." Equiano, the diplomat and strategist,

knows how to stoop to conquer, and the success with which he garners support of the high and mighty in the British society for his abolition cause shows how effective his strategy is. It is my contention that Equiano had decided that there was no sacrifice he could not make as long as it advanced the interest of his fellow Africans, hence it should be seen as part of his strategy of stooping to conquer that he chose to flatter the British ego by referring to their culture as superior, by settling in Britain, becoming an Anglican, and marrying a white lady. This seems to be the only way to understand the great contradiction in Equiano's narrative. On one hand, there is the subtle and, for that reason, devastating exposure of white racism and the hypocrisy of a Christian culture that permitted slavery. On the other hand, there is an equally subtle depiction that systematically reveals that the so-called heathenish and savage people of Africa were, in fact, more civilized in the true humane understanding of that word than their pretentious deprecators. Equiano achieved this diplomatic coup with a subtle compositional structure and characterization, both of which transform the narration from its delightful subterfuge of a tale of adventure to his true story--a tragic account of the life of "Oluadah Equiano, the African." This main story is ably narrated in a manner that makes it possible to equate the self with the self's place--Africa. The details of how Equiano does this will be seen below.

In Things Fall Apart, Achebe stages a similar literary coup that turns the table on the white ego that feeds on the illusion of a racial and cultural superiority, again using subtle compositional structure and characterization whose details shall similarly be revealed below. Meanwhile, at the surface level, Achebe's story is as diplomatically subtle and deceitful as Equiano's, and it is just as arrestingly entertaining. Again, like Equiano, Achebe dangles the exotic carrot of sociological description of a primitive culture as he narrates the captivating story of Okonkwo. Again, Achebe knows the taste of his twentieth century white audience who had substituted the love of adventure, inherited from their eighteenth century forebears, for a love of the psychological and the tragic. So,

Achebe intricately delights his audience with the analytical story of the complex psychology elements responsible for Okonkwo's rise into a heroic stardom only for the same elements to tragically undermine him in the end. The reader vicariously experiences with Okonkwo a taste of the tragic abyss, a pleasurable purgation of emotions, and is as delighted and satisfied as the eighteenth century predecessors who enjoyed Equiano's exotic adventures. The pleasure was all the more guaranteed because Achebe has graduated from the same Igbo school of cultural diplomacy as Equiano, and is as adept in the subterfuge language of entertainment. As critics have unanimously attested, to read Achebe is a linguistic delight, that is the result of a subtle aesthetic sensibility which has discovered the secret of expressing the African thought through the English sentence structure in a manner that produces an unobtrusive, smooth communication, redolent with the poetic cadence of proverbial wisdom. This dexterous combination of the diplomatic elements of the entertaining surface story is what has made Things Fall Apart one of the best selling novels in the world today. Meanwhile, beneath the surface story Achebe has carefully plotted another story--his true story, in which we see Okonkwo as a representative tragic product of a representative African culture that has created him as much as he has created it. How Achebe creates this story of the self that can be equated with the self's place will be seen below.

Soyinka adopts in Ake the child's naive point of view which enables adults to see with fresh insight the reality of their lives, especially those contradictions in them that occasion the child some worry and concern. At the same time, the naivete of the child becomes an endless source of discretely enjoyed humor and entertainment for the adults. Explaining, for instance, why he anticipates no problems with marrying Mrs. Odufuwa, "the most beautiful woman in the world," Wole reasons in the following manner: "I bore her husband no grudge, after all, he was my godfather, so he should prove no obstacle to my marrying this goddess once I had grown to manhood" (101). After overhearing some conversation concerning the manner local tax collectors abuse their office, Wole sedately

resolves that when he "grew up, no khakied official was going to extract one penny in tax from my hard-earned salary" (184). Also when conflicting signals, playfully given by adults, led to a fight between him and his brother Dipo, Wole summarily concludes that "there was neither justice nor logic in the world of grown-ups" (104). With an uncanny insight, Wole perceives in his naive way the similarity between traditional African religion and the Christian religion, by simply equating the traditional masquerades with the images of venerated Christian personalities painted in Church stained-windows (32-33). Those familiar with the religious and philosophical debates between the missionary Mr. Brown and the old man Akunna in Things Fall Apart would recall that the issue Wole has so simply (naively) resolved is the weighty theological point of contention, that stands at the root of Western denigration of African religious practices (179-81). It is obvious, of course, that the child's naive point of view is not as innocent as is pretended since it is remotely controlled by the worldly experience of adult Soyinka, who, no doubt, thinks like Akunna on this theological issue .

What Soyinka does in Ake, then, is to capitalize on the directness and innocence of the child's perception of reality to convey his insight into the truth of the socio-political and economic reality of Ake, the place, as apprehended through the self of his child protagonist. This is why as the memoir progresses, the story grows imperceptibly from the narration of the experiences of the child Wole to a tale of Ake, the representative African city (Essaka of the Interesting Narrative, the Umuofia of Things Fall Apart, the Piedmont of Colored People) and as experienced by the reliable child narrator. Thus, Ake and Wole are intricately intertwined just as Equiano is inseparable from Essaka, Okonkwo from Umuofia, and Henry from Piedmont. While the details of this narrative strategy will be discussed below, it is pertinent at this point to observe that much of the aesthetic pleasure of reading Ake derives from Soyinka's attempt to convey the poetry and mystery in young Wole's imaginative apprehension of his natural environment and social reality. Being the accomplished poet he is, Wole the adult is able to find the appropriate language

to capture the fascinating world of his childhood. Typical in this regard is the very first page of the memoir with its poetic language of personification and ironic allusions to contending deities, contending cultures and contending tongues. Poetically captured is the mystified geographic landscape of the imposing Itoko heights that merges with the sky, recalling Mount Olympus and the Greek gods and goddesses. The "pagan" Chief with his stable is the guardian of the "profane" crest of the sacred heights that magisterially commands a panoramic view of the settlement located below its steep descent, and from where every Sunday God descends, taking "gigantic stride over those babbling markets--which dared to sell on Sundays--into St. Peter's Church, afterwards visiting the parsonage for tea with the Canon;" the same God who "reserved his most exotic presence for the evening service which, in his honor, was always held in the English tongue. The organ took on a dark, smoky sonority at evening service, and there was no doubt that the organ was adapting its normal sounds to accompany God's own sepulchral responses, with its timbre of the *egungun*, to those prayers that were offered to him" (1). While delighting in the share poetic beauty of this imaginatively heightened passage, the informed reader is also aware of its hidden polemics because the whole question of colonial cultural imposition and the defiant resistance of traditional culture and the manner this cultural contest should be mediated--the central theme of the memoir--is indirectly raised and also resolved here in the very first page for the perceptive reader.

The delight of Colored People reminds one at once of both Ake and Things Fall Apart. Gates's use of the naive child narrator and his variation on the application of the mode that both links it to, and differentiates it from, Soyinka's employment of the device in Ake has been earlier remarked. The point to insist on is Gates's preference for telling his story from the "point of view of the boy I was" (xvi), rather than telling the story as if he were still a child as does Soyinka. While this perspective justifies the learned character of the child's story, it denies it of the disarming, innocent humor emanating from the irony of naivete. For instance, the captivating humor in the manner Wole presents his childhood

infatuation for a married woman, Mrs. Odufuwa, is not matched by Henry's comparable declaration of love for middle-aged Matilda, mainly because the freshness of humor is robbed out of the irony of naivete by the analyzing learnedness that went along with it--what I refer to as editorializing: "... Matilda, always wore luscious red lipstick. She was not a pretty woman, perhaps, but with her light-beige powdered cheeks, her dark-brown, almost black hair and dark-brown eyes, and that red lipstick, when she stood before the golden and dark-brown breads, cookies, and pastries, or wrapped the blood-red links of her daddy's bologna in white waxed butcher's paper with that deliberate way she had, she was, I was convinced, one of the loveliest creatures on God's green earth" (37). But, of course, what is lost in the innocent irony of a child's naivete, characterizing Soyinka's style, is regained in Gate's learned or conscious irony implicit in the waxed beauty of a powdered old maid in a bakery, as well as in the sexual suggestiveness of the "red-blood links of her daddy's bologna."

The greatest linguistic appeal of Colored People, however, is in its pervasive irony, humor and hyperboles, the intense, passionate moment of love evocatively recalled, and in its Achebean approach to the language of colored people. The ironic, extended religious anecdotes of chapter ten "Joining the Church" are perhaps the most entertaining for their straight-face, tall tales, verbal ironies in reference to the conversion of Mr. Les and the beliefs of Miss Sarah, "Sister Holy Ghost," who "talked to the Lord directly--on the phone, in her living room, or wherever she felt like it" and with whom "the Lord consulted ... on a daily basis, giving her full reports on all the seraphim and the cherubim" (118). Humor is so pervasive that it would not desert Gates even in the most personally tragic situations such as when he jokes about his "first glimpse of eternity" on his hospital bed and about the northward migration of his hip's metal ball (142, 146). Aside from the emotionality of the account of his mother's depression, perhaps the most gripping pages of Colored People are in chapter nine "Love Junkie" where the doomed love for Linda Hoffman is evocatively recalled with accuracy and a truthful, bare-all candor--an evocation

that leaves no doubt about the fact that the love for Linda lingers there still in Gates's heart. In spite of the proliferation of learned allusions, and the intrusion of the professoral diction such as the search for fine distinctions ("Sports on the mind, sports in the mind"), the highfalutins ("this voyeuristic thrill of the forbidden contact" 20), or the involved imagery ("My metaphor was an unthethered craft, battered by frigid waters, too far out for me to bring back to shore" 130)--in spite of these reminders of the Ivy League professor-author, the linguistic idiom that characterizes Colored People, in the main, is not that of the learned English professor of Harvard University, but that of the colored people. Because of the choice of narrated direct speech, the voice transmitted is invariably that of the speaker or the character, and only rarely that of the narrator, and even when it is the latter, Gates often affects the language of ordinary folks. In fact, in an interview with Diane Middlebrook, Gates says "I wrote this portrait in honor of my mother in my father's voice. My father is a wit" (190).

Thus, Black speech resounds throughout Colored People in a way similar to how the Igbo speech resounds in the English syntax of Things Fall Apart. We read, for instance, that "he was beat so bad" (25); that "Mama read her minutes, just to represent the race, just to let those white people know that we was around here too" (33); that "Now, Murray was some *serious* grease" (45); that Henry is the outsider "who enjoyed being on the edge of the circle, watching ... trying to strip away illusions, getting at what was really coming down" (83); and that Nemo's "God was one jealous Dude" (159). Black speech as a rule cherishes its freedom and refuses to be constrained by any taboos, and certainly not one imposed by any hypocritical prudishness; so, there is no surprise reading this: "In the newly integrated school system, race was like an item of apparel that fitted us up tight, like one of Mama's girdles or the garters that supported her hose" (92); or this: "Like when some white man would show up at the Legion, cruising 'to get laid by a colored woman,' or some jug-headed loader would bring his white buddy to a dance and then beg some woman to 'give him some' " (8); nor this: "... like the way Bobby Lee Jones

... looked that day he beat his woman, his tacky red processed strands getting dangling down the middle of his forehead, his Johnson getting harder each time he slapped her face. They say he would have fucked her right then and there if he hadn't been so drunk that his arms got tired of swinging at her ... Or the time some guy cut off the tip of Russell Jones's nose after he had grabbed him for feeling up Inez, Inez's thighs smoking from doing the dog, her handkerchief wet from her rubbing it between her legs, men fighting for the right to sniff that rag like it was the holy grail" (10-11). But as with Equiano, Achebe, and Soyinka, whatever the nature of the linguistic idiom or the pleasure it might give in Gates's memoir, it exists mostly as a medium of communicating the protagonist's perception of self and the self's place--Piedmont, the representative abode of representative colored people.

Place as Self-Self as Place

Setting, that is, time and place, has always been important in imaginative literature, and with the best writers setting provides not merely a decorative geographical and temporal background where characters act out their fates, but functions as a major character in the plot, actively influencing and being influenced by the human protagonist. The naturalists more than other writers fully recognized the importance of setting in fiction and, having taken a cue from Darwin's biological determinism, they proceeded to embrace a theory of environmental determinism that over-empowered the social factors residing in a place in time, as if humans were mere passive victims. The four writers under consideration show in the works that we have been examining that they recognize, like the naturalists, the enormous power of environment, but at the same time, they also recognize, unlike the naturalists but like the Marxists, that human beings possess the will to remold their environment. Indeed, in the portrayal of the dialectical complexity of the relationship of self and place, they tend to be the opposites of the naturalists by tilting the balance in favor of the human agent.

There are not too many works in which place assumes as much significance as in the works under examination. So important is place that it not only supplies the title to one of the memoirs, *Ake*, but also becomes the first item to claim narrative attention in all the four works without exception. More than that, the amount of space devoted to space, understood as the geographical time and physical land within which a people exist creating a culture, is disproportionately higher than that strictly devoted to the story of how the biographical or fictional self exists within the identified space. The story of the self in Equiano's *Narrative*, where space is the most varied among the four texts, is presented in three major phases, each of which approximates a space: the phase/place of liberty, the phase/place of tyranny, and the phase/place of partial restoration to liberty. The story of Equiano is the story of his movement within and from one phase/space to another and the role his will plays in each stage. Three major phases/spaces are similarly delineated in the life of Okonkwo: the phase and space of liberty, the phase and space of exile, and the phase and space of return to partial liberty. The play of will during each transitional phase provides the central plot for Okonkwo's story. There are two major phases in each of the other two memoirs: the phase of innocence, and the phase of maturity or experience.

(a) Equiano's *Narrative*

With regard to the representation of self and place in his narrative, Equiano adopted three strategies that were designed to effectively counter the three basic white racist arguments characteristically advanced in his time as justification for the enslavement and subhuman exploitation of Africans; namely, that Africa was a dark continent peopled by a primitive race who needed to be civilized; two, that Africans were heathens who needed to be converted to Christianity for the salvation of their souls; and three, that Africans constituted an intellectually inferior race when compared to the people of the white race who, therefore, were justified in treating Africans as subhuman. The first of the three

major phases of his memoir is constituted by the first two chapters where Equiano provides a detailed geographical social and cultural description of his country, his family, and his upbringing as a strategy for demolishing all the three racist fallacies about Africans. The second phase which consists of the narration of his experiences as a slave focuses on Equiano as an individual whose ability to survive the harshness of slavery derived from a combination of three factors: first, the character traits implanted by his cultural upbringing in Africa, second, his great intellectual ability which enabled him to learn fast and excel under unfavorable conditions, and third, God's providential selection which had marked him out for success--a providential favor that was already manifest in his home in Africa before he was captured into slavery. The three factors were especially emphasized because again they effectively undermined the racist fallacies about Africa and Africans. The third phase culminates the memoir with an account of his life as a freed man, an account that once again effectively levels all the three racist arguments for justifying the enslavement, oppression and exploitation of Africans.

For good reasons, Equiano takes pain at the beginning of the first phase of his autobiography to point out the representativeness of Essaka, the village where he was born on the bank of the River Niger: "the history of what passes in one family or village may serve as a specimen of the whole nation" (32). Similarly, Equiano takes care to represent himself as a typical Essaka child despite the fact that he also regards himself "as a *particular favorite of Heaven*" and that his name *Olaudah* "signifies vicissitude, or fortunate also; one favoured" (31, 41). As examples of his providential selection for favors, Equiano cites the instances of good omens associated with the crowing of harmless serpents "as thick as the calf of a man's leg" which had crept at different times into the room where he and his mother slept. One other instance that he recalls was when a poisonous snake he had stepped on moved away without harming him (43). These incidents were interpreted by the village wise men, his mother, "and the rest of the people, as remarkable omens in my favour" (43). What Equiano wishes to impress on his reader

with these details is that even though he was "a favorite of Heaven," he was by no means unique. If the latter had been the case, the wise men, let alone the ordinary people of the village, would have been unable to interpret the snake omens. Indeed, the impression the passage creates is that these were pretty common omens, of which Equiano happens to be one among other beneficiaries. Equiano was not treated different from other children of the village because of these propitious omens: he lived the life of a typical village child, intermingling and playing with his mates. Equiano acknowledges his typicality as a child of his village by the choice of the qualifier he selects for his title: it is not just the narrative of Oluadah Equiano, but Oluadah Equiano, the African. Of course, the naming also ensures that he is not mistaken for a European.

Having established himself as a typical African child and his village as representative African village, Equiano meticulously provides details of what life in a typical African village was like, and the details leave no one in doubt as to the fact that Africans were a well organized, well governed, well behaved, and a humane people; in other words, a truly civilized people.

The identification of the geographical location of Essaka on the bank of the River Niger is followed by a detailed description of every aspect of the life of the inhabitants. What emerges is that Essaka is an autonomous governing constituent of a district of the most powerful empire then on the coast of West Africa--the famous Benin Empire. The Essaka people, who are farmers, operate an impartial judicial system that shows no favor to anyone irrespective of the individual's social standing. The son of a chief, for instance, is as liable before the law as anybody else. Though the law is sometimes harsh, it is always enforced with humane considerations. For instance, a woman caught in adultery, a crime whose penalty is usually death, is spared life because she nurses a baby. Marriage is regarded as sacred; there is strong love for one's kins; and the ethics of communalism rules behaviors; a person building a house, for instance, uses free communal labor. The people are industrious and modest in their habits, and there are no excesses or debauchery, the

people being "totally unacquainted with strong or spiritous liquours" (35). Equiano also writes: "Our manners are simple, our luxuries are few," while also affirming that organized ceremonies and entertainments are a regular part of life: "We are almost a nation of dancers, musicians, and poets" (34). Medical practice is organized and religion is sacred, with religious rituals closely resembling those performed by the Jewish people. Education of children is undertaken with care: "The manners and customs of my country," he informs the reader, "had been implanted in me with great care." Being a favorite of his mother, he was always with her "and she used to take particular pains to form my mind. I was trained up from my earliest years in the arts of agriculture and war: my daily exercise was shooting and throwing javelins; and my mother adorned me with emblems, after the manner of our greatest warriors. In this way I grew up till I was turned the age of eleven" (46).

Equiano never pretends that his people were perfect; he reveals their limitations, which include the unequal treatment of women by men, and the fact that slavery was practised in Africa. He points out, however, the vast difference between African and European slaves, noting that among Africans slaves are treated as family members: "With us they do no more work than other members of the community, even their master. Their food, clothing, and lodging were nearly the same as theirs, except that they were not permitted to eat with those who were free born and there was scarcely any other difference between them ... Some of these slaves have even slaves under them, as their own property, and for their own use" (40).

By providing this meticulous description of his cultural origin, Equiano obviously wishes to prepare the mind of his readers to understand the source of the calibre of man he turns out to be in spite of the adversities of slavery during the second phase of his life. His strong faith in God's providence in the face of extreme hardships during slavery, for instance, has its root in the faith he has had while still in his village where he believed that he was "a favorite of heaven." The statement about his military training in his village, an

obvious allusion to the training of Greek warriors as made famous by Homer's epics, is meant to explain why later, as a slave, he was constitutionally prepared to withstand the rigors of slave labors and why he was such a capable hand as an aide-de-camp on British naval campaigns. The allusion, as well as the direct comparisons of his people's culture with those of the Jews and the Turks and other peoples regarded as civilized by white people, was, of course, meant to underscore racist lies about Africans' supposed lack of civilization and also to pin-point the immorality of the double standards employed by the white race in matters concerning Africa.

Chapters three through seven detail his experiences as a slave, beginning with his transit through the horrors of the middle passage, the degradation of the auction block, his purchase by and service to his quaker master, the harrowing experiences leading often to near death experiences at the hands of white men like Dr. Perkins of Savannah, the shipwrecks, the diseases, and the injustice and cheating he suffered at the hands of those he trusted, as well as many other such misfortunes during numerous trips on commercial and naval ships on the seas between England and America or between America and the Caribbean islands. Equiano's narrative shows that he was able to survive the harrowing experiences of slavery because of the quality of his character, the foundation of which had been laid by his African upbringing. He was an industrious person, and as he attests "The West-India planters prefer the slaves of Benin or Eboe to those of any other part of Guinea, for their hardiness, intelligence, integrity, and zeal" (38). He was, in addition, a likeable individual because he was humble, ready to be of service, tactful and diplomatic in his relationship with people, quick to learn, patient, and all-forgiving even to those who clearly did not deserve his forgiveness. These qualities as well as his courage, optimism, unwavering faith in divine deliverance, and, above all, his determination, perseverance, thriftiness, and great commercial instincts as he pursued his freedom through purchase were what made it possible for him to finally leave the phase of slavery to the final and third phase of his return to freedom.

Characteristically, Equiano welcomed his freedom in terms that links him to his African origin though he chooses for good reasons to go to England than to return to Africa: "and now, being as in my original free African state, I embarked on board the Nancy" (emphasis mine, 138). Chapters eight to twelve record this final phase of Equiano's memoir which comprises of his journeys in Europe, his cross-Atlantic trading (paradoxically in slaves, among other things), his scientific expedition to the North Pole, his conversion to Christianity, the self-publication and self-marketing of his narrative, his marriage, and his far-reaching and successful efforts to disseminate information about the evil of slave trade and to lobby the queen, members of the House of Lords and House of Commons for the abolition of the trade. The qualities that enabled him to survive slavery and to purchase his freedom--humility, congeniality, intelligence, tact, diplomacy, hard work, courage, faith, entrepreneurial instincts, and thrift--qualities that he associated with his African upbringing--were the same as assured his success as a British subject. By the time he died in 1797, Equiano had amassed considerable inheritance for his two daughters, one of who did not long survive him.

Every phase of Equiano's narrative achieves his intended goal. The first phase establishes with indisputable evidence that Africans were a civilized race, as evidenced by their well structured governmental, economic, social, legal, and cultural systems; that they were God-fearing people who have a structured religious system quite similar to those of the Jews; that only an intelligent people could organize the kind of efficient, God-fearing and moral society as Equiano has described; and that it was a sign of God's approval of the Africans that he would favor one of them and appoint him (Equiano) as His instrument for their deliverance from the ungodly perpetrators of slavery. Phase two reinforces phase one by showing how Equiano, a representative African, survives the horrors of slavery with fortitude, dignity, faith in and support from God, a situation in which an intellectually less endowed person would have perished. The intellectual and material success of Equiano which phase three depicts also further reinforces the deductions from the earlier two

phases. The enormous success of Equiano in garnering the support of the peoples in the influential circles of England to use his popular narrative as an anti-slavery instrument shows the hand of God who had chosen Equiano as a "particular favourite of heaven." Obviously, a people by whom God so firmly stands cannot be seen as heathens. Clearly, a people who would produce a personality as Equiano, could not be regarded as unintelligent or uncivilized. Equiano's learned and carefully structured narrative, let alone his great personality and material success in hostile environments, was itself an irrefutable confirmation of his people's superior intelligence, superior civilization, and their godliness. This was why those who understood the import of Equiano's narrative were quick to deny that he was an African. This was why Equiano calls himself "a stranger" even after he has successfully integrated himself as a British subject (31). It is what also explains the reason Equiano consistently links the self (Olaudah Equiano, the African) with the self's place (Essaka/Eboe/Benin Empire--Africa) throughout his narrative. Equiano knew only too well that the greatest insult an individual Nigerian can receive is to denigrate the individual's home by saying he or she lacks home training. It is one's obligation and honor to defend one's home/place as a way of defending one's dignity/self. Equiano succeeds admirably in carrying out the dual task.

(b) Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*

The task that confronted the Black intellectual during slavery was practically the same as later confronted their descendants during colonialism, except that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, alleged African primitivism, heathenism, and intellectual inferiority served as the European pretext for the enslavement of Africans, while in the nineteenth century, the same allegations, though already discredited, nonetheless became the pretext for a new form of enslavement--colonialism. In dealing with this similar problem, Black intellectuals often employed approaches that were similar to those used by their predecessors. This is why it is not surprising that the artistic strategies of Achebe's novel,

Things Fall Apart resemble those deployed by Equiano in his Interesting Narrative. However, in using the tactic of defending one's honor by linking the self to the self's place of abode or origin, Achebe goes into greater psychological details than did Equiano.

Achebe's novel is divided into almost two equal halves, with the first half, chapters one through thirteen, devoted to the era preceding European incursion into Africa, and the second half, chapters twenty through twenty five, dealing with the European encroachment. The first half of the novel also coincides with the first phase in the life of the novel's hero, Okonkwo. The second half of the novel neatly subdivides into two equal parts, with the first part consisting of six chapters (fourteen through nineteen) depicting the second phase in Okonkwo's life, and the third phase treated in the last six chapters (twenty through twenty five). As in the case of Equiano, the narrative of the first phase of Okonkwo's life displays microscopic details of the cultural milieu in which the hero's character was formed and in a manner that totally refutes European justifications for colonialism. Phase two, also as in Equiano's case, reveals that the ability of the hero to survive the adversities of exile has everything to do with the manner in which his culture has positively conditioned his character; thus, twice refuting white racist justification for colonialism. Again as in Equiano's memoir, the third phase of Okonkwo's life in Achebe's novel is a climactic affirmation of the dignity of African culture in a manner that suggests its moral superiority to the aggrandizing, duplicitous and pretentious culture of the intruding colonizers.

What Essaka was to Equiano is what Umuofia is to Okonkwo--home, the cultural bedrock of character, and almost every aspect of Okonkwo's character is a reflection of Umuofia's social, political, philosophical, economic, legal, religious, military, and family values. Although Okonkwo is a forceful, assertive personality, he moderates his individualism in conformity to the communal republicanism that governs Umuofia. Hence, even though he would have always wished to have his way in public affairs, he goes to the village commune to argue his case, and he listens to and reasons with other people's views

until a communal decision is taken from reasoned arguments. Okonkwo does not always like the communal meetings because he knows that his people have a great love for the speech delivered with aesthetic beauty and oratorical flourish, and in this department, Okonkwo is a nonstarter, being a man, not of words, but of action. But the people of Umuofia are not a narrow sort of people; they have a democratic accommodativeness for the varieties of life. Hence they love Okonkwo, a poor orator, for what he has in plenty and which they need for their communal protection: his strength, courage, military prowess and leadership. Okonkwo is a battle-tested, well-decorated, and greatly respected war general of Umuofia, one whose name strikes widespread fear in the enemy's camp. Because of the advantages of such a dreaded military leader in instances of war, the people of Umuofia conscientiously promote an environment for the emergence of fighters like Okonkwo. To this end, they have promoted the contest of strength into a popular public entertainment. Indeed, Okonkwo's story begins with the description of a historic wrestling match that establishes his unparalleled strength and fame in the nine villages of Umuofia and beyond.

Though the Umuofians valued military prowess, they also appreciate people who cultivate the refined taste of the arts, like music; in any case, they love entertainment, and hence they accommodate the likes of Unoka, Okonkwo's father whose laziness is proverbial. A cardinal virtue in Umuofia is industry, and Okonkwo assiduously and successfully cultivates this virtue primarily because he does not want to be a failure like his father and because material success is the way to rise to the position of importance and reverence in the society. The ever-present and terrifying fear of becoming like his father, a material failure and a weakling in Okonkwo's eyes for his love of songs and music, is the psychological fuel that supplies energy to the fire of Okonkwo's ambition and iron resolve to successfully climb the ladder of social recognition. Although Okonkwo's success is phenomenal, the fear of falling back from the height of his many-titled rank to the social abyss of his father's nothingness remains with him forever, cornering him into a position in

which he feels compelled to constantly prove his strength and courage. This psychological liability becomes the regular source of his human errors and lack of sufficient demonstration of tenderness of feeling toward even those he loves the deepest. To show love, he believes, is to show weakness.

Okonkwo's view on this matter contradicts the position of his society which celebrates memorable loves like that between Ozoemena and Ogbuefi who even death could not part, but Umuofia is a society that democratically appreciates variety and dissent, their philosophy being summed up in this dictum: live-and-let-live. For a people whose love of the word, beautifully spoken, has led to believe that "proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eaten," it is no surprise that this philosophy has been neatly framed in a memorable proverb: "Let the kite perch and let the eagle perch too. If one says no to the other, let his wing break" (19). As this proverb also shows, the Umuofians are a people with a strict sense of justice. They have an efficient judicial system that settles everything from family quarrels between husband and wife like that between Nzewulu and Mgbafo (86-93), to land disputes, and impending wars between villages. As we see twice in the experience of Okonkwo, theirs is an absolutely incorruptible system of justice. No one, irrespective of his or her standing in society, is above the law. Okonkwo, in spite of his many titles and the great respect he commands as a great warrior, a patriot, and an extremely wealthy man, twice receives judicial punishment, the first time for breaking the sacred Week of Peace by beating his wife, the second time for accidentally killing a kinsman. In the distant past, the sentence for the first offense used to be death, but it has been reduced to fines by the time of Okonkwo, whose punishment for the second offense was more severe--seven years of exile. The nature of these punishments reveals that Umuofia is not a society that is rigidly frozen in the past but one that regularly modernizes. Also it reveals the great regard the people have for life which should not be deprived even by an accident. This discourages carelessness. The high regard that the people have for life is further made evident by the fact that they do not lightly go into war,

except it is inevitable and only when they are in the right. Umuofia, the narrator affirms, "never went to war unless its case was clear and just and was accepted as such by its Oracle" (12).

The Umuofians are a deeply religious people, and the essence of their religious practices, as the conversation between the missionary Mr. Brown and the old man Akunna shows) is little different from that of Christianity, consisting as they both do in beliefs in a supreme deity, God/Chukwu, a hierarchy of what Akunna calls "lesser gods," and the use of symbolic physical images to represent spiritual objects of worship or adoration (179-81). The observance of the rituals of certain social functions like marriage, naming and burial ceremonies, harvesting and the taking of titles are also performed with almost a religious zeal. The people practice medicinal and psychiatric treatment with efficiency, as is evident in Okonkwo's use of herbs to cure Ezinma who was suffering from fever, the same Ezinma whom Chielo, the priestess of Agbala, mounts on her back and in the middle of a particularly dark night takes from one village to another and back as a way of psychologically conditioning her against the fear of darkness and the fear of the unknown. The priestess knows what is not known by charlatans like the medicine man Okagbue who has diagnosed Ezinma as an *ogbanje*, a spirit child who mercilessly plagues parents with repeated cycles of births and premature deaths.

The people of Umuofia also know how to enjoy their leisure; they love sports, festivals, feasting, and the conversation that goes with it. They are a people of ceremony and social decorum, meticulously observing the specified details of their social rituals, and taking great delight in the perfection of their execution. For instance, every breaking of *kola* and drinking of palm wine while welcoming friendly visitors, or during social ceremonies like marriage negotiations, or during religious observances like sacrifices to gods or goddesses, is a complete ritual on its own and is meticulously performed.

Thus, Okonkwo's phenomenal achievements in Umuofia are attributable to his ability to correctly identify what his society values and to his ability to pursue single-

mindedly what he has set his mind on until it is achieved. For his success in measuring up to the standards set by his society, the latter generously rewarded him by placing him in a position of honor and leadership, in which capacity, he helps to set standards for the rest of the society especially in areas where he is regarded as a great specialist: industriousness, strength of character, ability to make wealth, unalloyed patriotism, courage, and military prowess.

The qualities that have elevated Okonkwo to the position of prominence in Umuofia do not desert him when he is compelled to go into a seven year exile to his motherland, Mbanta, following his carelessness, involving an accidental gun discharge that killed a kinsman, the son of Ezeudu whose burial ceremony is being performed. In time, Okonkwo overcomes the adversities of exile and starts to prosper after a fashion, thanks to the cooperation he receives from his maternal relations, the support given by the friends he left behind in his fatherland, principally Obierika, and, above all, his industriousness, courage, and experience as a great farmer. However, a new phenomenon--the arrival of white missionaries and colonial administrators--which at first manifests itself as a manageable, if curious and annoying nuisance, begins to establish a presence in Igboland during this second phase of Okonkwo's life. Before long his son Nwoye, soon to be renamed Isaac, abandons him and joins the white missionaries. Painful as this experience is for Okonkwo, he is able to live with it because he has long suspected Nwoye to be a reincarnation of his father, the weakling and materially unsuccessful Unoka, whose failure, coupled with the great premium Umuofia placed on material success, have supplied the psychological motivation that propelled him to wealth, military distinction, and social success. So, it is not too difficult for Okonkwo to dismiss Nwoye as a predictable failure.

However, when at the end of seven years of exile, Okonkwo returns to his fatherland, laden with evidence of material prosperity and ready to start the third phase of his life, he discovers that the white missionaries and colonial administrators have fully entrenched themselves and are working hard to consolidate themselves as sole authority of

government in Umuofia. Okonkwo, of course, cannot accept such an eventuality and he fully expects his country men to join him in driving away the pretentious strangers, but to his utter amazement his people act as if their subjugation to an alien rule is already a forgone conclusion. In view of what he has known about the white intruders, Okonkwo cannot contemplate willingly yielding authority to them. He can see no moral ground on which to justify the demands of arrogant foreigners who have shown gross insensibility to the rightful owners of the land, their religion, leaders, culture, and everything they hold sacred. Okonkwo, the soldier cannot conceive being ruled by foreigners who have displayed the worst form of military barbarity, ambushing a whole village of women, children, and men, all of who were unarmed and unwarned, and mowing them all to the ground in retaliation for a white man who was killed more in freight and ignorance than for any ulterior motive. Okonkwo sees no sense in submitting to governance by people whose only claim to power rests on their arrogance, insensibility, and inhumanity, and who have introduced a perverted judicial system where their "District Commissioners judged cases in ignorance" (174), in addition to having succeeded in dissociating governance from the governed by introducing the first corrupt and alienated officials into the administration of the land (197). Okonkwo prefers the dignity of death to the indignity of being governed by his moral inferiors.

Viewed in this manner, Okonkwo's death in spite of its method is a death with dignity and a credit to the land which has produced a man with such a high sense of honor. In the end, Okonkwo is a historical landmark, bearing the language of African protest against racist arrogance, unprovoked aggression, and economic greed. Meanwhile, Umuofia which has retained its traditional resilience in the face of adversities, and with which its flexibility, its accommodation of variety, its modernizing capacity, and its philosophy of "live-and-let-live," lives on in its younger generations like Nwoye who would design new ways of dealing with the new reality.

Achebe depicts not only the details in Umuofia's culture that unequivocally refute the groundless and racist claims of African supposed primitivity, intellectual inferiority, and heathenism, but also the weaknesses of Umuofia, notably, the treatment of twins who are regarded as taboos and are thrown away into the so-called bad bush, the *osu* caste system which dehumanizes those regarded as unclean, the mutilation of the corpse of those children identified as *ogbanje*, and human sacrifice like the killing of Ikemefuna. However, Achebe's artistic strategies show that these weaknesses were not the cause but only a convenient pretext for colonization. The barbaric incident at Abame, the insensitive treatment of the elders of Umuofia, and the corrupt nature of the administrative governance set up in Umuofia and neighboring populations like Mbanta and Umuru show that Umuofia's weaknesses serve the colonizers merely as pretext for gaining a foothold among a people for whom they have a design that is anything but humane, civilized, or Christian.

(c) Soyinka's *Ake*

At the height of the Ake women's revolt against unfair taxation when the Alake's palace is besieged, an insolent colonial District Officer rudely shouts at the women's leader, Mrs. Kuti, commanding her to "SHUT UP YOUR WOMEN!" After deliberately allowing a weighty moment of silence that would let the gravity of the insult register on everybody's mind, Mrs. Kuti's angrily remarks: "You may have been born, you were not bred. Could you speak to your mother like that?" (Ake 211). Beyond corroborating the remarks I have earlier made regarding the importance Nigerians attach to proper upbringing--"home training," in popular parlance--this revealing episode, as I understand it, underscores Soyinka's motive for writing *Ake*. Home training, for the Nigerian, explains everything: it shows whether a child would be well mannered or prosper in the world, but, more important, it reveals the texture of a people's culture, because the child is an ambassador of the home, the culture of origin. In *Ake* Soyinka reveals the texture of the culture, the

people that have bred him, the better for his observers to understand how he became who is--a world renown intellectual, writer, and political activist. The is the same motive behind Equiano's and Achebe's works, as we have seen, and Gates's memoir, as we shall see. Additionally, and equally important, Ake is Soyinka's comment on the culture debate as it relates to contemporary times and that also answers back to white racism as practicalized in slavery and colonialism.

Although the last words in Ake are remarks concerning Wole's confusion about the "irrational world of adults and their disciplines," these words are not to be taken as literally as the earlier occasions when he has used a similar expression. This is because at this point Wole is over ten years and was already used to the strange logic of the adult world in which he already participates not just vicariously by observing and listening to, but by himself engaging in, adult conversations and with people like Mr. and Mrs. Daodu Ransome-Kuti. There is, however, genuine confusion on his part the first time he makes similar remarks. This is when the same adults who have instigated a fight between him and his brother Dipo have commenced to scold him after the fight. Then he has sweepingly concluded that "there was neither justice nor logic in the world of grown-ups" (104). When Dipo's name is changed to Femi, he also expresses similar sentiments: "Once again I felt a helpless confusion--did these grown-ups ever know what they wanted?" (125). The difference between the genuine and the pretended confusion is the difference between the first and second phases of Wole's childhood as recorded in Ake.

The first phase--the years of innocence--is characterized by a curiosity about and fascination with the natural environment imbued with intelligence and mysteries and which is constantly changing and expanding in horizon and character. At first, it is a limited small world of the parsonage compound, that contains the Canon's residence, BishopsCourt where the famous Bishop Ajayi Crowther once lived but which now serves as an Anglican school girls dormitory, school buildings, play fields, the Orchard, headmaster's residence where the Soyinkas live, and the mission bookseller's compound.

Nearby is St. Peter's Church which together with the parsonage, in Wole's highly creative imagination, constitute an embattled island of faith, surrounded by a hostile world, chief of which is the pagan Itoko heights that with its pagan priest, the Chief and his stable, looks hostilely down on the parsonage. The parsonage is in addition bordered by formidable thick woods, the abode of spirits and ghommids and the shrine of the dreaded *oro* cult. The stories recounted in Wole's house about the fearful spiritual battles the faith-emboldened parsonage and its legendary occupants like Rev J. J. Ransome-Kuti had fought with the equally awesome and mysterious forces of the pagan world bordering its compounds further mystifies and sharpens Wole's imagination which begins to see pictures and statues like that of Bishop Crowther come alive as he (Wole) moves around in the compounds. And God, of course, lives at the top of the Itoko heights in spite of the pagan presence of the Chief and his stable on its crest, and it is from there that God descends every Sunday to visit St. Peter's Church and the parsonage. Wole spends many long hours alone exploring the mystery of the compounds, the boulders, the orchards and their fruits and flowers which re-enact for Wole's benefit their biblical stories as he keeps their company. And there are the heavenly fruits like the guava and the pomegranate, for which, following the example of the battling parsonage and its pagan surrounding, Wole soon learns to stake a proprietary claim, and fights with his sister and other children of the house.

In time, the small world of the parsonage gradually expands to include spaces outside its walls, and before long young Wole soon comes to know the whole of Ake township and suburbs, and even his father's village, Isara, some forty miles away. Repeatedly Soyinka nostalgically comments on the changes that have overtaken the parsonage and, no doubt, part of the purpose of describing it is to preserve the checkered history of the cradle of his life in printed memory.

The contest of will and of faiths between the evangelizing Anglican missionaries, many of whom are Africans like Bishop Crowther and Rev. J. J. Ransome-Kuti, is

exemplified by a story recounted to young Wole by his mother, Mrs. Eniola Soyinka, and which, no doubt, Soyinka renarrates because of its telling ambiguity. This happened in an Ijebu village. Rev. Ransome-Kuti had ignored warnings not to evangelize on a given day because it was sacred to followers of traditional religion who were going to have an outing for their *egungun* masquerades. While the Rev. was performing service, the *egungun* procession arrived and one *egungun* demanded that the service be stopped, but the Rev carried on. Before departing the church, the *egungun* tapped thrice with his wand on its main door and almost immediately, the church building mysteriously collapsed. The other mystery was that none of the members of the congregation was hurt by the collapsed roof and walls, nor was Rev. Kuti at all intimidated. In fact, he merely paused to calm the worshippers and offer a thanksgiving prayer, and then carried on with his service as if nothing had happened.

This incident as well as others, some of which he has personally witnessed (like the mysteries of the *abiku* child Bukola or the mysterious paralysis of an *ogboni* cult member supposedly caused by "the collective psychic force of the women" of the uprising whom he has publicly derided 212-3), or those that are authenticated by reliable witnesses (like his mother's accounts about his uncle Sanya reputed to be an *oro*--a spirit man), influenced Wole in two ways. They conditioned him to have an open mind towards both the Christian faith and African traditional beliefs, and they demonstrated to him what faith and a strong will can achieve. The significance of the latter would further be impressed on him by both his father and grandfather on separate and significant moments in his childhood. The grandfather who assures him that "there is more to the world than the world of Christians, or books," advises him never to run away from a fight because determination and his will eventually will make him win (143, 147-8). When his father thinks that he is about to die, he gives Wole a deathbed advice: "You are not to let anything defeat you... You will find that only determination will bring one through, sheer determination. And a faith in God--don't ever neglect your prayers" (162). With these influences, Wole with

ease conflates the Christian and traditional beliefs, speaking of St. Peters as "my special *egungun*" (33) and expressing admiration for the magician's "language of a dual force" (152). This is doubtlessly the root of the cultural and spiritual eclecticism that would later enrich his works with a conflation of African and European myths and of his choice of the Yoruba deity *ogun* as the patron of his art.

Wole's childhood education also is characterized by this duality both in its content and agent. His father's house is "the intellectual watering-hole of Ake and its environ" (19) and Wole listens and is encouraged by his father to listen to the endless intellectual arguments and debates that go on there. Furthermore, his father actively promotes in him the development of an inquiring critical mind that accepts nothing on faith and that "lawyers" every presented opinion. The father constantly engages in disputations with his young son who soon becomes notorious for "lawyering people to death." Joseph the house boy is sure Wole will turn out to be a troublesome native, a prophesy that has come true as all Nigerian unpopular leaders and dictators know only too well. During the brief period he attends Abeokuta Grammar school, its principal, Daodu Ransome-Kuti who is his maternal uncle, also organizes the curriculum to emphasize the training of assertive, independent-minded, critical intellects. He is encouraged to read, and he reads fast and beyond his years. His education is consciously ordered by his parents to emphasize both Western knowledge and knowledge of his Yoruba culture. Traditional values are impressed on him and they feature prominently in the life of his parents. His father, a school headmaster who religiously cultivates a rose garden, eats elegantly and with impeccable English table manners, and performs calisthenics every morning, is also an Isara Chief who uses the traditional chewing stick for teeth hygiene, narrates folktales to his children, wears both European and traditional clothes, and takes his family home to Isara, his village, every Christmas to perform his duties as chief and to expose his children to the local traditions. His mother trades in assorted African and European retail goods and combines African and European menus in feeding the family. The medicines used to

treat ailments in the house are also an assortment of African and European preparations. Because his education has also stressed intelligent and critical evaluation of phenomena, the principle of multiculturalism which he thus imbibes eschews mindless imitation of foreign cultures, a prevalent habit of some segments of contemporary Nigerian youth which he sternly rebukes (155-6).

The traditional communal ethics of sharing and the Christian tenet of hospitality are exemplified in the family often to the inconvenience of young Wole who hates the "maternal dormitory" that resulted from the general sleeping arrangement in his mother's room. The house which already has a multiethnic composition of kins, servants, and visitors, becomes a regular guest house for visitors from Isara, including the peasant women who bring their produce every market day to sell at Ake. The house is also an abode for strays, and one of them, nicknamed "Maysself" becomes notorious for his abuse of the family's hospitality at meal times. In spite of the inconvenience of the "maternal dormitory," young Wole learns the crucial lesson that life is meaningful when it is not selfish but is governed by the precepts of communal ethics. This is doubtlessly the root of the communal principle that has consistently guided his social activism in the Nigerian polity. In Wole's household, punishment is regularly used as an instrument for inculcating discipline; however, while the mother prefers the cane, the father chooses psychological weapons that tests the mind and trains the will. The manner the mother handles the case of Mr. "Maysself" and others who overstep their bounds teaches Wole the value of tact, diplomacy, firmness, and decisiveness in dealing with people.

The second phase of Wole's childhood education--the phase of experience, is associated with the events surrounding the Egba Women Movement which practicalizes for him in a summary sort of way all the lessons of the first phase of his education--the phase of innocence. At this time, Wole is about nine-and-half years old and is temporarily attending Abeokuta's Grammar School, pending his securing a government scholarship to attend the more prestigious Ibadan Government College. He witnesses the unraveling of

all of the events that led to the formation of the women's movement and knows that it is the concern for the common plight of Egba peasant women who are being unfairly taxed that makes Mrs. Daodu Ransome-Kuti, Wole's mother, and a few other influential Ake middle-class women to decide to do something about the situation. The women are angry because the unfair tax shows that the government has violated the traditional communal ethics which require that governance be in the mutual interest of the governed and the governor, but they can do nothing about it until they are organized and the people they are trying to help become well informed.

So they begin the formation of an association, start adult education for the peasant women and commence to canvass grassroot support. To succeed, they have to be strong; consequently, they broaden the base of their women union by forming a nationwide Nigerian Women Union which they affiliate to nationalist political parties working for independence. Mrs. Kuti even carries the women case to present to the colonial government in Britain. Wole sees the daily details of the Egba Women activism, the labor, perseverance, debates of tactics and strategies, the cost for printing and distributing material to educate the public on the matter within and outside Ake, and , above all, he sees the intellectual leadership, courage, sheer determination and will power provided by Mrs. Kuti, and backed by her formidable husband, Daodu Ransom-Kuti. At every stage, Wole is involved in the movement as errand boy, as peasant women teacher, and as secretary, and is there at the scene of action observing from a safe distance when the movement climaxes into the uprising that rocks Ake, shakes the powerful *ogboni* council, disorganizes the local colonial District Officer and the national colonial administration in Lagos, and nearly topples the Alake from his throne. He sees the ups and downs of the events leading to and during the revolt and the central role organization, knowledge, strategy, courage, will power, and leadership play to make the revolt a success. In short, the young Wole has seen details of a revolution and how it works, is impressed by it, and

he chooses to make the documentation of these details the significant conclusion of his memoir.

The major lesson of Ake is that government is not sacrosanct and that it could and should be made answerable to the people it governs. In order to ensure that full implication of this lesson is not lost on the reader, Soyinka makes the reader realize that the target of the women's uprising was as much against local as external tyranny by pointing out that the Alake, who at the height of the rebellion was a prisoner of the women trying to depose him, was indeed "the slave of the [colonial] District Officer--if not the present one, at least of the earlier, insolent one" (220). The women revolt then was actually against colonial domination whose philosophical root was white racism. This was why the women movement was affiliated to the independence-seeking nationalist political parties and why Mrs. Kuti went to England, seat of colonial government, to argue the women's case. It was also the source of the vehemence with which Mrs. Kuti repeatedly charged the allied forces with white racism for choosing on racist grounds to bomb Japan, and not Germany, during the second World War. As Wole prepares to leave for Ibadan Government College, to which he has won a scholarship, he is warned by his uncle, Mr. Daodu Ransome-Kuti, of the miseducation that awaits him at that colonial college which is run by white racist principals and teachers. It is of the greatest significance that Soyinka should end his childhood autobiography on this note.

What Soyinka shows in Ake, then, is first the progress of the fight that Okonkwo in Things Fall Apart began but could not win because his people were then not prepared. Second, it is a portrayal of how he, Soyinka, reflects the best tradition of his land by virtue of how the land had bred him in childhood. He is thus in agreement with Equiano and Achebe in the understanding of how the self reflects the self's place.

Gates's *Colored People*

Gates begins his memoir with a nostalgic view of Piedmont, his place of birth which is in danger of disappearing: "You wouldn't know Piedmont anymore --my Piedmont, I mean-- by its silhouetted ruins" (3). My darkest fear," he writes, "is that Piedmont, West Virginia, will cease to exist, if some executives on Park Avenue decide that it is more profitable to build a completely new paper mill elsewhere than to overhaul one a century old" (xi). One of Gates's reasons for writing the memoir, then, is to preserve in printed memory the record of the Piedmont that he knew, his Piedmont, the Piedmont of colored people. But colored people did not live alone in Piedmont; whites lived there too, and were in the majority. Moreover, this was pre-civil rights times; Piedmont, therefore, was a segregated town. Segregation was so pervasive that young Henry, lovingly nicknamed Skip by his maternal grandmother, "assumed that this dispensation could no more be contested than the laws of gravity, or traffic lights" (19).

Racist segregation was everywhere: whites lived in their own streets in their own beautiful houses; colored people congregated in their own poor streets in houses owned by whites because they had no rights to own property. Churches were segregated; whites had theirs, the colored had theirs, and if it happened a colored went to a white church, as his father did, he would be asked "to sit in the back pew" (115). Hospitals did everything they could to avoid treating colored patients, as Skip discovered when taken in excruciating pains to a hospital where a doctor played dumb, claiming Skip was faking his pains. The schools too played tricks, as Skip's brother, Rocky, discovered when he was cheated of a prestigious scholastic award he had won--the Golden Horseshoe award, which ranked as "the Nobel Prize of eighth graders in West Virginia"--because he was colored (98). Work was segregated; for, at the paper mill where "almost all colored people in Piedmont worked," they all "made the same money, because they all worked at the same job, on the platform" as loaders (8). Services and entertainment, of course, were segregated; Skip recalls: "For most of my childhood, we couldn't eat in restaurants or

sleep in hotels, we couldn't use certain bathrooms or try on clothes in stores" (17). Interracial dating was a taboo: "Colored go with colored; white with white" (92); consequently, Skip's and Linda Hoffman's spontaneous and mutual love for each other, a love which Skip nostalgically and lyrically evokes, was shipwrecked by racism. As for television, Skip says that because "we were starved for images of ourselves... we searched TV to find them," but "except for sports, we rarely saw a colored person" (19, 20). The consolation, however, was that television provided the only window they had into the tightly segregated middleclass world of the whites, "a world so elegantly distant from ours, it was like a voyage to another galaxy, light-years away" (21).

Obviously, it is not for this segregated Piedmont for which Skip is nostalgic or worried that it might disappear. From colored people, racist Piedmont elicited one of two emotions, typified by his mother's deep hatred, or his uncle Nemo's deep fear. As for Skip, he was only too glad to grab at opportunities that enabled his mental horizon to expand beyond the suffocating confines of Piedmont.² This was why he loved Geography and map at school, why he enjoyed his trips to the Peterkin Church camps, and was glad when he eventually left the town for college. This was why, when the civil rights movement, which "came late to Piedmont, even though it came early to our television set" (19), finally arrived, he embraced it whole-heartedly as did members of his activist group, the "Fearsome Four." For them, the movement "was an exciting and sincere effort to forge a new communal identity among a people descended from splendid ancient cultures, abducted and forced into servility, and now deprived of collective economic and political power" (186).³

The way of life that these abducted, economically exploited, and politically deprived people have carved out for themselves amidst hostile segregation, and the history and cultural traditions of this life are what constitute the Piedmont--"my Piedmont"--of which Skip nostalgically speaks and whose possible disappearance, caused by a capitalist fiat in factory relocation, he expresses fear. This is the Piedmont of colored people, and it

is how he, Skip, was bred in and experienced this Piedmont that he presents in Colored People. In his interview with Middlebrook, Gates explains: "We [colored and white Americans] didn't want to be forced to live with each other, but we *were* forced to live with each other, and we developed a culture out of that. We didn't want to be slaves, but we created a culture, even as slaves. And I think we tend to forget that there was a tremendously vibrant, wonderful, compelling culture that black people created before integration, and a lot of that has been lost" (196).

As stated earlier, Skip narrates his story in two broad phases. The first--the phase of innocence--portrays his birth and upbringing, while the second--the phase of maturity--depicts Skip as one of the prime movers in the creation of a new Piedmont. This is the phase of action involving the demolition of the walls of segregation in Piedmont.

Two Black intellectual traditions--one linked to Booker T. Washington, the other to W.E.B. DuBois--characterize Skip's family education, and they are associated with the two sides of his family: the Colemans--the maternal--and the Gateses--the paternal. The Colemans, made up of nine brothers and three surviving sisters, do not want the applecart of race relations to be upset; rather, they promote advancement through industry, self-reliance, cooperation between kins, discipline, and religious faith. They were very ambitious, very enterprising, imaginatively resourceful in the use of their hands, and thrifty: "They'd drive fifty miles to save cents ... Carpentry, masonry, gardening, hunting, fishing. Just fixing things in general. If you can hammer it or oil it up, dem coons can do it," concedes Skip's father who, being the Gates that he is, does not particularly like his in-laws (64). The Colemans were closely knit, self-reliant, deeply involved in church-going, ascetic in their habits, rather clanish, and were chauvinistic in the treatment of women: "They didn't drink, they didn't smoke, and if they weren't especially religious, they were especially self-righteous" (61). They lived a double life in order to accommodate white segregationist laws: "They would mouth the white man's command in the day, to paraphrase Hurston, and enact their own legislation and jurisprudence in their sepia world

at night" (64). With these characteristics, it was only a matter of time before they became prosperous: "Born barely working class--clawing and scraping your way out of starvation class, Daddy says--they carved out a dark-chocolate world, a world as nurturing as the loamy soil in Nemo's garden at the bottom of Rat Tail Road" (64). Their success brought respect from everybody, including whites who treated them with some preference: "The Colemans were the first among the colored to be allowed hunting licenses and their own rifles and shotguns" (159) and to own property. "They had a weighty sense of family and tradition," Skip says, and one tradition they religiously observed was the annual family reunion, which "was the social event of the season" and for which it was an honor to be invited. Their table manners are as impeccably aristocratic as that of Soyinka's father in *Ake*: "The Colemans were *serious* about their cooking and their eating. There was none of this eating on the run; meals lasted for hours, with lots of good conversation thrown in"(39). Thus, "being a Coleman was a very big deal in Piedmont" (53).

Naturally, the Colemans wanted Skip, who was a favorite of the head of the Colemans family--Miss Maggie, his maternal grandmother--and of his oldest uncle, Nemo, to follow their foot steps. However, Skip says "As years went by, I grew more critical, deciding that I was more like the Gatese than the Colemans" (61), and the distance between him and the Colemans widened even further during the civil rights era when Skip became an activist and became rebellious against family control, doing things like drinking and smoking that offended the Colemans' code of conduct. Worse still was the fact that Skip was breaking the principal rule of the Colemans' philosophy of racial accomodation by agitaging for equal rights. For the Colemans, by whom "integration was experienced as a loss," Skip's radicalism was worrisome: "Because I flouted the rules, they thought I would come to a bad end, and they took pleasure in inletting me know that. Deep down, I think they were frightened for me. And deeper down, I think I frightened them" (184, 185).

The influence of the Gates side of his family was in the tradition of DuBois--intellectual and radical. The Gateses descended from Jane Gates, "our missing link with Africa," writes Skip. Jane inherited landed property from the white man for whom she had all her children. Her descendants multiplied that property, establishing businesses, and they prospered. At the time Skip's paternal grandfather died, for instance, the children had much property to share, and "Everything [was] paid for, every deed unencumbered. Never use credit, Pop had told my daddy for as long as he could remember" (70). Skip's paternal grandmother was partial to her three daughters, whom she gave college education, while sending all her seven sons to work in factories. Because of the college education of his aunts, the Gateses by Skip's time were already a family of intellectuals that boast "Three generations at Howard, including the board of trustees, two generations at Harvard, including Harvard Law School. Three generations of dentists and three of doctors" (72). The intellectual atmosphere of the gates was visible in their abode and in their pastimes: "The rooms of their house had a certain worn and aging depth and the sort of dust-covered calm that suggested tradition. They drank beer and Scotch, played cards, read detective novels and traded them with each other, did crossword puzzles, and loved puns" (67). And they love "analyzing things when they were over, breaking things down one by one. Second-order consciousness. Metamouthing. Scrutinizing. Reading the signs. Explicating the implicit" (169).

Even though Skip's father did not possess a college education, he steered his son in the direction of the intellectual life of the Gateses. He encouraged in Skip the development of a critical, inquiring, and analytical frame of mind, and to this end, he often played the role of the devil's advocate in debates with Skip: "By the mid-sixties, we'd argue about King from sunup to sundown. Sometimes he'd just mention King to get a rise from me, to make a sagging evening more interesting, to see if I had *learned* anything real yet, to see how long I could think up counter arguments before getting so mad that my face would turn purple" (26). Later, he would play the same intellectual game with Skip

and Skip's radical friends--"The Fearsome Four"-- who had adopted him as surrogate father: "and the four of us would sit for hours arguing with Daddy and Mama, eating dinner, watching television, and arguing some more ... We'd fall asleep in my bedroom ... then get up and argue with the Old Man some more. We'd argue with Daddy for hours on end" (187). Skip's house was, in effect, the "intellectual watering hole" of Piedmont, much like Wole's house in Ake.

Skip's father, however, was not a "race man" and did not fully embrace Skip's radicalism unlike the other Gateses who were intellectual "freethinkers" towards whom Skip gravitated (85, 188). On the other hand, Skip's mother was unlike her family, the Colemans, being a radical herself: "she did not seem to fear white people" and "it was Mama ... who showed us how to fight" (34, 98). She had three related methods for fighting, one was psychological, one was physical, and the other was intellectual, and she fought because "Mama did not play when it came to her boys, and she wasn't going to let any white woman or man step on her babies' dreams" (92). She was involved in a protest march to demand education for colored children before Skip was born. When Skip's brother, Rocky, was cheated in the Golden Horseshoe competition, she "took the battle to them" in open protest (98). She displayed psychological finesse in her battle with stores that would not allow colored people to try on clothes, and she took her children along to observe this refined mode of fighting. But her greatest weapon was intellectual, doing everything to ensure that her children excelled in formal education and showing her children the power of education. She was respected in Piedmont by both white and colored on account of how she used her intellect and limited education. Her eulogies at colored funerals was memorable for their psychological insight and oratory. She was the first colored to be appointed secretary of the PTA and she produced admirable minutes: "It was poetry, pure poetry. She'd read each word beautifully, mellifluously, each syllable spoken roundly but without the hypercorrection of Negroes who make 'again' rhyme with 'rain'" (33).

Given this paternal and maternal encouragement, it was clear that Skip would prefer the Gateses' Dubois radical intellectualism to the Colemans' Booker T. Washington accomodationism as a mode of dealing with racism. Skip's background and education also ensured that he would not confuse race with racism. Each side of his family has a generous dose of white blood; indeed, "until a generation ago, most of the Gateses qualified as octoroons--'light and bright and damn near white'" (73). Besides, in spite of prevalent racism, Skip's personal experiences showed him that the white skin must not be confused with racism. For instance, even though it was racism that prevented the natural love between him and Linda Hoffman from blossoming, his first fulfilling love affair was with another white girl, Maura Gibson. Also, the first individual who had provided him the best intellectual stimulation outside of family was a white liberal professor at Potomac State College, Duke Anthony Whitmore, who taught him the virtue of intellectual courage and boldness: "Sin boldly," Whitmore had insisted. Thus, Skip makes it abundantly clear in his preface, that while he identifies fully with colored people, he would not wish to be defined exclusively by that identification: "I rebel at the notion that I can't be part of other groups, that I can't construct identities through elective affinities, that race must be the most important thing about me" (xv).

Young Skip was very much attracted to religion and, like his father in his youth, had wanted to go into the priesthood. Church going appealed to him for a number of reasons. One was socio-cultural: "What the church did provide was a sense of community, moments of intimacy, of belonging to a culture" (116). Church gave him a sense of African-American history: "I'd sit next to her, trying to learn the words of the traditional gospel songs and the camp songs, listening to my past and future through Andrea's lovely voice" (148). A second reason was entertainment--he loved gospel music because it "could make you feel good, with people 'patting their foots' and nodding their heads and being in tune with the message." For this reason the revival meetings of the Holiness Church was his favorite, "that was a camp meeting," Skip ironically enthused, "It

was part of the ritual: working hard on Saturday, partying Saturday night, picnic and camp meeting on Sunday--an ideal weekend" (116). His favorite was when Miss Toot sang "The Prodigal Son," half drunk, obliterating the distinction "between the sacred and the secular" (116). A third reason was spiritual and intellectual: Skip liked good sermons. But the fourth reason was perhaps the most important and it was psychological. Church promised a heaven of equality, justice, and happiness that segregation had denied on earth and it assuaged his fear of hell: "I supposed the shake-up of my spiritual creed was hastened by my realization that I was religious in part because I was scared, scared of Jesus coming back to earth and sending me to Hell, scared of being liquidated or vaporized in a nuclear holocaust, scared of what was happening to my mother--scared, in all likelihood, of life itself" (137). It was after this discovery that Skip abandoned the intention to dedicate his life to the priesthood and discovered a personal relation to God: "What I did feel was that God spoke His will to my heart if I asked what I should do in a given situation. I still ask, and, generally, I still hear. Sooner or later" (134). No doubt, the ignorance or the intellectual fraud or religious hypocrisy of the Colemans churches and the "Sister Holy Ghost," on one hand, and the racism of white churches, on the other hand, also contributed to Skip's disenchantment with organized religion, and a preference for a truly protestant personal approach to religion. Indeed, what Skip discovered was his true self--the Gates who belonged to the intellectual tradition of freethinkers.

Skip also imbibed from his family and the Piedmont colored community the colored people's intense love of life, which consisted of an appreciation for humor and a disregard for social taboos that killed the joy out of life. "Daddy, loved telling stories about his family," Skip writes, "and I loved listening to them, mostly because they were so funny" (68). Colored people of Piedmont so love life that it was fun to them openly discussing how everybody was cheating on everybody else and accepting their bastard children without complain. This love of life is also reflected in the attention the colored of Piedmont paid to their style of clothing, hairdo, music, and dancing at the colored

Legions. The cultural symbolism of this colored Piedmonts' love of life was the annual mill picnic which drew Piedmont indigenes from wherever they might be located because they wanted to share in the special tradition, the love of life, that was Piedmont's. It is for this reason significant that Skip should nostalgically and symbolically signal the disappearing of "his Piedmont" with the termination of the tradition of the mill picnic, the description of which also ends his childhood memoir.

Before this conclusion, however, Skip had presented the final element of his Piedmont education or upbringing--that which constitutes the second phase of his memoir: the Age of Maturity. If the first phase--the Age of Innocence--portrays Skip's education, how he was bred, the second phase is the phase of action and it depicts how Skip shows the tenor of his character and started giving back to the community that had given so much to him. The central element of this phase is the civil rights movement which was for Skip what the Egba Women revolt in Ake was for Wole. Just as the watching of the Egba Women's movement taught Wole the process of how a people can assert their will and make government accountable to the community, so did the watching of the civil rights movement on television educate Skip on how to integrate segregated Piedmont. Given his age, Wole's participation in the Egba revolt was necessarily limited to that of errand boy, secretary, or teacher for the women; in his case, Skip and members of his "Fearsome Four" were the civil rights movement in Piedmont, having personally taken the risks of integrating many of the segregated facilities in Piedmont. Skip also personally integrated a section of Rehoboth Beach in far out Delaware, and was, in fact, paradoxically the deciding factor in the mayoral election of the city of Keyser, West Virginia, by virtue of his radical courage in dating Maura Gibson and becoming "apparently the first interracial couple in Mineral County" (196). His book report on Dick Gregory's *Nigger*, his high school valedictory address, and his college application to Yale rang with the assertive radicalism of his integrationist crusade. For all this, he entered the security police's bad book as "that troublemaker Gates," a service of naming that Joseph, Wole's family

houseboy, had performed for the colonial security police by calling Wole the troublesome native. In time, even white Piedmont accepted the radically-emerged and academically-promising Skip Gates, whom they invited to help that Piedmont's rock of segregation--Westvaco paper mill--to integrate. This was one of the first confirmations of how right Skip's mother and the Gates were in bringing up their son to believe that intellectual radicalism--that tool promoted by W.E.B DuBois--was the right weapon to fight racism. Thus, even though Skip Gates refuses to be generalized ("I am not Everynegro ... this story is not the story of a race but a story of a village, a family, and its friends" xv-xvi), the way it has been told undeniably makes it the representative story of a representative African-American in a representative town. This is so because the family education of every African-American child has had to confront at some point a choice between the accommodationist philosophy of Booker T. Washington and the radical intellectual tradition of W. E. B. DuBois, and because every adult African-American has had to make this choice, even if the adult finally settles for neither the one nor the other, but rather a judicious selection of either as circumstances dictate.

Thus, Colored People demonstrates that the autobiographical self is a reflection of the autobiographer's place, a reflection whose primary strategy is to undermine the racist definition of the biographer's place and, as such, the biographer's self. To this extent, therefore, Equiano's Narrative, Achebe's Things Fall Apart, Soyinka's Ake, and Gates's Colored People can be said to be uniform in artistic purpose and strategy.

Notes

1. If one begins by linking Achebe's birth place, Ogidi, described in the autobiographical notes at the end of the novel as "one of the first centers of Anglican missionary work in Eastern Nigeria," with Umuru, a geographical locale within the novel, described as situated "on the bank of the Great River, where the white men first came many years before and where they had built the center of their religion and trade and government" (174). It was "to the new training college for teachers in Umuru" that Mr. Brown (who was more rational and more diplomatic than his successor Reverend James Smith) had sent Okonkwo's rebellious son Nwoye, now renamed Isaac (182). When Achebe's autobiography or biography becomes available, it would be possible to ascertain the precise relationship between him and the fictional Nwoye. At the moment, one can only speculate that Nwoye might be more than just a fictional representation of a member of the generation of Achebe's father; perhaps he is the artistic depiction of his father. If this is true, then Things Fall Apart could be described, using the title of Allison Kimmich's and Vivian May's proposed 1996 MLA Convention panel, as an "Autobiography by Other Means, Writing the Self through Other Selves" (18). The "other selves" in this case would be Nwoye (the fictional representation of Achebe's father according to this speculation) and Okwonkwo (the speculated grandfather of Achebe). Even if there were no iota of truth in this speculation, Things Fall Apart as Achebe's creation is his authorial statement about the cultural and political history of his people, expressed through the indirect medium of fiction. What this statement translates into in plain terms would gradually be manifest in the process of this discourse.

2. Most of the contributors to The City in African American Literature agree that, while exemptions exist, African American writers generally depict the city, or the urban melieu, as a more positive force than the village, or the rural setting, on Black protagonists. This is in contrast to mainstream American literature which more often

presents a romanticized, idealized image of the rural setting, while the urban background is negatively depicted (Hakutani and Butler).

3. References in Colored People to Africa--sometimes direct, sometimes veiled--are positive and suggest Gates's identification with Africa, though this is to be received in the context of his desire not to be restricted by race in the matter of "constructing identities through selective affinity" (xv). See, for instance, pages 9, 42, 70-71, 79, 101-2, 109, 112, 143, 186, 208-9.

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Narrating The Angolan Nation-Space

Thus, it may seem that if imperialist domination has the vital need to practice cultural oppression, national liberation is necessarily an act of culture. Amílcar Cabral, *National Liberation and Culture*

I. Acts of Culture

On December 10, 1975, Agostinho Neto, then the first president of Angola, spoke at the opening ceremony of the União dos Escritores Angolanos (Angolan Writers' Union - UEA) in an address that emphasized the cultural dimension of the national liberation struggle: "... the struggle for national liberation must not separate itself from the struggle for the imposition and recognition of a culture particular to our people." ¹

This brief fragment of Neto's speech at the founding of the Angolan Writers' Union just one month following independence is, in fact, very telling of several facets of Angolan nationalism. At the very least, it points to the vanguard position of militant writers within the liberation movement that ultimately proclaimed the nation. Angolan writers, including Agostinho Neto himself, figured dynamically within the ranks and leadership of the Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (Popular Movement for

the Liberation of Angola - MPLA) and would continue to do so after independence within the political party of the same name.

Neto's phrasing is very much engaged in the public discourse of nationalism that proclaims the heterogenous many as the monolithic national one. This homogenization of "Angolanness" as "the people" posits national selfhood as uncomplicated, precisely at this very complex historical moment of Angolan nationhood. If Neto's strategy is to celebrate the unity of Angola's people, the dis-unity of the liberation struggle evidenced by the already on-going civil war, as well as the proclamation of nation itself, looms menacingly, and not in the shadows, but rather, in the forefront. As discursive strategy moreover, political liberation is inextricably linked to cultural revindication as the imposition of a culture that is particular to the people.

Nationalist rhetoric aside, for the moment, Neto's linking of political and cultural liberation is very telling of one variation of Angolan resistance to colonial domination and, of course, apropos for the occasion. Not only were militant writers active within the MPLA, but it has been effectively argued that their texts were arms in the struggle itself.² The occasion may cause Neto to particularize about cultural resistance, but does not detract from its primacy within the nationalist struggle. In this sense, Neto's speech echoes that of Amílcar Cabral which is cited at the opening of this chapter. For Cabral, the liberation

struggle is itself "an act of culture," at the very least in terms of reclaiming cultural space.

Undoubtedly, this reclamation, as Edward Said asserts in Culture and Imperialism, is at the very center of decolonization as "the charting of cultural territory."³ Said's imagery here is important, first as a counter-mapping to the seemingly rigid colonial boundaries of political and cultural terrain. The counter-mapping, of course, is only part of the reoccupation of restricted territory that was reserved for the European (in this case, the Portuguese), and prohibited for the "inferior Other." For Cabral, as well as Said, who cites the late African nationalist leader and theorist extensively, the violent breakdown of colonial boundaries is the process through which the colonized subjects reintegrate their history as both communal and national.

Following Said's argument that colonial narratives were an unconcealed part of the European imperial process in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, I would propose, in the case of Angola, that nationalist texts engaged in the retaking of cultural terrain as part of the process of decolonization. As such, these texts were not "reflective" of the nationalist movement in Angola, but rather were works of resistance that battled for cultural territory as much as armed revolution sought to liberate the colonized geographical terrain. For Angolan resistance literature, narratives were the very sites in which history was reclaimed and reexamined.

Barbara Harlow's work on resistance literature demonstrates that across national boundaries, resistance poetry and narratives collaborate in liberation movements "alongside the gun, the pamphlet and the diplomatic delegation."⁴ Harlow distinguishes between resistance poetry and narrative in regard to temporality. She claims that the poetry of organized resistance movements problematizes the given historical moment and the cultural images that underlie collective struggle. In contrast, resistance narrative examines the past, and in particular the symbolic heritage with an eye to possible futures. In this sense, resistance narratives battle for that space to engage in the rewriting of history, and in the case of Angola, to imagine the basis for nationness. Moreover, Harlow's distinction between resistance poetry and narrative is important, especially in regard to the particular role that literature played in the Angolan nationalist struggle.

The contemporary phase of Angolan resistance literature began with poetry as one might expect from Harlow's analysis. Poetry became the discursive space where Angolan writers sought to engage in immediate acts of cultural resistance focused on circumstances and events of the present condition. Acts of momentary resistance, however, necessarily require the consideration of what should be central to the formation of collective struggle. As previously discussed, the 1950s poetry moves people marginalized within the colonial formation to the discursive center where their voices and aspirations can be

imagined. Resistance narratives also engage in imagining moments of resistance, but their length and complexity permit the textualizations of collective histories and futures.

Luandino Vieira's 1957 poem "Canção Para Luanda" (Song for Luanda) poses the question "Where is Luanda?"⁵ This question is that of a temporary condition reenforced with the use of the verb estar (to be at the moment) rather than the expected and grammatically correct ser (to be as a permanent condition). The poetic voice is seeking the lost identity which formed the collective basis of a creolized past that has been displaced by the tractors and settlers that have made Luanda a Europeanized city. The voices of the street vendor, the prostitute, the fishmonger, and others join together to answer that the other Luanda, that which has been covered with asphalt, remains in their hearts and collective consciousness. What the poem does not show however, is what that other Luanda was as the site of hybrid identity and resistance and what it might become in the imaginary constructs of nation. That more complex imagining, as will be discussed in the following chapter, completely dominates Luandino Vieira's resistance narratives written throughout the period of the protracted liberation struggle.

Luandino Vieira's narrative efforts to link invented pasts, presents, and futures is, in fact, the task of imagining a nation. In the colonial experience the cultural imagining of what independence might be necessarily precedes the establishment of political independence itself. Independence once achieved,

however, may require re-imagining as the nation imagined during resistance becomes the nation that functions or disintegrates, in fact, after liberation.

In the case of Angola, moreover, the textual imagining of nation as an act of cultural resistance, itself passed through various stages before independence. The length and complexities of the armed liberation struggle forced militant writers to abandon early didactic visions of nation as a culturally homogenous and socialist paradise. Muana Puó, the allegorical narrative of the creation of a utopian egalitarian society is written by the same Pepetela who only a few years later re-imagines a tense hybrid nation from within the guerrilla outpost of Mayombe. Luandino Vieira's early text Vidas Novas (New Lives) optimistically imagines that the liberation struggle itself will transform the lives of common people, turning them from victims of the colonial order to liberated actors within the collective drama of creating nation. His later novel, Nós, os do Makulusu, (We, Those From Makulusu) problematizes any such transformations and questions whether the collective "we" of the title might even survive the liberation struggle itself.

The very complexity of resistance, liberation, and independence in Angola precludes any accompanying narratives from imagining facile reconciliations within the projected post-colonial nation or, for that matter, within the transition itself from colony to nation. The dangers of the so-called liberating condition of post-coloniality, that Ella Shohat so convincingly

critiques in "Notes on the Post-Colonial", include the uncomplicated construction of hybrid identity. As Shohat points out, and particularly relevant to the case of Angola, imperial powers also imagined hybrid identities and, in fact, justified colonialism itself as a hybridizing mission.⁶ However, the acculturated identities that imperial Europe imagined can easily be mirrored in a simplistic counter-vision of the colonized so that both imperial and revolutionary nationness might be conceived as ultimately the same. This colonial leveling of difference attempted through imperial policies of assimilation finds its counterpart in Benedict Anderson's oftentimes globalizing construct of nation as imagined community.⁷ Not only does Anderson propose that all modern nations imagine themselves as utopian constructs, but that they do so within the specific chronological order of European development. Thus all imagined communities are seen as emerging in a prescribed schematic fashion that echoes the very imaginings of imperial civilizing projects themselves.

The various constructs of a hybrid Angolan identity undertaken by the writers included in this book do not mirror the metropolitan constructs of pan-lusitanian identity nor do they, in the end, participate in the envisioning of a utopian nation. Homi Bhabha's description of hybridity as neither synthesis nor dialectics, but rather as a disturbingly ambiguous liminal state of tension between colony and imagined nation-space provides the starting point for an analysis of narrations of nation in

contemporary Angola.⁸ That liminal space is, in fact, the site of continued negotiations of hybridity that have emerged in the textualizations of Angolan nationness. Race, class, gender, ethnicity, tribe, region, generation, all play shifting roles in these negotiations, not only between narrative characters, but within the particular imagined Angolans themselves. In Fanon's phrasing, this oftentimes violent negotiation counters the colonial obsessions with classifications of subject within the imperial Manichaeian imagined community.⁹

This negotiation of cultural hybridity gains further significance if we view it as an integral part of the processes of transculturation. Transculturation, itself, is a type of hybridization process on an abstract level. The negotiation of cultural identity described in these narratives shows that process being worked out through both as a negotiation of individual identities and as a negotiation of differences of national selfhood in the emerging nation. Moreover, if as Bhabha contends that cultural hybridity is negotiated in interstitial or liminal spaces that "entertain difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy,"¹⁰ then intersections of race, class, gender, tribe, region, and ethnicity in Angolan narratives also invite the reader to engage in the imaginings of a future hybrid nation.

National liberation in Angola was indeed an act of culture, a reclaiming of that terrain reserved for the colonizing subject that moved the colonized's marginalized perspective to the center of a new nation-space. Once the periphery, however, became the

center, the identification of national subjects did not end with political independence. That on-going negotiation is, too, an act of culture that ruptures the false and neo-colonial boundary between colonialism and post-colonialism. This boundary moreover, is that which appears to separate colonial Angola from national space, but as the events of the past two decades in Angola and elsewhere have proven, the border between nation and colony remains precarious. The narrative textualizations of this uneasy liminal space may better be described as counter-narratives of nation that disrupt the monolithic construct of nation as imagined community. In short, Angolan writers explored and textualized the borderlands between what Angola had been, was, and dreamed of becoming, to chart that negotiated terrain of imagined nation-space.

II. After the Revolution: The Case of Manuel Rui

Manuel Rui Alves Monteiro, who writes under his first two given names, was born in Huambo, Angola in 1941. Both a poet and a fiction writer, Manuel Rui writes his most important narratives from a post-independence perspective, when the boundaries between colony and nation have supposedly been obliterated by the revolution. Like other Angolan fiction writers, Manuel Rui began with liberating imaginings of nation, but in his case narrated from within the initial euphoria of nationhood. This early imagining posits an Angola that finds its expression in the

communal memory of the revolutionary struggles.¹¹ Collective identity in these Manuel Rui's early narratives is formed across tense differences of race, class, gender, generation, and ethnicity, but assumes the common and euphoric language of nationness. Manuel Rui, more so than any other contemporary Angolan writer, imagines nation using the modes of discourse that were created within the revolution itself. His textualizations of Angola are the euphoria of emergent nationness, and the new estória (the story) that will be passed on from generation to generation is that of the revolution.

The irony in Manuel Rui's early works that is so pungently directed at colonial and neo-colonial incursions into the struggle for nation, is tempered in these narratives precisely by the euphoria of independence. Beginning in the 1980s, however, this irony, once reserved for the "puppets of imperialism," finds uneasy targets within the imagined nation itself. Here, the language of nation is turned upon itself in a mocking pastiche of revolutionary codes and slogans. The discourse of nationness has been betrayed in practice, and Manuel Rui's narratives respond to the betrayal as irony, and only irony. If the earlier texts countered the irony of the many colonialisms with the liberating discourses of revolution and nation, there was always the sense that these narratives were part of the lived experiences of all Angolans. The ironies of postcolonialism are also part of Angola's communal memory, but in the more recent works that irony

is not countered by euphoria. Rather, the discourse of nation reveals a condition that is neither liberating nor hopeful.

This trajectory can be seen most clearly in two estórias by Manuel Rui. The first, "O Relógio" ("The Watch"), was published in 1977 in the collection Sim Camarada! "The Watch" is in many ways the collective narration of an estória of nationness and like many of Manuel Rui's works centers on the role of children in imagining Angola. This is the estória of an estória, and involves the Sunday afternoon storytelling sessions led by a disabled MPLA guerrilla commander. The commander, who assumes the role of a griot, narrates the tale of a watch taken from a Portuguese major killed in a skirmish and then exchanged to a Zairian patrol for the lives of MPLA guerrillas. Each week, the estória is transformed through the active role of the commander's audience -- children who ask questions, change details, and thus, retell the tale as collective authors.

The narration of "The Watch" cultivates the tension between literature and orature through the use of such terms as "repaginar" (repaginate) and "reescrever" (rewrite) in the context of the oral storytelling session. The use of such ambiguous terms is underscored by the assertion that no author would be able to put the many versions of the oral estória into writing. This is an estória, that ends, but does not conclude, as it is part of common memory. The estória's transculturated form is contrasted, of course, through the tale of the watch as a metaphor for the European sense of time. Here the purpose of the

watch is subverted, as it is traded for the lives of nationalist guerrillas. More importantly, however, the European sense of narrative time is challenged in the counter-narration of estória that does not measure time with a watch.

This is a positing of narrative time that does not have precise borders of measurement, but rather is compared to the movement of the sea from which the commander draws his inspiration. This sea, moreover, is bordered by a children's beach, a space of future imaginations of nation and possibilities of collective authorship. Images of the sea figure repeatedly in Manuel Rui's prose fiction and poetry from his earliest works to the present.¹² The author has emphasized the significance of the sea in his works as a symbol of what he terms "mudança estática" (static change): "The sea is something always equal and always changing."¹³ In "The Watch," the sea is given to the children by authorization of the revolution and signals their own authored participation in the complex and changing narration of nation.

"O Rei dos Papagaios" (The King of Kites), from Manuel Rui's most recent collection 1 Morto & Os Vivos (One Dead and the Living) contrasts sharply to the early post-revolutionary euphoric visions of nationness. The king of kites is a young boy named Kalakata whose ear has been burned off in a fire caused by a petroleum lamp. Kalakata is mocked by the other musseque children, rarely chosen for games, and spends most of his time outside of school waiting in long food lines to get bread for his

family. What saves Kalakata is his passion for art, as he makes sculptures and toys from discarded materials. He even gains a measure of fame among the other children on account of his majestic kites, made from the scraps of paper found at the National Press. As his fame grows, he is commissioned to make kites for two boys who live in the wealthy section of Luanda. These are the children of a judge, whose job is, in the words of Kalakata's father, to "defender-nos da bandidagem" (defend us from banditry).

Of course, as the narrative reveals, the judge fails to defend Kalakata, or even recognize his humanity. Kalakata's kites --made from luxurious foreign materials brought back by the judge from his travels --win prizes and bring Kalakata momentary fame as he is interviewed on a national children's radio program. After being temporarily held up as an exemplary pioneiro of the new Angolan nation, Kalakata finds himself back on the food lines in the musseque where one afternoon he is beaten and robbed of his family's ration card and his bread. In the confusion that follows, the judge passes by in his official sedan and stops to inquire about the robbery. He is told that this is just another "maka dos gregos" (argument among the marginalized lumpen poor) and he leaves without recognizing Kalakata or intervening on his behalf to catch the thieves.

This failure of recognition is, in a sense, the failure of the revolution that had promised to erase the colonial barriers of class by creating a common Angolan identity. The judge, whose

very job it is to protect this common identity by enforcing equal justice, refuses to intervene when the quarrel is merely one among those who are dismissed as gregos. His perception of the marginalized is a non-perception, a non-recognition of their humanity. It is not that all gregos look alike, but that all of the poor can easily be dismissed as gregos.

The last scene of the estória is reminiscent of an earlier Angolan tale. Kalakata returns home to the wrath of his mother who blames him for the loss of his family's ration card, the only legal way of obtaining food in Luanda. His cry at the end of the estória, "Mama, eu não sou grego" (Mother, I am not a grego), echoes the ending of an estória written thirty years before by Luandino Vieira and including in Luuanda. In "Vavó Xixi," the title character's grandson is stripped of his identity, labeled a terrorist and whipped by a Portuguese merchant. The grandson protests his innocence as a terrorist and in that protest is an implicit counter-assertion of his Angolan identity. He is not what the Portuguese colonizers label him, but rather what he might become through the experience of the revolution.

Thirty years later, after the revolution, Manuel Rui's character Kalakata makes a similar protest, this time against the label placed on him in the neo-colonial nation by the new ruling elite. Ironically, the term for a marginalized lumpen who lives by thievery is grego, also Portuguese for "Greek." The term strips the lumpen of their nationality, even of their race, and imposes a foreign identity on their peripheral positioning.

Kalakata's denial then, is actually his assertion of Angolanness and of his right to be included in the nation. Thirty years after the publication of Luandino Vieira's Luuanda, estórias that were a narrative reconquest of Africanized space, that territory has been relinquished to a new colonization, and the demarcation of the city into separate class divided sectors has remained inviolate. Kalakata may cross over from the musseque to the home of the wealthy judge. He can even eat at the judge's table with his children and make them kites. He cannot, however, be recognized as a human being once the barriers of neo-colonialism have been crossed back over.

The narrative of Angolan nation -space has come full circle. For Manuel Rui, the future imaginings of nation have always been expressed in the promises of a new generation of children who are authorized to narrate the nation by retelling the estórias of revolutionary and national euphoria. These are the estórias betrayed by the judge and a new ruling class that made independence but not a nation. For Manuel Rui, the only hope of nationness is in the hope that the children of estórias like "The Watch" and "The King of Kites" will complete the promises of the national liberation struggle and imagine a true revolutionary nation. For the moment, however, the revolution has eaten its children when the children of Angola cannot eat.

1. Agostinho Neto, Ainda o Meu Sonho, 17.

2. See Russell Hamilton's analysis of acculturation and acculturated literary practices in the Angolan nationalist era is put forth in Literatura Africana, 22. Hamilton argues that acculturation practices that reenforced exploitative domination can be transformed by members of the dominated group into arms of liberation.

3. Edward Said, Culture and Imperialism, 209.

4. Harlow, Resistance Literature, xvii.

5. José Luandino Vieira, "Canção Para Luanda," 239-241. The poem was originally published in Cultura (II) no 1. in 1957.

6. Ella Shohat, "Notes on the Post-Colonial," 99-114.

7. Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities, 7.

8. Bhabha, Locations of Culture, 113.

9. Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, 51.

10. Bhabha, Locations of Culture, 4.

11. The distinction made by the first and second liberation struggles (primeira e segunda guerras de libertação) is one made by the MPLA. The first liberation war refers to the nationalist struggle against the Portuguese. Combat after 1974 among FNLA, MPLA, and UNITA forces, as well as each movement's respective supporters, is known as the second liberation struggle.

12. Manuel Rui's first collection of poems, published in 1973, is entitled A Onda (The Wave). In his introduction to the English translation of Sim Camarada!, Gitahi Gititi discusses the writer's use of the sea as a trope for the possible futures of Angola. Gitahi Gititi, Foreward, Yes, Comrade ix-xxvi.

13. Manuel Rui, personal interview, 18 July 1985. "O mar é uma coisa sempre igual e sempre a mudar."

Nativity And The Creative Process: The Niger Delta In My Poetry

by

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Nativity And The Creative Process: The Niger Delta In My Poetry

The creative writer is never an airplant, but someone who is grounded in some specific place. It is difficult to talk of many writers without their identification with place. Every writer's roots are very important in understanding his or her work. For example, though born in Harlem to southern migrants in 1924, James Baldwin told an interviewer:

I am, in all but in technical fact, a Southerner. My father was born in the South --my mother was born in the South, and if they had waited two more seconds I might have been born in the South. But that means I was raised by families whose roots were essentially southern rural. . . (qtd. in Hall 22).

Similarly, Zora Neale Hurston wherever she lived considered Eatonville, Florida, her home. As Cheryl A. Wall puts it, wherever Hurston journeyed, she "was able to draw on this heritage and find the strength to remain herself" (27). Claude McKay of Jamaican origin but living in Harlem wrote *A Long Way from Home*. Many African-Americans see Africa as their ancestral home. Even in the so-called mainstream American literature, William Faulkner's strength as a novelist comes from his Southern nativity. The writer's roots and heritage arise from his or her nativity.

Nativity has much to do with creating literature, especially poetry. The writer tends to exploit memory and return to childhood days to garner images to clarify his or her vision. I may have traveled extensively all over the world, I may

have lived in different parts of Nigeria; I may be currently living and working in the United States, but my native home is the Niger Delta. Friends and readers of my writing say that I light up and become passionate when I write about the Niger Delta. Call that nostalgia, but I call it the immense power of the Niger Delta as my native place, the constant backdrop to my inspiration. In this essay I will use the Niger Delta in the context of my nativity to discuss the inexhaustible field of imagination that the writer draws from in the creative process.

Space is a major defining factor in African culture. Every African is expected to be connected or linked to some specific place. In other words, space defines both the rootedness and heritage of people in Africa. That is why where one is born is important. It is a life-long badge one wears. Nativity in this essay means birthplace and/or the place where one grows up to imbibe its worldview. Generally, where one is born or lives the formative years of childhood defines the person's nativity.

Nativity is some specific place whose air, water, crops, folklore and other produce nourish the individual. One can say that space in this context is geography. However, as Jose Ortega y Gasset hypothesizes, "Each geographic space, insofar as it is a space for a possible history, is . . . a function of many variables" (qtd. in Mudimbe 188). These "variables" include biology, economics, language. Biologically, humans submit to the "demands of an environment, coming to terms with the modifications it imposes" (190). Michel Foucault sees humans as having needs and desires which they seek to satisfy economically. He

also sees the human need for *meaning* resulting in arranging a *system* of signs (qtd. in Mudimbe 190-91). V.Y. Mudimbe further sees "a spatial configuration" in imagining "a panoramic view of African *gnosis*" (191). Discussing space therefore involves a complexity of ontologies, cosmologies, and many other *systems* that it holds together or connects with.

In traditional Africa, land (a major component of space) is highly valued. Ngugi wa Thiongo in *Weep Not, Child* says of land among the Gikuyu people:

Any man who had land was considered rich. If a man had plenty of money, many motor cars, but no land, he could never be counted as rich. A man who went with tattered clothes but had at least an acre of red earth was better off than the man with money (22).

So space-bound on the physical plane is the African worldview that when old people die, they are expected to be taken to their homeplaces for burial. It is as if the individual who was given his or her first nourishment in an area upon birth should return to the spiritual realm upon death through the same gateway in order to complete a life cycle.

My Urhobo people of the Niger Delta have the concept of *Urhoro*. It is the mythical place--paradoxically aspatial--through which people in the spiritual world make their pre-natal choices and are then born into this world. Every individual, according to this mythical concept, is fated to live in accordance with his or her choice at *Urhoro*. In other words, we are predestined in the Urhobo worldview. Sometimes, according to elders of the group, sacrifices can be offered to ward off

negative forces. There is thus traffic between the spiritual and physical worlds of the Niger Delta. When somebody dies, the person passes through the gate of *Urhoro* into the spiritual world to be an ancestor, who will be reborn again and again. Among the Urhobo, people talk of *this* world and the *next* world.

The Urhobo concept of *Urhoro* not only ties space to the physical and the spiritual, but also to the temporal and the a-temporal in the unending cycle of reincarnation. Nativity is significant here as the known and familiar each seeks its own kind. The Urhobo myth of *eda*, what the Yoruba and Ibo call *abiku* and *ogbanje* respectively, can be anchored on this spiritual dimension of beliefs in my native Niger Delta home.

Urhoro appears directly and indirectly in my writing. A recent long poem is titled "Urhoro: Going in Cycles." In it I reflect not only on my personal condition and the impact of bloodkins (daughter and father) on me but also on the human condition and the ironies involved:

I who side-slipped every ambush on the road
am bound to a survival kit,
thrown into a rioting mass of currents.
Buoyed by precedents of crossing rivers
in *Olokun's* arms, without a boat,
I can understand why the champion swimmer
drowns in a knee-depth, while
the novice doomed to disappear

escapes the shark bite of bad mouths.

Later in the same poem,

I surrender my garments and property,

but will not give up the bird

that flies and flies, brightening

my eyes beyond the horizon. . .

That "bird" is my soul with its possibilities that emanate from the place, from *Urhoro*, the outer and spiritual space of my native Niger Delta.

Space is more meaningful when seen through time. The singularity of reality lies in the connection of a point in space with a moment in time. As Mudimbe puts it, "all cultural figures determine their own specificity in apparently regional ruptures and continuities, whereby the otherness of their being appears as dynamic event, and thus history. All temporal pasts expose an otherness of the same ontological quality as the otherness unveiled by anthropologists" (195). Time transforms a place and accelerates its culture in the changes which occur. Culture is thus dynamic. A place can expand or become narrow but the theoretical space remains even in memory if re-occupied. It is for these dynamics that culture and society are redefined by the transformation of space through human contact in time. Values of a people change, social and cultural icons also change. The creative writer finds himself or herself in the vortex of this socio-cultural flux set about by the impact of time on place.

The writer attempts to bridge time and space. He or she can only reflect,

for the most part, the time of his or her existence. I see myself, if not consciously but subconsciously, as chronicling the time in which I live from the positionality of the Niger Delta. To put it differently but in a Chinua Achebe image, I am watching the masquerade of life from my Delta foothold. This positioning no doubt has advantages and disadvantages, because seeing things through this local but specific perspective could bring an intense vision. At the same time, narrowness to a specific place is bound to obscure some distant angles. To put this more bluntly, because of my Niger Delta nativity I am subconsciously conditioned to respond to reality in a way unique to me and different from others who are strangers there. People who share the same birthplace are connected in their group values and interests.

The Niger Delta is the three-dimensional space that time continues to change. As Nadezhda Mandelstam asks of the Russia of the Stalinist period, can I escape the Niger Delta? My life on earth started from here. If the purpose of life is to build, there is so much in the area to build on. However, to avoid a constraining parochiality, the writer needs "friends and allies across barriers of both time and space" (Mandelstam 229), hence I open myself to other worlds. But significantly, the writer nourished by a specific place gives back something by assuming the responsibility of being an honest, sincere, and passionate witness of his place and time. If my writing in part reflects the zeitgeist and volkgist of the Niger Delta, then I feel I have performed a duty. After all, the attributes of a place's culture are equivalent to the attributes of a period's culture (Mandelstam).

A signifying icon of a place's culture is the prevailing pantheon. Of course, gods are indigenous to specific ethnic places. The Romans and Greeks had their gods with specific localities as their haunts. Homer and Ovid, among other classical writers, utilized the presence of gods with great effect. Closer home, Wole Soyinka demonstrates the power of one's people's gods in the creative writing process. *Idanre and Other Poems* and *Ogun Abibiman*, two poetry collections, have Ogun as the central "character." In fact, Ogun defines the poet's persona in Soyinka's poetry. Much of Soyinka's writing bristles with Yoruba gods. Chinua Achebe also refers to Ibo gods such as Ani, the Earth goddess, and Amadiora, god of thunder and lightning, in his writing.

Among the Urhobo people of the Niger Delta, gods are constantly invoked by devotees to help in difficult situations. Of these gods, four have always fascinated me and entered my writing. They are: *Uhaghwa*, god of songs; *Aridon*, god of memory; *Umalokun* or Mammy Water (called *Olokun* by others); and *Abadi/Ivwri*, god of war. Other Niger Delta groups like the Ijo and the Itsekiri also revere *Umalokun*, goddess of the waters and wealth. To a large extent, a people's gods help to define their spiritual concerns and worldview. In much of traditional Africa, gods are the apotheosization of a people's values, beliefs, and desires. The mystery of the large expanse of the sea instills a certain awe among the Urhobo to worship its spirit. This spirit is the goddess of beauty and wealth that lives in a skyscraper of needles underwater. Such is the impact of the native god/dess that at my first physical contact with the Pacific in the San Francisco-Sausalito Bay

Area, I had to invoke *Umalokun*.

Gods have their homes but the efficacy of their influence, blessing, and power goes beyond their places of origin. In other words, there are no barriers to their power over their devotees. That is why a god's totem pet like the iguana will always be treated with reverence by the Orogun clan people of the Niger Delta in whatever part of the world they find one. *Uhaghwa* and *Aridon* are sometimes used interchangeably by Urhobo people and I have made *Aridon* assume the role of *Uhaghwa* and vice versa. I started with having *Uhaghwa* as my mentor god, hence the frequent invocation in my two early collections, *Children of Iroko and Other Poems* and *Labyrinths of the Delta*. I needed the inspiration of the god of songs then to fire me up. Later as I have grown older, memory has become more important to me and I have come to have *Aridon* as my other mentor. It is *Aridon* that I invoke in "The Fate of Vultures" to "blaze an ash-trail to the hands / that burried crates of cash in their bowels. . ." (*The Fate of Vultures*, 11). I now relate to the two gods as twin-gods and my mentors because I need inspiration and I need the memory to ground my experience.

While the Niger Delta is physical and geographical, it has a mythic dimension whose uniqueness of folklore is tapped by the native artist. Where else than in the riverine area of the Niger Delta will the tortoise/turtle be a major mythic figure? The tortoise has many names in the Urhobo language. It is *orose* (the shell one), *alauke* (the hunch-back), *oroghwuwevwiya* (the one that carries a house along), and *ogbeyin*. The so many attributes of the tortoise in Urhobo folklore involve

cunning, greed, selfishness, and meanness. I have transferred the negative attributes of the tortoise to the corrupt Nigerian politicians and military dictators, who are so selfish that they do not care about how the nation suffers from their individual avarice. The Niger Delta myths are sources of allusions to describe the present reality of the Nigerian nation.

There are other examples of the Delta mythic world. There is the *oko* drumming bird, which comes with the early heavy rains that turn the dry creeks into tumultuous currents that flow into the big rivers that pour themselves into the Atlantic Ocean. "Going to the sea" in Urhobo and Ijo suggests death and entering eternity. There is the belief similar to the Greeks' about the dead being ferried across the sea into the spirit world. A pioneer Niger Delta poet, J.P. Bekederemo-Clark uses this image in *A Reed in the Tide*.

The mythic corpus of the Niger Delta infuses poetry and other creative writings with a ready storehouse of allusions which root the poetic vision in a specific culture, locus, and reality. It gives energy and mystical glamor to the creative work.

The Niger Delta as a cultural home has its imprints on languages. By its exposure to the outside world by way of the demarcating Atlantic Ocean, this area has always been in dialogue or conflict over time with other cultures, especially the Western/European culture. This again is testimony that a culture though with a spatial setting is not containable in spatial boundaries. The infusion of European languages and neologisms into Urhobo and other local languages and the

emergence of pidgin English are strong indications of the openness of *any* place to foreign influences.

The Urhobo area has its socio-cultural life stamped with early European influence. The Portuguese were the first Europeans to trade with people of the Niger Delta. The Urhobo call them "Potukri" and for a long time called Europeans irrespective of their national origin "Potukri." After slavery, the Europeans were called "oyibo." The "oyibo" has a negative connotation because of slave trade, colonialism, and other forms of European exploitation and domination of Africans. Many Urhobo words today are neologisms or rather Urhoboizing of Portuguese. The following Urhobo words show the Niger Delta's indebtedness to Portuguese: *oro* (gold), *ughojo* (wristwatch/clock), *osete* (plate), *ukujere* (spoon), *meje* (table), *sabato* (shoes), and *isama* (salmon/canned fish).

There is also indebtedness to English. The Urhobo word for sailor is *kruman*, the Urhoboization of "crewman." The Urhobo names of many modern technological items are basically English with a local accent. Words for aeroplane, radio, television, video, motor car, and many others are transparently English-derived. Other influences of the European incursion include the bringing of the "wrapper" dress which has become a cultural costume of Delta people. The fabric for this dress originated from Goa/India and brought first as a means of exchange by the Portuguese and later by the British in the barter trade between Europeans and Africans. Delta people acted as "middle-men" between the Europeans and the hinterland groups such as the Ibo and Bini.

Pidgin English in Nigeria was for a long time a Delta monopoly. Sapele and Warri in the present-day Delta State and Port Harcourt in Rivers State are the bastions of pidgin English. Of course, these cities are ports in which there was a lot of exchange between Europeans and Africans. Pidgin English in Warri and Sapele has absorbed Urhobo semantics and syntax for a unique "broken English."

I have a few poems in Urhobo and pidgin English respectively. Part of "The Wrestler" is in Urhobo, a song which begins and ends the poem. However, even when the poems are written in English, the major symbols and rhythms are derived from Urhobo experience. A poem like "The Battle" will make its greatest impact on an Urhobo speaker than on others:

For fear of exposing its soft body
the *oghighe* plant covers itself with thorns,
for fear of bad company
the *akpobrisi* keeps distant from other trees,
for fear of falling into the grip of age
the python yearly casts off its skin,
for fear of its head
the tortoise moves inside a fortress.
For fear of our lives
we arm in diverse ways
to fight the same battle.
(*The Endless Song*, 44).

As I stated in "Musical Roots: The Rhythm of Modern African Poetry," many African poets superimpose English/foreign language words over native rhythmic patterns. In such cases, "a poem's rhythm is lifted or distorted from an existing traditional musical composition" (Ojaide 67). Thus when I write about the turtle/tortoise in "Labyrinths of the Delta," the title poem of the collection, I am in fact building a poem on an Urhobo folktale's song. Here's the folksong:

Uro bio ogbeyin rhe/Currents, bring back the turtle

Tue tue/Steadily, steadily

Uro bio ogbeyin rhe/Currents,bring back the turtle

Tue tue/Steadily, steadily

Ogbeyin ruvwe/Turtle has hurt me

Oru vwa abo vwirhin/it broke my hands

Tue tue/Steadily, steadily

Ogbeyin ruvwe/Turtle has hurt me

Oru vwa awo vwirhin/It broke my legs

Tue tue/Steadily, steadily

Uro bio ogbeyin rhe/Currents, bring back the turtle

Tue tue/Steadily, steadily

Uro bio ogbeyin rhe /Currents, bring back the turtle

Tue tue/Steadily, steadily

Here is the rendition in a part of my poem:

Turn the tortoise back, O Waters

Bring him back
Spare him mishap on the way
Bring him back to me;
He broke not only my hands
But also my legs and ribs;
Bring him back to me
Spare him mishap on the way here
And let the villain taste
What he inflicted on me
From my own hands (26).

Here the Urhobo characterization of the turtle becomes the symbol of exploitation and oppression for which the speaker seeks revenge and restitution.

I have learned much from an Urhobo poetic form, the *udje* dance song. A unique form that combines the dirge and the abuse song forms, the *udje* dance song is popular in the Ujevwen and Udu clans of Urhoboland. I have especially borrowed its satirical side and rhythm in my political poems. The *udje* dance song is a ready tool for me to use against the corrupt politicians and dictators of Nigeria and Africa. The indirectness of naming what is generally known, the fictionalizing of facts, and the sharp edge of the criticism of the *udje* dance song form have informed such poems as "The Fate of Vultures," "State Executive," "Players," and the Ogiso poems in *Cannons for the Brave*.

In my only published pidgin English poem, "I Be Somebody," I try to use the

common people's lingua franca to articulate and assert the dignity of the common person. Here's the poem:

I fit shine your shoe like new one from supermarket,
so I know something you no know for your life.
I fit carry load for head from Lagos go Abuja,
so I get power you think na only you get.
If you enter my room, my children reach Nigerian Army;
so I rich pass you, whether your naira full bank or house.
You no know kindness, big man: na me de help
push your car from gutter for rain, not for money at all;
and you de splash poto-poto for my body when you de pass.
To tell the truth, I get nothing; but
you no fit get anything without poor man--
na me be salt for the soup you de chop every day;
I be nobody and I be somebody.

(The Eagle's Vision, 69).

With the examples of my writing in Urhobo, imbibing Urhobo folklore and rhythms, and use of pidgin English, the writer could be seen simultaneously as both the socio-cultural product and standard-bearer of his or her birthplace. The quality of the product depends on the individual talent of the writer, which is quite another matter.

The interplay of spatiality and time which brings transformations in culture

and society shows in the material resources available to the writer. The change from the Niger Delta of my youth in the 1950s to the Delta of the 1990s exacerbates the tension in my poetry. There is the image of the past which is drastically different from that of today, an idyllic past opposed to the ecologically tainted Westernized present. The opposition of the traditional Niger Delta and the modern Delta gives rise to two seemingly different "spaces" of my birthplace. Mudimbe poses the questions: "In which sense does the so-called traditional arrangement define itself as an autonomous field outside of modernity and vice-versa? In which mode of being are the concepts of tradition and modernity expressed and formulated within a cultural area" (189)? He gives no answers but suggests that local customs can be transformed by modern systems for the better.

I have nostalgia for the Niger Delta of my youth. I spent all my formative years in my native Delta home. Living with my maternal grandmother, my guardian angel Amreghe, I followed my grandpa and uncles to fish before I started to go with my own age-mates Iboyi and Godwin to fish with hooks. I followed adults in the family to "harvest" ponds. From these activities, I knew about the earthworm used as a bait as being like a woman that likes only soft spots. I knew the mudfish that enters the cone-shaped net as the figurative language for sex. I saw the beautiful *erhuvwudjayorho* fish, so beautiful but denied growing big, a sort of mystical law of compensation. In the creeks and rivers, there was a parade of fishes. There was the *onyenye* with an inimitable beauty. The sword-fish, electric fish, snake-fish (*ogbene*), *okpogun*, *obo*, and a variety of fresh and salt-water

fishes.

There were also the water lilies (*tetebe*) that grew on water, so delicate and so the metaphor for the resilience of a fragile being. Of course, gourds stood on top of fierce currents. By the later 1950s we heard of Gamalin 20 with greedy fishers who poisoned the fish to pick. Some cocoa farmers in Urhoboland had converted the chemical from being sprayed on cocoa plants to protect them from being destroyed by diseases to poisoning fishes in ponds. The local bye-laws banning fishing and palm-nut collecting at certain times of the year were still in place.

I followed the men to clear and plant the farms and watched the ritual of spraying the earth on the yam pieces and praying for fruitfulness before the planting. Every year brought its own demands, but the images of increase and fertility were always invoked. I heard the *apiapia* bird ushering in a new planting season with its song:

Ukpe tere/Another year has come

Udu ko bruvwe/And my heart beats

Kpe kpe/In fear of the future.

I discovered that the python slept deeply and even when decapitated did not die immediately but only after noon when it would have its death jerks. No wonder my Grandma sometimes called me a python when I overslept and risked getting to school late. In the forest there was the man-like anthill (*orato*) with a helmet-like head. What of the civet cat (*aghwaghwa*) crying at night, the fear of the gorilla

then said to rape beautiful women who went to farm alone? Even animals, one *udje* dance song states, know the difference between beautiful and ugly women! Thus the waters and the land of the Niger Delta were invaluable resources that sustained the population.

The great change came with the arrival of Shell-BP, the oil-drilling multinational, in the Niger Delta about 1958. In the Urhobo area we heard of Shell's simultaneous presence in Oloibiri, Bonny, and other eastern parts of Ijoland. My childhood memoir, *Great Boys: Years of Childhood*, and a collection of poems on the impact of modern Western technology on traditional African life, *Daydreams of Ants*, deal with the post-Shell presence with its increasing ecological degradation of the Niger Delta. Oil pipes broke and the waters once teeming with fish were polluted and many turned into dead creeks and rivers, which sent fishermen and women out of work. In many areas, including Kokori and Ughelli, Shell flared gas. The staple crops such as yams and cassava wilted. The heat killed the fauna and flora and possibly gave diseases to people who met untimely deaths. The catalogue of Shell's destruction of the environment with its adverse effects on inhabitants of the Niger Delta is endless.

The Niger Delta I once knew as home has changed drastically. The demise of the pristine environment has driven people from rural areas to the cities of Warri and Port Harcourt. The traditional occupations of farming, fishing, and hunting that used to sustain rural dwellers have been wiped out by oil drilling. Shell-BP and other oil corporations in Warri and Port Harcourt have become leading employers in

the Niger Delta.

The new wealth brought by these oil companies have changed the socio-cultural lives of the people. The cramping of people in the cities brings its loosening of the traditional values that once governed the people's lives. Now modern urban lifestyles are prevalent: robbery, adultery, greed, and exploitation of others for personal gain.

The oil-boom of Nigeria in the late 1960s and 1970s exacerbated another aspect of the Niger Delta people, hence they call it the "oil doom" period. As a minority in the Nigerian federation, they feel cheated not only by the oil corporations but also by the Federal Government dominated by majority groups who are united in their exploitation and oppression of minority groups. Many Delta people believe that the Nigerian nation still stands as one only because of the abundance of oil in their area. The story of Nigeria would be different today if the oil was located in one of the three ethnic group areas of Hausa, Yoruba, and Ibo. In any case, the revenue allocation formula which favors other groups at the expense of the Niger Delta people is cause of deep-rooted resentment. The personal enrichment of national leaders and the development of other areas as the Delta deteriorated have made the minority Delta people more activist in both drawing attention to their sore plight and calling for compensation. It is in light of this unconscionable anomaly that I wrote "Ughelli" in the late 1970s. The poem reads:

To see her dry-skinned when her oil rejuvenates hags

to leave her in darkness when her fuel lights the universe
to starve her despite all her produce
to let her dehydrate before the wells bored into her heart
to have her naked despite her innate industry
to keep her without roads when her sweat tars the outside world
to make her homeless when her idle neighbours inhabit skyscrapers
to see her lonely when sterile ones use her offspring as servants
to regard the artisan as a non-person when drones celebrate with her sweat,

for the palm's oil to be called the fig tree's
for the goddess of wealth not to be complimented for her gifts
but spat upon by raiders of her bosom
for one to earn so much and be denied all except life--
robbery wears a thousand masks in official bills--
and for her to be sucked anaemic by an army of leeches,

it is a big shame(74).

In the 1960s and 1970s, Ughelli was not just the administrative headquarters of Urhobo East local government but the center of an oil-producing area. The town had no electricity (and pipe-borne water) while it supplied the rest of the country immense revenue and power. The same Ughelli whose gas is said to be about the best in the world!

Today the Niger Delta as space/place of oil and minority status in the Nigerian nation has generated ideas of struggle and survival among its people. In Rivers State, Isaac Adaka Boro struggled against regional and national exploitation before his death. The Nigerian civil war was fought for the soul of the Niger Delta because of its huge oil reserves as both parties had their eyes on the "prize," oil. The problems of Boro's time have been made worse by the alliance of multinational corporations and military dictatorship. Ken Saro-Wiwa's struggle for the Ogoni and other minority groups of the Niger Delta is consequent upon the pollution, deprivation, exploitation and neglect of the oil-producing area, synonymous with the Niger Delta. Saro-Wiwa's struggle was for the just compensation of the people for the wealth taken away by Shell and the Nigerian Government, while their birthplace was being destroyed irrevocably by oil spillage, gas flaring, and other forms of pollution. Saro-Wiwa called for investment in the area to correct the ecological destruction suffered over decades because of oil exploration. The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) represents the temperament of the Niger Delta people.

The Niger Delta gives identity to its natives. The inhabitants of this watery land of lush vegetation are a minority in the Nigerian federation with a very strong center that has access to all resources within its frontiers. The status of these minorities is that of an exploited people. It is for this reason that one of the Delta writer's orientation is to signify the Delta, showing its paradox of sitting on oil and yet impoverished.

Different as the Niger Delta is, it is connected with others. I have already discussed the impact of the European connection on Urhobo language and culture. But even earlier and after the European incursion, there has always been a strong African connection. The Urhobo people trace their roots to Benin and Ife, further inland. The Itsekiri whose language is very close to a Yoruba dialect trace their royalty to Ife. The Ijo appear to be the only group that has always been there, since they have no myths or legends of coming from elsewhere to their present abode and other groups like the Urhobo and Itsekiri met them there. Ibo and Edo words appear in Urhobo language and this suggests influence and contact. In the case of Edo, the Urhobo, Bini, Ishan, and some other groups might have once lived in an eponymous place, Aka, before dispersing to their present locations. In modern times, Warri and Port Harcourt, the two major Delta cities, have become very cosmopolitan in absorbing people of different groups from different places into the Delta community. Apart from Lagos, Warri and Port Harcourt could boast of having the largest population of Europeans and Americans in Nigeria.

The Niger Delta is not just physical space but a spiritual, mystical, and psychological setting. It evokes ideas of public and private space in me: the physical and the psychic Delta which are fused in my individual being. I foreground the Delta both consciously and unconsciously; consciously because it is the place I know best and I am most familiar with and unconsciously because I have so imbibed its spirit that it speaks in me even when I am not aware of it. It is the backcloth, so to say, of my experiences as a writer. It is the context of the text

of my writing. The Delta provides me different types of refuge, defense, and guard. This only means that nativity of a place can run deep in one's psyche and perspective. Arguably, it can also be a constraint if not mitigated by a readiness to accept what will nourish and reinforce from other cultures. The Niger Delta is unique in its rootedness but also has by its position as the marine gateway to much of Nigeria absorbed European and African influences. Nativity brings into tension *ours* and *theirs* in values and interests as an exploited minority in the majority-dominated Nigerian polity. However, the Delta area has shown how Sameness does not preclude the Other.

From my discussion so far it is apparent that space and time are inter-related. The Niger Delta has history, an indication of a common experience of a people over time. If "history is a relation to values and sets itself on mechanisms of intellectual valorization" (Mudimbe192), my vision is colored by the history of the Niger Delta. There have been changes from a traditional idyllic place to a modern area rifled with oil-drilling businesses. The historical inter-relationship between space as place, culture, and society poses challenges of nativity to me as a writer. There is a psychic transference onto Urhobo and the Niger Delta of the past into the present. With the pivotal role of memory in the creative process of writing poetry, nativity is a continuous presence that keeps the flame of associations burning. I see much of the world and life through the eyes of a Niger Delta indigene. My vision emanates from where I *stand*.

The minority people have moved from natural contentment to political

agitation against exploitation. The demand by the old Delta Province to become a state of its own without Anioma is another indication of the politicization of nativity. In Delta State, the inhabitants of the old Delta State see themselves as the true Delta people! If this coincides with a shift from a poetry of nature invocation to that of political activism, it only means that nativity has so much power on the writer.

There is an accumulation of forces deriving from the particular nature and condition of the place. The Delta is a body of place and a spirit. I am not an airplane. I may travel the world and live elsewhere but I am physically and psychically anchored to the Delta. It is the driving spirit of the Delta that shapes the vision and provides the images in my writing.

In conclusion, and to borrow Wall on Hurston, wherever I journey, I am able to draw on the Urhobo Niger Delta heritage and find strength to remain myself (27). My sense of home is based on a multiplicity of factors, my persona rooted in the Niger Delta of the 1950s to the present. Whether I am physically displaced from home, I am intuitively linked to my home which I can reclaim effortlessly. In other words, place is not only physical but mental, spiritual, and psychic. My experience outside stretches the parameters of my homeland intellectually. The Niger Delta moulds my identity at home and outside, as in many ways I am one with its people. Nostalgia for this land of evergreen rain-forests persists in me. I can always image an inner space filled with pieces from everywhere but dominated and colored by the Niger Delta which strengthens my bond with humanity.

COMING HOME

I might disembark at more ports than
the moon can cope with in a full phase.

I might bring new mirrors to elders,
that breed of tenacious roots who prefer
an interpreter of two languages to recast
their own son's tales of his recent sojourn.

I might be the migrant bird that
shores up the seasons in the calendar.

I might be current finding my way
from mountain to sea, not the river's bed.

I would not be the ship mocking the rock
because it has freedom of movement,
nor would I be the rock mocking the ship
because it does not yield to anybody's craft.

At home every proverb becomes a tonic
that fortifies through jungle cities abroad,
every bird or animal proffers tales of
how to move in the minefield of America;
every native cherry flavours the tongue
with straightface smiles of my childhood--

erased, the aftertaste of not just Diet Coke
but also the toxic breath of smokers.
Every face home, brother or sister;
my gods worship their devotees!

Now silent from the last summons,
Ishaka never breached the clan's walls;
yet spun stories of faraway places--
glass towers, beauties, and monsters;
details gave truth to the scatterbrain.
But who, reeling with laughter and longing
for England, cared about his running mad?
His stories of London launched me on
the fountain-pen trail to meet the Queen.
I might be Odysseus' son in another life,
lost more than one love to absence
and gained one away to take home;
still I would love to be a home fellow
powered by the draughts I imbibe.

Elders talk of "Two mouths, one stomach."
I have not yet encountered the strange one

but have given it a place in memory-yard,
the only charming monster in the world.
Coming home we exchange gifts and tales,
each more fond of the other's special fortune--
alliance of *iroko* and eagle in a divine bond.
And two firm hands lift the calabash
from the ground to the mouth
to slake the parched body!

(May 25, 1994)

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**SOUTHERN AFRICA'S LAND DILEMMA:
*Balancing Resource Inequities***

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I. INTRODUCTION

A proper understanding of the legal notion of property is critical to our understanding of the relationship between law, the state, societal organization and governance. Land is the most important form of property. Indeed, in the popular imagination, and sometimes in legal parlance as well, references to 'property' and 'property rights' are synonymous with 'land' and 'land rights'. In this discussion, these terms will be used interchangeably.

This paper sets out to provide a general overview of the land question in Southern Africa. As such, I do not aim to present detailed analyses of the land issue in all countries of the region. Such a study would require more space and a more empirically-oriented approach, with appropriate case studies. Rather, the objective here is to present a general survey of some of the conceptual and common policy issues and problems that arise in relation to this question.

Land underpins the economic, social and political lives of the great majority of people in the world. This is especially true of those societies which have a particular dependency on agriculture and natural resources for their social reproduction and survival. As has been observed by some commentators, land is fundamental to the reproduction of capital and in defining spaces within which other markets and distributional processes operate (Nagan, 1993; Gutto, 1995; Moyo, 1995a). It also provides the basis for political and spiritual territories which configure local and national power structures (Moyo, 1995a: 13). Access to land, then, determines the boundaries of most people's social and political spaces and, in particular, economic empowerment. Property rights, including questions of access and affordability, tenurial regimes and land reform, are thus located within the political economy of space and territoriality. Not surprisingly, the complex array of use and exchange values located within these spaces has tended to breed conflict and competition among various classes, races, nationalities, genders and other social groupings which struggle for control over land.

The colonial experience in Africa, especially, demonstrates the extent to which the unequal ownership and control of property - such as land, capital, and other forms which constitute the major means of production - determined (and continues to determine) social differentiation along class, gender and racial lines. The struggle for self-determination in Africa was intimately related to the struggle to reclaim the land from which the native populations in the colonized polities had been evicted by the European immigrants and the colonial state. The history of the independence movement and armed struggles in, say, Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa, clearly demonstrates that the articulation of the land problem was a central motivating factor on the part of the peasantry in their support for these struggles (Ranger, 1985; Gutto, 1987).

One of the common themes which runs through the history of land tenure and agrarian reforms in the former colonial territories in Southern Africa is the notion of dual land tenure systems and structures. There was, on the one hand, land appropriated by the colonial settlers, under "received" forms of tenure governed by the "received" colonial law and legal procedures. On the other hand, land occupied by the indigenous populations fell under "customary" tenure or other forms evolved by the colonial authorities. The distribution of land within these two broad categories was of course skewed and inequitable, since the settler community was invariably allocated disproportionate amounts of the most productive land. It was in this context of inequities and inequalities that nationalist leaders were easily able to marshal up widespread support around the "land issue" as the focal point of the anti-colonial struggles. But, it has also been observed that despite the overarching importance of the grievances against colonial agrarian and land distribution policies in the nationalist struggles, independence was secured on terms requiring severe compromises in post-colonial land policies. The British government, for one, succeeded in imposing legal and constitutional constraints on acquisition and distribution of settler land (Allott, 1968: 7). It has further been argued that the lure of immediate political independence,

and the mistaken belief that these constraints could always be revisited after independence, provided the explanation for the retreat of the nationalist politicians on the land issue (Ng'ong'ola, 1992: 118). The reality is that the land question has continued to provide a terrain for contestation in post-independence politics in most parts of Africa, including Southern Africa. A lot of space in the literature on land and agrarian reform in Africa has been given to a consideration of this issue (Downs & Reyna, 1988; Bekker, 1991; Bassett & Crumney, 1992). I do not propose to engage the debate along this question as such. As stated above, my aim is, rather, to re-focus attention on some of the major conceptual and policy dilemmas that have not often been highlighted in the somewhat fragmented discussions on the problem.

In considering the land policies of Southern African countries, one overriding consideration should be to examine the similarities in the policies of these countries, and thus to draw some lessons concerning post-independence reforms in the region. Although, of course, one must bear in mind the many differences in population growth and demographic spread, urbanization patterns, availability of land, wealth, infrastructure, and so on, among the various countries, some common challenges and problems can be identified within the region as a whole. Ultimately, the problems posed by unequal access to landed property and the challenge of balancing resource inequities in the interests of greater social justice and substantive political and economic equality for all citizens afflict the entire region. Some of these problems will be highlighted here.

Two of the major similarities in matters of access to, control over, and management of land use in the region can quickly be noted. A common major characteristic is the existence of two parallel and separate systems of agriculture - commercial and subsistence - with white large scale farmers (and a tiny minority of blacks) dominating the former sector. This is accompanied by structural inequalities in access to agricultural land in both quality and quantity, and to

infrastructural facilities and services, between whites and blacks (at least in Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe). One predictable consequence of this in all the former settler colonies of Southern Africa has largely been the accompanying land hunger, overpopulation and low productivity in the subsistence sector, as opposed to under-utilisation of land in the commercial sector. Another common characteristic concerns the gender-discriminatory nature of land policies, and the consequent denial of equal access to, and ownership over, land that women generally suffer. I shall address this problem in some detail below. But, first, a brief catalogue of some of the shared dilemmas and the questions and challenges they pose for the countries in the region. Not all these questions are answered here, but they need to be posed as critical issues for further reflection in the discourse on land rights.

II. SELECTED ISSUES IN LAND REFORM POLICIES: COMMON CHALLENGES AND SHARED DILEMMAS

There are a number of critical issues that must be articulated in any discussion of the contemporary land dilemma in Southern Africa. Only the major ones will be addressed here, namely: land privatization, customary land tenure, land restitution and restoration, women's access to land, and post-conflict land resettlement.

Land Privatization

First, the trend towards privatisation. One of the results of the external pressures brought to bear upon African states by donor organizations is the liberalization of land tenure arrangements under structural adjustment programs and the transition towards market economies. This raises a number of questions for consideration. For example, can there be a trade off - ought there to be one - between security and productivity, on the one hand, and equity and traditional notions of

land tenure on the other? The problem would appear to be that while international financial institutions advocate such reforms, apparently in the interests of greater agricultural productivity, and exaggerated free-market illusions of modernization, they would most probably lead to even more rural poverty and landlessness (Plant, 1993: 14). Clearly, therefore, one of the issues which needs to be borne in mind here has to do with the kind of alternative guarantees that can be devised for land security for the rural poor while accommodating structural changes.

Land Restitution and Restoration

The second dilemma relates to the principle of land restitution. South Africa provides us with not only the most obvious but also the most challenging context for a consideration of the issue of land restitution in the region. It is necessary to discuss its situation in some detail.

Apartheid policies denied millions of South Africans access to land and rendered untold numbers homeless. But even before the imposition of state-sponsored apartheid, with the coming to power of the National Party government in 1948, land dispossession in South Africa had already been in place for almost three centuries. For the history of the European occupation and colonization of the country, going back to the arrival of the first Dutch settlers in the Cape in 1652, was also, largely, a history of land dispossession. The legislation which was to be put in place later, starting with the Native (Black) Land Act of 1913, represented only the starting point of a systematic process of legally sanctioned land discrimination and dispossession. And, although the history of land dispossession is shared with other countries elsewhere in Africa, it was in South Africa that the process lasted for so long, was so complex and vicious, and led to the denationalization of the indigenous populations. The massive forced removals that became the symbol of apartheid were a central plank of this process. According to Platzky and Walker (1985), 3.5 million people were forcibly removed between 1960 and 1983 alone. In 1960 39.8%

(4.4 million people) of the black population were crammed into the formal tribal reserves. By 1980 forced removals had raised the proportion to 53.1% (11 million people) (Letsoalo, 1994: 208). Not surprisingly, by 1991 it was generally accepted that about 10% of the South African population owned more than 80% of the 122 million hectares of land in use in South Africa.

Given this historical context, it came as little surprise to most observers in South Africa when the negotiations for a new democratic constitution yielded a special sub-chapter in the interim Constitution (Sections 121-123) devoted to the restitution of land rights to persons deprived of them by apartheid legislation. Towards the end of 1994, the South African Parliament took up this constitutional commitment by enacting the Restitution of Land Rights Act of 1994. The Act establishes a Land Claims Commission and a Land Claims Court to deal with land restitution claims. Some commentators have hailed this as a radical innovation; as a recognition of what the struggle was all about, what people went to jail or into exile for, and what many more had died for. Others have criticized the constitutional provisions as not going far enough because, they argue, the broader issue of redistribution is ignored and the rights of restitution are subjected to and weakened by existing property rights and an administrative process of ministerial certification (Roux, 1995: 5). For yet other observers, it is perhaps too early to judge the merits and demerits of the process; one must wait and see how the post-apartheid government will go about delivering and implementing land reform, especially in the area of land restitution and redistribution (Murphy, 1995: 1). But a number of issues need to be briefly considered here.

The first consideration is this: demands for restitution are based on the fact that the land in question was acquired forcibly, unjustly and in contravention of the rights of the original owners and claimants to the land. Should land restitution now be conceived of solely as a symbolic redress for apartheid wrongs? Clearly not. It has been argued that land restitution should be employed as a developmental tool to re-establish communities deprived of land; that to succeed

as a means of social and economic security, the process must be accompanied by mechanisms of developmental and infrastructural support, not to mention financial resources.

Secondly, it is also argued that land claims should not be based exclusively on a narrow, doctrinal positive law of ownership (van der Walt, 1992: 431). But, rather, that land claims should be seen as claims of equity, social justice and inherent human rights. Therefore, any restitution process, apart from restoring legitimate rights in land to those unjustly deprived of them, has to take account of the need to redress the denial of rights of ownership by apartheid land laws to the majority of South African citizens and to give recognition to the informal tenures which emerged in response to that prohibition (Murphy, 1995: 3). The argument here is that land claims cannot, and should not, be based selectively on title deeds or lease agreements for the simple reason that the claims of the greater majority of black people are going to be founded on length of occupation, customary notions of birthright and expectations of secure tenure based on tradition and consensual practices (Swanson, 1992: 336). In other words, as Murphy aptly notes, "a land claims court ideally should be a court of equity reaching its decisions by balancing a variety of factors of which title is only one amongst many" (Murphy, 1995: 4). We can only wait to see whether the newly constituted, but as yet unoperational, Land Claims Court will adopt just this approach.

The final issue concerns the imposition of time limits for claims for restitution. This was one area of contestation between the various political parties and others engaged in the debate. In the case of South Africa, how far back can we go in time - 1913, when the first major piece of legislation denying Africans equal access to and ownership of land was enacted? Or 1652, which marks the historical starting point in this long process of land dispossession, as some political parties and formations in South Africa, principally the Pan Africanist Congress, have argued? The interim Constitution and the newly enacted legislation settled for 1913 as the cut-off date. This

is regarded as a pragmatic compromise which reflects the consensus that the doctrine of aboriginal title should not form the basis of restitution claims in the new South Africa (Bennett, 1993: 443).

Customary Land Tenure

The third dilemma common to Southern African countries arises out of the process of counterbalancing customary land rights and statutory land rights. The tension between customary law and statutory law is quite pervasive in African societies. This tension is most noticeable in the area of land rights. The issue deserves a fair amount of treatment.

In this era of externally imposed structural adjustment programmes in most African countries, there has arisen a corresponding pressure to replace customary land tenure systems with private and registered forms of ownership. The claim is that private land ownership and land registration programs are mechanisms for promoting security of tenure, inducing more investment in agriculture, and thereby increasing agricultural productivity. This claim is, of course, premised on the rather familiar, but thoroughly debunked, argument that traditional land tenure systems are a constraint upon agricultural development (Bruce, 1993).

As indicated above, colonial land ownership policies and models almost invariably provided for dual systems of ownership whereby the colonial settlers enjoyed private and alienable rights to the land (freehold title), while the majority of the indigenous Africans were limited to the enjoyment of communal land rights under the traditional systems of allocation. The colonial ideology purposively promoted the notion that Africans did not "own" property in land, at least not as individuals. This became received orthodoxy, not only among colonial lawyers, anthropologists, missionaries, and so on, but also among most commentators in the post-colonial era. This orthodoxy has recently been challenged as a thinly disguised strategy to distort, indeed deny, ownership of land and property relations among African people precisely in order to provide

a justification for the colonial take-over and dispossession of these lands (Ranger, 1993; Gutto, 1995: 16).

In any event, most African countries have retained the distinction between communal (or traditional) and private (or freehold) land, with varying degrees of the relative responsibilities of central government, local and traditional political authorities. The moves towards greater land privatization must be seen against this background. But critical questions remain. Even if it is accepted that increased land privatization ensures better security and access to credit, does it not also lead to more landlessness and land dispossession? How does land privatization impact upon traditional authority, especially in respect of the powers of land allocation which chiefs in most traditional communities still claim for themselves? As regards this last question, a number of approaches have been engaged in some of the Southern African countries. In Zimbabwe, the Communal Land Act of 1982 recognized the concept of communal tenure but vested land allocation powers to elected rather than traditional chiefs. By contrast, traditional chiefs in post-independence Namibia have continued to enjoy the power to allocate land within their recognized "communal areas". In Botswana, the system of Land Boards provides a half-way house: the Land Boards are empowered to allocate land under both customary and common law for traditional and other uses. Their membership includes both traditional authorities and government appointed functionaries. In all these cases, there have been some conflicts between the traditional and the new state-appointed authorities, with the former demanding a restoration of their exclusive powers over land allocation. Similar conflicts are currently playing themselves out in post-apartheid South Africa.

Women and Land Rights: A Gendered Perspective of the Land Question

The fourth dilemma concerns women's property rights and access to land. It is indisputable that

men have traditionally dominated not only the major forms of property, including land, but also the institutions of governance and political power which in turn determine access to, and control over, property. This has remained the case even where constitutions have set out to provide for apparently gender-neutral provisions guaranteeing equality and non-discrimination for both men and women. In all the Southern African countries, and particularly those with entrenched bills of rights, there are constitutional provisions which prohibit sex and gender discrimination. Some of these countries are also parties to the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which enjoins state parties to ensure equal treatment for both men and women, especially rural women, in land and agrarian reform as well as in land resettlement schemes (Article 14(2)(g)). Yet, the reality is that there is rampant evidence of continued exclusion of, and discrimination against, women by both officials and institutions with power to allocate and distribute land. Formal equality as guaranteed in constitutional provisions and other relevant legislation is hardly matched by social and political action. Women constitute the largest group of vulnerable persons whose entitlement to land rights and security is not guaranteed in prevailing land policies in Southern Africa. Although it is generally agreed that women play an especially important role in rural agriculture, accounting for the larger share of subsistence food production in Africa (Davison, 1988), past agrarian reforms have been largely prejudicial to women's land security. Where traditional customary tenures may have provided some kind of security to women, land reform tenures since independence have tended to discriminate against them. Land registration programs have favoured men, by putting newly registered land in men's names and ignoring women's traditional rights to land use (Jacobs, 1988: 26). The legal position as it affects married women in Botswana is particularly instructive in this regard.

State land in Botswana is allocated by the Land Boards, mentioned earlier, to both men

and women, and the allocation is made irrespective of whether one is married or not. On the basis of this policy, women not only ought to have access, but have every right to own such land. However, when it comes to registration of title, women cannot register such land because, under Botswana law (based principally on Roman-Dutch law), women married in community of property, or those married out of community but not having excluded the marital power of the husband, cannot in law register land rights in their own name (Qunta, 1987; Mathuba, 1992). And here is the way to a vicious circle: these women cannot obtain loans to develop the land, since banks and other financial institutions insist that borrowers register their leases with the Registrar of Deeds. Yet, Section 18 of the Deeds Registry Act, the relevant piece of legislation in this regard, requires that women disclose their marital status and, if married, to state the name of the husband. Furthermore, irrespective of whether the woman is married in or out of community of property, the husband has to assist the wife in executing any deeds registered in the deeds registry. The problems arising out of this legal situation have been well documented by researchers (Mathuba, 1989: 35). Thus, for example, women have had to suffer the injustice and indignity of having their family's property sold off without their knowledge; a married woman who happens to be the bread winner in the family is denied the opportunity to own and develop property - since the land is not and cannot be registered in her name, she cannot use it as security to obtain loans from financial institutions. In the final analysis, the law simply discriminates against women and has the effect of perpetuating their economic dependency on men, since the latter are not subjected to similar strictures in their ownership of, and access to, similar property. All this despite the existence of provisions in the Botswana Constitution which guarantee sex and gender equality (Sections 3 and 15). This experience points to the interrelated nature of certain legal issues concerning the position of women - legal capacity, status, marital rights - which have a direct bearing on the question of access to and ownership of land. The formal equality guaranteed

by the constitutions is not always borne out in the daily application of some of the legislation and the unwritten Roman-Dutch or English common law which underlie the majority of the legal systems of the Southern African countries.

Now, the need for a gendered perspective arises partly in recognition of the fact that most discourses on land have focused on the land rights of the landless as aggregated groups. Often, no regard is paid to the internal divisions or social strata amongst such groups. The emphasis often given on efficiency and commercial viability of land use, tenurial regimes, productivity, and so on, rarely takes as much account of differentiations based on gender as it does of race and class, for example. It is argued that this aggregation of land users has obscured the differential interests, inputs, rights and obligations relating to land, especially in the rural areas. Gaidzanwa's observation, in relation to Zimbabwe, that "this trend in analysis is predicated on the evolution and support of [ideologies] that increasingly mute or phase out the entitlement of individual women, especially those in marriage relationships, to unmediated access to land" (Gaidzanwa, 1995: 2) is equally true of all the other countries in Southern Africa. Indeed, it ought to be obvious that the linkage of women to land only through marriage at a time when land is increasingly becoming a privatised and registerable resource, given the pressures of structural adjustment alluded to earlier, only undermines women's livelihoods and economic rights. Attempts to engender research on land control and access must thus be seen in the light of the increasing struggles by scholars and writers to "deconstruct" the gendered basis of power relations. But, in a recent critique of studies on the land question in Zimbabwe Moyo has identified a number of problems with some of the attempts to identify the gendered basis of iniquitous land control and relations: first, that such research tends not to address the key interrelated variables of gender, class, race and ethnicity, or to treat these aspects individually and in isolation. Second, that the land problem also tends to be treated in a narrow functionalist sense, which sees only agricultural and housing land

issues as the pivotal locus of a gendered analysis of the land question. And, finally, that existing studies with a gendered perspective often lack an introspective approach, which could critically examine women's local and national scale agency for more equitable land reform (Moyo, 1995a: 14).

What is advocated, instead, is the examination of gender relations alongside the examination of such processes as the evolution and role of class formation in differentiating access to land and related resources (Cousins *et al*, 1990; Moyo, 1995a). Similarly, the role of capital, land market processes and private institutional processes which govern land distribution also needs to be interrogated. Some of the emerging body of literature on these issues in the Southern African region has begun to address some of these concerns. Studies on Botswana (Mathuba, 1989, 1992), Swaziland (Rose, 1988), South Africa (Letsoalo, 1994), Zambia (Himonga and Munachonga, 1991), and Zimbabwe (Gaidzanwa, 1988, 1995; Moyo, 1987, 1995a; Pankhurst and Jacobs, 1988) seem to incline towards a common conclusion: that land reform policies have on balance tended to increase women's dependence upon men, despite some benefits. Until women obtain land rights on the same basis as men, this will necessarily remain the case. However, it has also been forcefully argued that land rights alone cannot fully liberate women. Women, unlike men, are constrained by marital regimes and other legal disabilities. The law may constrain them as subordinates to their husbands. Where they are not married, they may still be subjected to the legal powers and domination of their fathers and brothers.

What all this suggests is that the disadvantaged position of women cannot be changed dramatically simply by changing the law, without some accompanying far-reaching economic, institutional and cultural changes (Jacobs, 1992: 27). After all, as was noted earlier, the guarantee of formal equality between men and women in constitutions and property legislation has not always ensured equal rights of ownership or access to land for both men and women in Africa.

Thus, for example, although Himonga and Munachonga quite rightly observe that the law and procedure relating to the acquisition and allocation of land in Zambia is substantially gender-neutral, they go on to identify and catalogue a number of factors which, in fact, have ensured that women do not enjoy equal access to ownership and control of land: for example, high rates of illiteracy among women, negative attitudes of officials, the subordination of women within marriage, kinship and succession systems, and the lack of economic power of women. The conclusion they draw for Zambia is equally relevant for all the other countries in the region: that the solution to the problem of rural women's access to agricultural land does not lie in the letter of the law and official policy but, rather, that much more must be done outside these regimes to increase women's actual access to agricultural land (Himonga and Munachonga, 1993: 70).

Indeed, this calls for new forms of struggle, of resistance and power relationships not only between men and women, but also between women and the state. This is one area which provides a great challenge to all states in the region engaged in the process of restructuring and balancing the resource inequities posed by the land question.

Post-Conflict Land Resettlement: Some Recent Developments

There are also at least two other issues that stand to be considered as aspects of the land dilemma in Southern Africa. In the first place, it has been observed, for example, that conflict and post-conflict situations will always generate immense practical problems and uncertainties over land rights and land ownership. Southern African States have witnessed huge population movements over the past two decades, especially. Refugees and internally displaced persons fleeing from armed conflicts generated by liberation struggles or post-colonial civil conflicts, as in Angola and Mozambique, have been among the most memorable political and social phenomena in recent years. Such displaced populations may well return to their places of origin only to find that their

lands have in the meantime been occupied by other people either spontaneously or through deliberate government-sponsored resettlement schemes. How should the resultant competing claims be reconciled? The consolidation of the peace process in Angola will bring this question into sharper focus.

Secondly, recent developments involving South Africa and other countries in the Southern African region and beyond present another interesting aspect to the land dilemma. The position relating to Mozambique, especially, deserves detailed mention.

Mozambique was, perhaps, the poorest settler colony in the region, and one that, moreover, achieved independence after an armed struggle that left the agricultural infrastructure largely devastated. The subsequent South African-sponsored destabilization which went on for another decade or so after independence did not render the task of social and economic transformation easy. Despite these setbacks, it has been noted that between 1975 and 1990 "[The] transformation on the land constituted possibly the greatest achievement of the Mozambican revolution. It also constitutes the area of change that is most incomplete, and most full of contradictions" (Honwana-Welch and Sachs, 1990: 6). The 1975 independence Constitution provided that all land and mineral resources belonged to the state, and that the state would determine the conditions for the use and enjoyment of land. Subsequent legislation, namely the Land Act of 1988, provided for land use rights for joint ventures between Mozambican enterprises and foreign capital, or actual leaseholding to Mozambican entities or foreign interests. These arrangements have been left more or less unaltered by the 1990 Constitution. Article 46 vests ownership of land in the state, while Article 47(2) provides that the right to use and enjoyment of land may be granted to individual or collective persons "taking into account its social purpose". The law also provides for the registration of title.

It is against this background that the rather startling developments of 1995 took place. the

announcement by a group of white Afrikaners in South Africa that they had secured an agreement with the Mozambican government to resettle a number of Afrikaner farmers in the country. The secretary of the South African Chamber of Agricultural Development in Africa (SACADA), Mr. Willie Joordan, claimed that this scheme - dubbed the "Boers' trek" in the local media - had the political and financial backing of the European Union, and that 12 African countries (including Angola, Mozambique, Zambia and Zaire) had already expressed interest. Although neither the European Union ambassador to Pretoria, Mr. Erwan Fouere, nor the South African government would comment publicly on the matter, it was clear that the project had some official sanction. For during his recent visit to South Africa, the Mozambican president, Joachim Chissano, met with officials of the Transvaal Farmers Union, the main movers behind the project, apparently to conclude an agreement in this regard. It was simultaneously reported that President Mandela had also asked Tanzania to accept the Afrikaner farmers to help that country develop its agriculture. These claims and arrangements have largely remained shrouded in something of a mystery. Although the whole scheme had been trumpeted as the brainchild of the leader of the Afrikaner-oriented Freedom Front, General Constand Viljoen, and was initially presented as a kind of "regional Reconstruction and Development Program" to assist in boosting the declining agricultural productivity of the region, both Maputo and Pretoria have since kept quiet about it. Similarly, it is not clear to what extent the offers to South African white farmers to take up and settle land as far afield as the Central African Republic, Congo, Zambia and Zaire under this arrangement have been taken up. Only Zaire has confirmed the holding of a meeting between a delegation led by General Viljoen and President Mobutu and the Zairian Minister of Agriculture, Wivine Nlandu, in Kinshasa on March 31, 1995. An agreement relating to the resettlement of South African farmers was reportedly signed at this meeting.¹ The Mozambican government has gone on record as saying that the land is not being given away free, but will be leased at 60 cents

per hectare per year. For his part, one such latter-day settler, Egbert Hiemstra, has been quoted as boasting that "[It's] like being a child in a sweet shop. There are just so many beautiful, fertile places to choose from".²

All this could simply be accepted as a legitimate enterprise falling within the provisions allowing for the leasing of land to foreign interests under both the 1988 Land Act and the 1990 Constitution if it were not for the fact that it is all happening at the great expense of the poor peasants who still have very limited, if any, access to these "beautiful, fertile places". Besides, the fact of the matter is that the openly declared motivation behind this late twentieth century Afrikaner trek into the interior of the African continent is the fear, on the part of some white South Africans, of the new land legislation, trade unionism, and affirmative action programs, as they affect their farming interests, in post-apartheid South Africa.³ In other words, what these developments represent is simply a thinly disguised effort at accessing new lands in new territories in order to escape the equalization and democratization of resources and access to land, economic and political power in post-apartheid South Africa.

I have no independent purchase on the validity of the economic arguments advanced by the Mozambican, Zairian, Zambian and other governments for this scheme. But it would seem to me that this cannot be the most thoughtful and sensitive approach to the need to balance the resource inequities of the region and to remedy the injustices and inequalities inherent in the current land situation in these countries. Indeed, resettling white South African farmers in countries which have yet to resolve existing problems of landlessness and land dispossession can only exacerbate, rather than eradicate, such problems. The persistence of the land problem in these countries is a consequence of the inadequacies of post-independence land reform policies. What is required all round is a new policy formulation process whereby the macro-economic objectives of land reform are clearly identified and defined. Some of these have been identified as household

production or social security, employment development, domestic output growth, export growth, and the promotion of social and regional equity in agricultural production (Moyo, 1995b: 289). Moreover, in order to succeed, any new land policies will have to identify the appropriate beneficiary groups targeted for land distribution. Politically and economically, the importation or emigration of frustrated Afrikaner farmers cannot offer the most credible and workable solution to the land dilemma in Southern Africa.

III. A CONCLUDING OBSERVATION

So many years after independence, the land question remains as hotly contested in all Southern African countries as it was during the years of struggle for political liberation. A number of issues still lie at the heart of this question, for example: the quality and quantity of land available for redistribution, the procedures and financial costs of land acquisition and redistribution, the efficiency of land use, the economic and social impact of land reform, and so on. The popular perception, in the more recently independent countries such as Namibia and Zimbabwe, for example, is that the expectations for egalitarianism raised during the bitter liberation struggles have not been fulfilled, and that it is capitalist farming elites, predominantly white, who continue to reap most of the benefits of post-independence land reforms (Moyo, 1995b: 1). It is argued that land reform will remain critical in Southern Africa, because of the specific historical experience of settler land expropriation, the culturally specific demands for land, the history of the struggle for land and the contemporary economic hardships facing both rural and urban people, especially in this era of structural adjustment. However, recent state responses to the land question do not generate any confidence and optimism.

There is now an increasing acceptance of the centrality of land allocation in schemes designed to combat poverty and social-economic deprivations in general, and also a recognition

that the land interest is deeply interwoven with the public interest and the common interest of the nation as a whole (Nagan, 1993: 151; Plant, 1993: 20). Two developments since the early 1980s have been of particular relevance to the debate on land rights in Africa. First, the emergence of the idea of the right to development as a human right.⁴ Second, the greater emphasis given to economic and social rights necessarily linked to the issues of land rights, access and affordability, and the recognition of the social function of property. As regards the connection between land rights and the right to development, it has been correctly argued that as land allocation, land use and planning are intimately bound up with the prospects for freezing or enhancing a community's capacity for development, land should not be looked at as some kind of reified, abstract juridical construct, but as a fundamental and important resource implicating an unfolding array of entitlements and interests (Nagan, 1993: 151). The right to development, much championed by the developing world, stresses the indivisibility of all human rights, and the inter-linkages between civil and political rights, on the one hand, and economic, social and cultural rights on the other.

From a functional point of view, land as a resource that facilitates individual and communal development becomes an important base for economic, social and political power. For land is, in this sense, central to a number of such issues as housing and shelter, communications, food security, environmental management and use, access to credit, finance and security, cultural identity, and so on. All these concerns are related to the issues of economic justice and equity, especially for landless rural communities. The right to development, therefore, underpins the demands by the landless individuals and communities in Southern Africa to a dispensation which respects and guarantees their rights to social and economic development, economic empowerment and human dignity. But the realization of these rights requires, *inter alia*, state intervention to protect not only private land rights, but also, more importantly, group and collective rights. Furthermore, the state must intervene to resolve the dilemmas and problems which have been

identified in this discussion. Until then, the imbalances in access to, and control over, land and related resources will persist. Such imbalances, as has been argued in this paper, represent an unmistakable denial of social justice and equity, especially for the millions of the rural poor spread around in the entire Southern African sub-continent.

Notes

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1. See *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg, April 13 - 20, 1995, p. 4.
2. Quoted in *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg, December 1 - 7, 1995, P. 10.
3. Ibid.
4. The notion of the "right to development" was first proposed by the Senegalese jurist and former judge at the International Court of Justice, Judge Keba Mbaye, and was subsequently adopted in U.N. General Assembly resolution 41/128 of December 21, 1986. Although it has now gained widespread support and currency, its status as a fundamental human right is still contested by some international lawyers and human rights theorists, especially from the West.

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The Social Effects of Road Improvement in the Colonial District of
Moçambique*: Negotiating Gender Roles and Space in a Peasant Household
(1885-1961)

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* The colonial district of Moçambique is today the Mozambican northern province of Nampula. Throughout the text by Moçambique I am referring to the district, and by Mozambique I am referring to the entire territory of the colony.

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Social historians have recently shown that the expansion of commodity production created not only new demands for labor but also opportunities for “dependents,” such as women and their adult children, to break the bonds of patriarchy (Berry, S., Fathers Work ... 1985); Guyer, J. and Peters, P., 1987: 197-213; Linda M. Heywood, 1987; Mandala, Elias, 1990; Watts, M., 1988:31-51). A consensus also exists that colonial economic policies fundamentally changed the context in which African household and kinship relations functioned in Mozambique (See for instance, S. Stichter and J. Hay (eds.), 1984; Sonia Kruks, Ben Wisner, 1984; Jelle Van den Berg, 1987: 375-389). While recent studies have emphasized the general erosion of patriarchy, they have barely studied the question of differential power and resource control between men and women. Scholarly works produced by market theorists, for their excessive concentration on market relations, and on simplistic models of 'economic behavior,' fell short to reveal the multiple responses that in practice occurred amongst rural population(John Howe, 1984; Edwin Holmstrom, 1934); Leland H. Jenks, 1944:3-20; Lima, Alfredo Pereira de, 1971; Jan Hogendorn, 1978; A.G. Hopkins, 1973; Simon Katzenellenbogen, 1982); Kenneth Vickery, 1986). These economic behavior models fail to address many social and economic responses at the household level. This paper explores how the expansion of modern land transport in the colonial district of Moçambique affected the relationship between men and women within a typical Makua household. It highlights women's situation under the impact of this transport revolution because their experience and voices have been heretofore overlooked.

This paper goes beyond an assessment of the effects of rail and roads to simple measures like the rise in volume and value of cotton, rice, and other cash crop production due to the construction of roads, to link transport influences to both economic and social changes within peasant households. All the adversities brought by the transport revolution affected men and women differently.

The coming of the railroad and improved road transport appear to have increased the number of young able-bodied men who left households. Thousands of able-bodied men were compelled to engage in contract labor either on the construction of the railroad and roads or on European plantations. Forced contract labor, as well as, the limited voluntary migration of young men, deprived typical peasant households of the most productive male labor force, which was critically needed for land clearing and tree felling in the peasant household economy. This reduced male labor supply limited peasants' ability to take advantage of the few economic opportunities that improved communications brought, particularly improved access to wider markets¹.

As the literature suggests (See for instance Major A. J. de Mello Machado, 1968; and F. L. Martinez, 1989), women in the Makua matrilineal society have always played a more important role than the men in agriculture. Modern means of transport increased this role. "A high percentage of adult males, mostly superior to fifty percent", a contemporary report asserted, "is currently employed in far away enterprises and other labor centers, where they spend no less than six to eighteen months." (Junta de Investigaç o do Ultramar, 1964: 76). The absence of these males increased women's workloads, responsibilities in their families, and influence on their children's education.

Despite the increase of female responsibilities within the household, women's status continued to be inferior to that of men. Like other patriarchal colonial societies, colonial Mozambique offered more opportunities in the emerging capitalist agro-industry to men than to women. Women's sphere of influence remained confined to the household economy, where education and contact with the outside world remained inaccessible. Access to rural stores was virtually the only window opened to them, and many hinterland

¹. J.A.S. Blair, writing on Sierra Leone, has similarly hinted the curtailing effect of migrant labor on peasant agriculture. "...the road appears to have accelerated the tendency of the young to migrate.... Ironically it appears that agricultural opportunities that improved communications bring, notably through allowing improvements in techniques through partial mechanization and through enhancing the motivation of the individual farmer by offering him better prices as a result of easier access to a wider range of markets, may be severely curtailed by the limitations in labour supply" (J.A.S. Blair, 1978).

Makua women used this unique weapon to lessen their absolute dependence on their male guardians.

In addition to improving communications and transportation in the hinterland, the railway and roads helped expand trade in remote rural areas (See for instance Pegado e Silva, 1959; Valdez, 1964; Holmstrom, 1934; Jenks, 1944; Pereira de Lima, 1971; Hopkins, 1973). This paper argues that the practical, material economic forces represented by the expansion of modern land transport into the hinterland and the subsequent expansion of the commodity market had a significant impact on the daily lives of both men and women among the hinterland Makua. The spread of modern means of transport in the Moçambique district hinterland brought with it rural shops (*cantinas*) that helped to expand commodity production as well as women's access to imported goods. Even before the expansion of modern transport infrastructures and cash opportunities into the hinterland, women's position within the household was gradually being eroded. The period of expansion of cash crops was preceded by a household woman-centered agriculture. With far fewer opportunities of acquiring cash than men, and tied to their role of family food producers, women still had to pay taxes.² While men were increasingly turning into cash-winners in both regional trade and migrant labor, women became increasingly dependent upon their male guardians for access to cash for both taxes and imported commodities.

However, as railway and motor vehicles gradually incorporated more 'backwater' regions into the world commodity market, women found a way of retarding the erosion of their previously central role in the household economy. Colonial development schemes in Moçambique district rested mainly on cash crop production. Since agriculture was commonly a women's domain, it is likely that women's position within the household

². Taxes for both men and women had been increased from 62 in 1925 to 75 escudos in 1927. According to a Portaria Provincial nº 631 of Dec.24 of the same year the increase was considered critical to cover the expenses of railroad building, road maintenance and high administrative costs. See Portaria nº1.883, published in the Boletim Oficial nº5, 1 Série, Feb.4, (1933).

economy became more and more crucial. Although initially family-minded producers, women gradually became the principal producers of cash crops.

The opportunity to acquire cash through the sale of surplus production to nearby rural shops enabled many women to renegotiate power within the household. Prior to the introduction of railroads and roads, evidence shows that women were entirely dependent upon men. Only males were able to migrate for jobs where they could acquire cash for taxes and clothing for their mothers, spouses, sisters, or daughters. However, the expansion of roads and the subsequent establishment of shops contributed to a change in this situation. While their male relatives were engaged in contract labor, women were able to produce cash crops (cotton, cashew nuts, sesame, peanuts), and sell them directly to shops for cash or other necessary commodities. As we shall see later, this did not mean the end of men's attempt to control household finances. However, women's position was still substantially altered.

This study rests basically on two bodies of primary source material: archival and oral data. I collected oral evidence in a series of field trips to Nampula Province, where I conducted interviews with female and male peasants, former rail and road transportation workers, and former local political authorities. During my research it became evident that there was a dearth of secondary literature and ethnographic studies on the colonial district of Moçambique. My work is a contribution to fill this void.

I. The Hinterland Makua Women in the Late Pre-Colonial and Early Colonial Period.

The Makua, like many other peoples of Central Africa (See for instance Chet S. Lancaster, 1981), have practiced a form of protracted uxori-local bride-service marriage. Uxori-local bride service marriage creates matrilo-cal extended families and gives society a matrilo-cal character (Major Machado: 15). Husbands in Makua society are always outsiders in their wives' villages. As a Makua proverb clearly maintains, "*Mulopwana,*

nakhuwo; kxanimela ekholwèle" (A man is like a corn shrub whose roots, unlike millet «méle», do not create offspring).³ This aphorism explains the very foundations of Makua society. It asserts that the man's clan is fruitless and sterile, that it cannot be transmitted to his offspring. In contrast, the woman is viewed as the fertile one, whose *nihimo* (the clan) is reproduced. A man in Makua society is merely a biological reproducer. He is therefore compared to a corn plant that fructifies only once before dying, whereas a woman is likened to the admirable millet, whose roots renew its productivity for at least three years in a row.

During the pre-colonial and most of the colonial period, despite the man's secondary role in the social reproduction of the *nihimo*, his role in the household economy was crucial. "*Mulopwana, epasó; muthiyana, ehipá*" (A man is the axe; and a woman the hoe) (Valente de Matos:205), says another Makua proverb. In fact, among the Makua, men conventionally cut the trees and cleared the fields with axes and machetes, whereas women tilled the land, seeded, and weeded with hoes. Without an axe, an important tool for clearing the land, a hoe could not do anything by itself. This aphorism is then extended by analogy to the gender roles of men and women in the Makua peasant household. Men and women must not be seen simply as fathers and mothers, but also as important economic agents competing along gender lines for the control of household resources. Both men and women played important roles in household social and economic reproduction. The balance of power between men and women is metaphorically presented as an equilibrium between an ax and a hoe, hence neither could unilaterally claim control of all household resources. Since both worked for them, these household resources then belonged to both of them.

³. Despite the fact that these proverbs were collected and presented in a written form much later, they are though part of Makua oral tradition dating back to the pre-colonial period. Aphorisms and proverbs are an important part of culture and moral education among the Makua. For more see, Provérbios Macuas: Cultura Moçambicana, collected by Pe. Alexandre Valente de Matos, da Sociedade Missionária Portuguesa. (Lisboa: Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, Junta de Investigações Científicas do Ultramar 1982), p. 68.

In the pre-colonial Makua society, all domestic chores were women's responsibility. These included bearing and rearing children, preparing food for the family, cultivating food stuffs, making domestic appliances like pots and sieves, and fetching water and firewood. It was men's responsibility to build huts, clear the land, fell trees, and provide all agriculture tools and clothing for their families. In the pre-colonial era and early decades of the colonial settlement, it was also men's responsibility to help their families to survive famines (Major Machado:190-191).

During the same period, long-distance trade, as a nondomestic sphere, was dominated by men. Depending on the distance from the point of departure to the coast, these trade journeys could last from a week to one month. Only able-bodied, healthy, young men participated in these trade clusters. Both the distance and duration of the journeys back and forth led to age and sex discrimination. Only young and able-bodied men could walk an average of fifty kilometers a day with loads on their shoulders. The length of the journeys acted as a deterrent to women. Women, constrained by their domestic chores, could not be absent for long periods from the household. It is therefore not surprising that long-distance trade was segregated along both sex and age lines. Women, children and the elderly were literally excluded.

However, the roles of the elderly and women in the preparation for the journey were very critical. Unlike the Akamba of Kenya, where long-distance trade participants engaged in a collective oath, blessings of their elders and other religious ceremonies (R. Cummings: 196), important Makua rituals were held within individual households. Each man along with his wife would offer *makeya* or *mukutho* to the spirit of their beloved ancestors, begging them for blessings. In Mecubúri (see attached map), for instance, before their departure on these long, uncertain and dangerous trips, men asked their wives or their female relatives to prepare food, which consisted of meal, dried manioc and peanuts. Food supplies had to suffice for a round trip. A successful journey required a thorough and meticulous preparation, which involved a series of rituals. For instance, the

makeya (gift to the spirit of ancestors) was prepared and offered by women on behalf of their husbands, uncles and sons. Shortly before such a long journey was to take place, it was quite common to see women pounding millet, taking the meal in a bowl, and going to a certain family holy site along with their husbands, usually where the most respected elderly family members had been buried, or to a tree called *mutolo*. During the act of offering the sacrifice to the spirit of the ancestors, as Mrs. Mukwashe recalled, a woman would recite:

'My husband is about to undertake a very long and dangerous journey. I implore You to protect him throughout the journey. Bless him so that the products he is taking with him will be well sold...' (Group interview with Manuessa Mukuashe et al. Mecubúri-sede. October 11, 1993.)

After this plea, the man would take his saddle-bag and leave to join others in the cluster.

While men were absent from the household, a specified set of rules and taboos were imposed upon their wives. Taboos formerly used by hunters were now adopted, transformed and perfected to play a new role during the period of long-distance trade (For more on this issue see Edward Alpers, 1975: chap. 4). In the long period of her husband's absence, a woman was not supposed to quit the household. She was barred from travelling beyond a distance of one kilometer, and was then only allowed to go to a nearby well or river to fetch water. She was also forbidden to shut the door of her hut throughout the period of her husband's absence (Group interview with Manuessa Mukuashe et al., October 11, 1993). She was proscribed not only from cooking for a strange male guest but also from traveling and conversing with men while her husband was away (F. L. Martinez, 1989:171).

From the above it can be assumed that this set of taboos was solely intended to control woman's sexuality. It was believed that limiting her movements, keeping her 'forcibly' home, and leaving the door open, would significantly reduce the chances of adultery. These taboos led women to believe that if they did not respect these prescriptions, the lives of their family members would be jeopardized. Any sort of

misfortune throughout the journey was blamed on women who did not adhere strictly to these rules (Group interview with Manuessa Mukuashe et al.). There was indeed a material reward for women's loyalty to their husbands. When their husbands, sons, or uncles returned, they could bring imported clothing, better hoes, salt and possibly beads if the journey had been successful.

In addition to the rituals performed by women before the departure of a trade expedition from the interior to the coast, its leader would consult a special *namirette* (a medicine man), who could predict how the journey would fare. If the *etchú (ethu) ya miháli* [the signs through which he predicted the future] indicated that the journey would be troublesome, the leader postponed the departure. However, in most cases the *namirette* would advise the participants to hold certain ceremonies or to make sacrifices for the spirit of ancestors, begging them to clear up the roads from all angers (Group interview with Manuessa Mukuashe et al.). It was strongly believed that those who neglected to consult the *namirette* before departure risked their lives. They could be devoured by wild animals, be bitten by snakes or even assaulted by bandits during the journey (Group interview with Manuessa Mukuashe et al. and interview with Matias Mbara et al., Milhana, Mecuburi, Oct.12, 1993). Despite the *namirette's* assurance of a prospect for a good trip, peasants from Namapa indicated that long-distance trade participants never went unprotected. Some of them carried weapons to protect themselves (Group interview with Bernardo Santos de Muía and José Berta Chiquebo, Namapa, Oct. 5, 1993). Nonetheless, one cannot underestimate the *namirettes'*⁴ spiritual influence on the organization and protection of the participants in long-distance trade. The *namirette* and elderly people led the ceremonies and offered sacrifices to the spirits of the ancestors. Without their intervention, few would

⁴ In general, according to Francisco Lerma Martínez, among the Makua there is not a specific priesthood cast. There are no people solely specialized in religious and cult ceremonies [for more see, F. L.Martínez:258]. However, there were people who were always expected to lead these ceremonies. These are the cases of *Mwene Mutokwene* (a traditional chief later on known as *régulo*), *Mwene* (the village headman), *Apwiyamwene* (a sister or mother of the traditional chief, sometimes called Queen), *Mahunu* (a head of household - he was always a male), and *Atata* or *Atokwene* (elderly men and women). In the Makua matrilineal society, the above figures were the one who actually exercised both the secular and religious powers.

dare to undertake the long and dangerous trip. By controlling communication with the spirits of the ancestors, elderly lineage chiefs had easier access to imported and rare commodities, an element which might have consolidated their privileged social position within the Makua lineage society.

Oral accounts in most of the Makua hinterland indicates that salt and clothing were commodities in high demand in the interior. For example, in Chinga (see attached map), peasants tired of flavoring their food with ashes of certain plant leaves like *éhturu*, *mukisi*, *m'tuttho*, *kutuma*, *m'kohi* and *m'koukoré*, all used to substitute for salt (AHM, "Relatório de Chinga", Secção Especial a III p.8, Cx. 187:165; and Group interview with Nikakoro Phakala, et. al.), organized caravans to purchase salt on the coast. In Namapa, notwithstanding the fact that peasants, especially women, could obtain salt from Lúrio river banks, importing salt from the coast was more economical because the entire process of salt extraction was demanding, labor intensive and time-consuming. Most of the women's labor during the dry season was allocated to salt extraction. However, increasing ties with the coastal commercial entrepôt of Memba brought in an influx of cheaper imported salt which consequently ruined local salt production. The collapse of local salt production in the late nineteenth century had far reaching social effects. Women who heretofore had been not only the producers but also the owners of salt, were becoming increasingly dependent upon men in order to gain access to the product. Since salt was brought in from Memba by men engaged in long-distance trade, the influx of cheaper salt from the littoral also meant women's loss of control over a very important seasoning commodity (Group interview with José Artur Berta Chiquebo et al. Namapa, October 5, 1993).

Despite this apparent exclusion of women in the coastal trade, economically powerful men could hardly turn women into slaves (Pe. Gérards, "Costumes dos Macua do Mêdo, 1941:6). In this matrilineal society, as Machado pointed out, women resided in the communities where they were born, enjoyed the protection of their close relatives, great autonomy, and relative independence from their husbands (Major Machado:190).

Unlike the development of long distance trade in other parts of Africa (For more on this issue see Richard Gray and David Birmingham, 1985:13; see also Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch and Paul Lovejoy (eds),1985), where its expansion led to the transformation of porters and long-distance trade participants into a group of petty traders with a commitment to accumulation and investments of their profits, most of the hinterland Makua who participated in this trade preferred the distribution of their profits amongst their extended families. Imported commodities brought from the coast were aimed at social reproduction of their extended families. Items were divided among married women, children, uncles, mothers and aunts. In most cases only single adult women were precluded. They did not receive any imported clothing, and had to continue wearing *nakotto*. This was rather a deliberate action, which was aimed at forcing them into marriages. As one peasant put it, "if they wanted *ekuwo* (cloth), they had to be married..." (Group interview with Matias Mbara et al.). Such statements suggest that long-distance trade as an economic activity within the hinterland Makua throughout the pre-colonial period was aimed at reproduction of communal social relations, rather than individual accumulation of wealth.

II. The Colonial Conquest and its Impact on Women (1885-1930)

Shortly after the 1885 Berlin Conference, during which Africa was divided among European colonial powers, the so-called 'pacification' military campaigns started. Because of the inefficiency of land transport, the process of actual colonization of the Makua hinterland was very slow and gradual. Up to the 1930s, many hinterland regions remained only marginally controlled by the Portuguese. Despite their fragile economic presence in the interior of the district, the Portuguese were nonetheless able to impose taxes⁵ as a means of raising revenues for the colonial state's administrative costs and for

⁵ 'Native taxes' were for the first time introduced in 1854. Only few Africans were in fact subject to taxes, because the Portuguese influence was very limited. It was only confined to a very narrow strip of land along the coast and Zambezi valley. After the colonial conquest taxes were extended into the hinterland, but always barely regulated. Throughout the Colony there were two types of taxes: the hut tax and poll tax. By

the construction of transportation infrastructures. These taxes had to be paid in cash by men and women alike [AHM, Cx. 7, Relatório do Distrito de Moçambique, 1916-17, see also Diploma Legislativo nº551, (June 9,1937)].

Taxation had an overwhelming effect on peasant households and peasants' social and economic lives. It affected economic and social relations within the household in many ways. During the first two decades of this century, many peasants of both genders lacked money to pay their taxes. The dearth of cash was due, in part, to the absence of stores in the hinterland, which made it difficult for peasants to sell their produce for money. As argued earlier, because peasants did not have access to stores in the hinterland, the only way of obtaining cash was to participate in long-distance trade.

During the dry season, after the harvest, clusters of hundreds of male peasants were reported carrying their produce (millet, maize, rice, peanuts, rubber, waxe, coffee, sesame, tobacco) from the hinterland to the coast, where they expected to acquire cash for their taxes (AHM, "Relatório da Capitania-Mor do Mossuril de 1 de Janeiro de 1902"; Governo Geral, Cx.1016."Correspondência Recebida, Distrito de Moçambique, 1905). Such trade clusters were sexually segregated. Single, divorced and widowed women living on their own were deprived of this relatively reliable source of cash. Because of this, the tax burden fell heavily on them. As late as the early 1930s, women had little access to cash opportunities.

In the most interior areas, such as Malema (see attached map), the situation was even more dramatic. Although local people were reported to be industrious, producing copious quantities of white beans, onions, and a variety of grain, the absence of markets limited commodity exchange and their capacity to pay their taxes. Malema lacked stores where they could sell their surpluses for cash. On this issue, a colonial Native Affairs officer noted:

1937, the Portuguese came formally to acknowledge that the hut tax did not exist, because what in practice existed it was the poll tax. For more see Diploma Legislativo nº551, (June 9,1937).

[...] in Malema there is not a single commercial establishment. Despite Ribáuè having two stores it is so far away from Malema, and in the entire Cuamba there is not a single sample of a store. How will this population be able to sell their produce for cash? (AHM, "Relatório de uma Inspeção às Circunscrições do Distrito de Moçambique (1936-1937), Pinto Correia, Vol. II: 113)

Wage jobs were still very scarce. Plantations and large-scale farms, which commonly employ large number of peasants, and pay them in cash, were virtually nonexistent. Up to late 1930s, when the construction of the railway brought in new job opportunities, the only source of cash for taxes were migrant labor and, marginally, long-distance trade.

Many male peasants from Lalaua and Malema were forced to work as far away as the tea plantations in Nyasaland and the sugar plantations in Mopeia. Some of them even went to Salisbury in Southern Rhodesia, where they worked in the mines. As an officer commented, they spent more than a month travelling to a workplace. Higher wages attracted them in Nyasaland, where "they earn an average of eight shillings a month, but by and large they return loaded with so many goods: shoes, cloths, umbrellas." (Relatório - Pinto Corrêa:123)

Under such circumstances, women were victimized by their gender. Unlike men, who could easily migrate to neighboring Nyasaland, to sisal plantations in the littoral, to the construction sites of railroads, women lacked these options. Women's domain remained confined to the social reproduction of the lineage. For instance, in remote regions like Malema and Lalaua, up to the late 1930s, (i.e., before their integration into commodity market) women lacked the means to earn enough cash to comply with the tax law. The only possible cash source was agriculture. "But", a colonial officer wondered, "what about the women? Where are they going to acquire resources that will enable them to pay the ninety *escudos* of taxes? From tilling the land, as it happens in the littoral?" (Relatório - Pinto Corrêa:113). Because of this constraint, the majority of tax defaulters were women. "Given this situation", the same official wrote, "it is worth arguing in favor of a reduction

of the amount of tax that women in the district of Moçambique must pay." (Relatório - Pinto Corrêa:116). It took, however, a decade before the amount of taxes to be paid by women was reduced from ninety to fifty *escudos*. (Portaria Nº 4:768, "Regulamento do Imposto Indígena," 1942)⁶

The issue of female tax defaulters was not only a phenomenon of the 1930s. In the 1920s a number of colonial officials had complained about the failure of women to pay taxes. Some *chefes de posto*, like Francisco Alexandre Lobo Pimentel, after frustrated attempts to coerce women to pay taxes, started accusing Makua women of laziness. Dismissing the prevailing belief among European farmers that women are the principal agricultural producers, he wrote:

This might be true among the *landins* (a colonial pejorative term for people of Southern Mozambique), but among the Makua it is not the case. One of the proofs that Makua women are not good cultivators is the fact that single and widowed women always fail to pay hut taxes, in almost the entire District. An additional evidence is that when men are compelled to go somewhere for forced labor, when they come back they find out that their women failed to work in the *machamba*... (AHM, Relatório de Chinga, Secção Especial a III p.8, Cx. 187).

But women were neither lazy nor reckless. Within the Makua division of labor, women labored hard to sustain the social reproduction of their families. Apart from their domestic chores, women also cultivated *machambas* (small farms) that produced enough food for their families. The impact of taxation and of commodity production upon the Makua way of living was overwhelming. Women, who heretofore had cultivated small plots of land with the help of their male guardians, were suddenly compelled to increase the size of their *machambas* without help from men, who had been coerced to work on construction public works—roads, rails, and bridges.

⁶. Taxes to be paid by single, widowed and divorced females was from this year on designated "*imposto indígena reduzido*."

Offered the two choices – to provide for their families or to comply with the imposed law at the expense of their children – women sought a better option. That is why they were reluctant to produce more crops at any cost for taxes, especially in areas with few markets. Challenging the colonial state was at best very risky. Many of the single and widowed women who failed to pay their taxes were subject to all sorts of abuses. As a colonial officer noted in Chinga in the late 1920s:

The *régulos* (quasi-traditional chiefs) very often get angry with single women and widows for failing to cultivate larger *machambas* in order to be able to pay their taxes. These women would furiously retort by telling to the *régulos*: 'You are not my husband, you do not have any right to command me.' And this it is a fact (Relatório de uma inspeção por Pinto Corrêa: 143).

This excerpt suggests how fast the relationship between husbands and wives within the Makua marriage had changed. The impact of taxation, combined with women's reduced cash opportunities, had the effect of reinforcing the patriarchal elements that always existed hidden within the Makua uxorilocal marriage. Men, who during the late pre-colonial and early colonial periods had always attempted to erode women's position in the household through the control of important imported goods like clothing and salt, might have regarded taxation as a tool that helped them to strengthen their power position within the household, at least during the first decades of colonialism. Women who failed to pay taxes faced the prospect of being sent to forced labor. Just as in the late pre-colonial and early colonial periods, hinterland women from Chinga, Mecubúri, Iapala (see attached map), and other hinterland regions increased their chances of wearing a piece of imported cloth if they were married (Group interview with Matias Mbara et al.), so from the early 1920s on they also felt more protected against forced labor and other abuses if they married.

In the early days of colonization in the Makua hinterland, enforced marriages became more frequent. There is strong evidence that a number of women, in order to escape being sent to forced labor, had to accept unwanted marriage arrangements as second and third wives (Relatório de Chinga: 69). Historically, marriages among the

Makua were monogamous (L. Lima Martinez:173-175). However, over time a combination of several factors – namely, the search for protection, economic security, and Islamic influence – changed the character of marriage. A colonial report indicates that after the imposition of hut taxes, single and widowed women increasingly sought protection from married men (Relatório de Chinga: 69). The latter found polygamous marriages economically advantageous. The more women a man had, the more production he could have. He had only to help his wives to clear larger plots and the economic advantages he obtained went beyond paying taxes. A man with several women had secure protection against any forced labor for failing to pay taxes, for each women had her own field in her village. If the production failed in one of his wives' fields, he could eventually obtain surplus from another and sell it for cash for taxes. Women in turn, found it helpful to have husbands who could help them to clear their land and to acquire cash in the faraway stores. Thus husbands or male guardians became crucial elements of linkage between dependent women and the market.

Historically, all marriages among the Makua were by the consent of both the man and woman. A man could not marry a second wife without the acquiescence of the first woman (*mwàra ntokwene* or *muthiyana a khalai*). However, taxation forced some of the *mwàra ntokwene* to accept compassionate marriages between their husbands and their single or widowed female relatives who needed protection. Terrified by the prospect of being sent to forced labor for failing to pay taxes, certain adult step-daughters married their mother's husbands. As a colonial *chefe de posto* noted in the late 1920s:

..a husband can marry with one of his step-daughters, but her mother seems not minding at all. In some of the cases it is she (the mother or the man's wife) who willingly offers her daughter to her husband, especially when she is too old to help him to raise money for taxes...(Relatório de Chinga:69).

Such marriages for convenience were quite distinctive, even in the Makua linguistic expression. Young women who were forced to marry just for protection or for other reasons were called *othelihiwa* (forced to marry) (L. Lima Martinez:158).

The balance of power and respect that was characteristic of Makuan marriages was gradually replaced by a more exploitative relationship. *Othelihiwa* women were on the one hand literally working for their husbands and indirectly for their *mwàra ntokwene*, and on the other hand for the colonial state taxes.

Abuses arising from women's increasing dependency upon men became more frequent. A husband in the typical Makua society, as an outsider in his wife's village, had often been in a very vulnerable position. In a situation of dispute between wife and husband, the latter was more likely to back down. As a 'stranger' in his wife's village, he was inhibited by the fear that he might be called upon to leave his family and therefore lose access to land. Once taxation and women's lack of access to the market became critical components of Makuan family life, some men turned the situation in their own favor. A man could use the tax to get rid of an annoying wife or mother-in-law or he could use this opportunity to underscore his importance to the household. A *chefe de posto* captured the patronizing male attitude in these words:

Even during the hut tax collection one can see how cunning the black man is; he takes advantage of the hut tax to prove to his wife how much he loves her by withholding and hiding the money awaiting for his wife to be arrested to the *Posto*. One or two days later, he would appear in the *Posto* with the necessary amount of money for her hut tax and would say to his wife, he had to borrow the money, because he is a 'good friend of her.' Some would even take advantage of the hut tax to free themselves from unwanted wives or even mothers-in-law (Relatório de Chinga:248).

Taxes, as this quotation suggests, increased tensions within the household over the control of the scarce financial resources for taxes. Women very often became the victims of spousal abuse. Marriages, it appears, did not offer enough protection to women. Many of them ended up in various types of forced labor for failing to pay taxes.

III. Rural women as road builders (1920s-mid 1940s)

In harmony with the Native Labor Codes of 1899, 1911, 1914, and 1928 both men and women who failed to pay their taxes were sent to forced public works. Women, like men, made an important contribution in the construction of local roads under the supervision of *régulos* and local colonial administrations. In addition to their direct participation in the building of local roads and bridges, women played a crucial role in the men's labor social reproduction. It was the women who fed most of the men conscripted for the construction of infrastructures, which were under the responsibility of local administrations. Despite their central role in the whole process of road construction and expansion, little has been written about these women. In this section, by exclusively focusing on the working conditions of rural women, I want to highlight the importance of their contribution to the expansion of modern transport infrastructures.

The coercion of female tax-defaulters into the construction of public infrastructures seems to have gained momentum in the early 1930s and especially after the imposition of forced cotton cultivation. It was also after the imposition of forced cotton cultivation that females as 'communal laborers' became increasingly more visible. Although the compulsion of tax-defaulter women into forced labor became widespread, few were documented by Portuguese officials. Examples of such exceptions can be found in Mecubúri, where in the early 1930s women were reportedly compelled to build roads by the then administrator José de Castro (AHM, "Relatório de Uma Inspeção (1936-39) por A.Pinto Corrêa:17). Peasants themselves from Mecubúri vividly recalled that:

In those days there was no sex discrimination for road construction. Both men and women had to built roads. Women from Milhana area built a bridge under a supervision

of a *cypai*. That bridge was called Phatari (Group interview with Matias Mbara et al.).

The nickname 'Phatari' is from the *Makua* '*phatari okhwá*', which means 'I would rather die'. Violence, harsh labor conditions at the construction site, and occasionally sexual abuse were so daunting that some women, as my informants maintained, would prefer death to building bridges.

Press-ganged women were forced to perform the same kind of tasks as men did. As in the case of Phatari bridge, female teams without a single man, except the *cypai* (a "native police officer"), were forced to cut tree trunks, to carry them onto the construction site, and ultimately to build the bridge. This was considered by the *Makua* as an extreme punishment. Cutting trees with axes and machetes was traditionally considered a man's job. Carrying heavy trunks was equally harsh for the women. As another peasant recalled,

women after cutting and preparing the trunk, they tied it with ropes. Then in each side of the trunk five women were placed, and subsequently they pulled it into the river, i.e. to the construction site (Group interview with Matias Mbara et al.).

While serving their sentences, women slept in makeshift shanties. Some of the women were subject to sexual abuses by the *cypai*. It was common, they claimed, to see an overseer or *cypai* sleeping with one of the women. Despite the circumstances in which these women were forced to engage in unwanted sexual intercourse, those who spent the night with *cypai* were seemingly the lucky ones. Whenever a new cluster of sentenced women arrived, the *cypai* would select one of them. Throughout the period of sentence, which was a week, that woman would sleep with the *cypai*. "She was the most darling. Instead of working on the construction site, her task was to fetch and boil water, and cook for the *cypai*," (Group interview with Matias Mbara et al.) sighed a group of peasants. Fetching water, cooking, and sleeping with the *cypai*, though unwillingly, as it appears, was equated with normal domestic chores and obligations which women were normally

subject to even in their households. Thus, cohabiting with the *cypai*, though not by choice, was still considered less painful than the harsh labor conditions on the bridge and road construction.

Coercing women to work in public works affected the core of Makua societal norms. Since public works fit into the category of non-domestic sphere, compelling women to this work was intolerable. Even local African chiefs who collaborated with the colonial administration in the procurement of labor for road and railroad construction, found forcing women to work in public works outrageous and unacceptable. Dissenting chiefs, especially those who refused to collaborate with the administrator in this matter, were sent into exile (AHM, Pasta Nº 68, "Relatório... (1936-1937)", Vol. II, por Pinto Corrêa:1938:17). The replacement of administrator José de Castro by Mendes Gil in Mecubúri in the mid 1930s provoked a wave of joy among both the Makua chiefs and their subjects. Pinto Corrêa, a high Native Affairs officer, who visited Mecubúri shortly after the replacement of José de Castro, commented, "All that regime of terror and despotism disappeared with the coming of the new administrator who leaves the women in peace in their huts..." (AHM, Pasta Nº 68, "Relatório... (1936-1937)", Vol. II, por Pinto Corrêa:1938:17)

This was rather a short lived euphoria. As long as all-weather roads did not exist the use of compelled labor would continue. Shortly thereafter an administrator of the Mecubúri's neighboring circumscription of Meconta, would jot in his diary, "Roads and bridges are indeed a constant agony for the natives." During the rainy season when roads and bridges collapse, "crowds of people are sent to fill up holes, to rebuild earth embankments, to fix bridges..." However, soon thereafter a torrent of rain water was enough to tumble down pontoons, and ruin sandy roads. In such a situation, as the administrator laconically put it, "I had to utilize men, women, and teenage boys in order to make the roads passable." (AHM, Pasta Nº 66, "Diário de Serviço do administrador da Circunscrição de Meconta, Leite Pinheiro, (26/1/37)."

In the early 1940s complaints multiplied from within the colonial state against the use of female labor in road construction (AHM, Secção Reserva, Cx.95, Inspecção dos Serviços, 1ª parte pelo Capitão Carlos Henrique Jones da Silveira, 1943). The decision in the early 1940s to transform the hut tax into poll-tax threw many women into the savagery of administrative officers. The majority of women were unable to comply with the law. For instance, in Nampula district, women were supposed to pay fifty *escudos* (about \$1.60) of tax annually. The social effect of this policy was devastating. Women, unable to comply with the law, were increasingly compelled to work in all kind of ways. Women could be seen on the railroad, building roads, in the plantations, in all places where they could remit their taxes.

For example, in Posto de Lunga, in the circumscription of Mossuril, women were coerced by indigenous authorities to work on the roads in the cover of the night, in order to make it harder to find out. "I met women in Posto de Lumbo cleaning grass around the residence of *chefe de posto* in remission of their *imposto-braçal* (a labor tax)," wrote the inspector (AHM, Secção Reserva, Cx.95, Inspecção dos Serviços, 1ª parte pelo Capitão Carlos Henrique Jones da Silveira, 1943). Similar situations were also found elsewhere in the district. In Muite, for instance, from which most men had migrated, women were press-ganged and forced to build roads and bridges (Group interview with Matias Mbara et al). A Native Affairs inspector, startled by the impact of the new poll tax and *contribuição braçal*, demanded reform of the existing labor policy. He recommended to stop using women's and children's labor in order, as he put it, "to prevent not only the demoralization, but also the frequent cases of deaths at the workplace." (AHM, Secção Reserva, Cx.95, Inspecção dos Serviços, 1ª parte pelo Capitão Carlos Henrique Jones da Silveira, 1943:95).

Mossuril and Muite (see attached map) were not the only places where women were being forced to work on roads. As the expansion of roads and railway progressed into the hinterland, settlers' plantations and cash crop production (this is the case of forced cotton cultivation imposed in 1938) were also extended into the interior, and they required an

increasing amount of labor. The bulk of men were either compelled or sought 'voluntary' jobs for cash. Many migrated from their villages to the plantations, railroad, road construction and other places for a period of three to six months. As a result, the number of men in remote 'backwater' regions shrank. During the rainy season, the *chefes de posto* resorted more frequently to *contribuição braçal* labor for local and feeder roads classified as third-class roads.⁷ Notwithstanding the *Contribuição Braçal* ordinance, which stated clearly that only male labor was to be used, during the shortage of labor especially during the critical rainy season, when many roads⁸ ruined and bridges collapsed, local *chefes de posto* and administrators would harness men and women alike.

In the early 1940s, complaints about female labor conscription for road and bridge construction multiplied to the point that the colonial Native Affairs officials began lobbying for a law that would ban this practice. Conscribing women was seen by these officials as threatening the stability in the countryside. As a result of pressures from peasants, aided by these colonial officials, an ordinance was enacted in 1942, aimed at stopping the frequent use of female labor for road and bridge constructions. The ordinance decreed that in a polygamous marriage all but the first wife had to continue paying taxes. By compelling the second, third and so forth wives to pay taxes the drafters of this ordinance hoped that this measure would promote what they called 'civilized' monogamous marriages (Portaria nº4:768, 1942). This colonial approach of imposing new culture values through

7. Roads were classified according to their importance and state into three categories. Roads classified as first and second categories were under the responsibility of the state Board for Roads. And the the third category roads were under the responsibility of local administrations. For the former, in theory all workers had to be paid for their labor, whereas for the latter local administrations relied on peasants. Prior to the *Contribuição braçal ordinance*, laborers on the so called 3rd category roads were tax-defaulters and other sentenced people.

8. By 1943 in Nampula there were 1,001 kms of first class roads, and 1,915 kms of second class. Both were under the responsibility of the Road Board, which was not supposed to use unpaid labor for both construction and maintenance. Roads classified as being of third category totaled 1, 737 kms, which constituted approximately forty percent of all Nampula's roads. These later were under the responsibility of local administartions, which relied on both sentenced workers and *contribuição braçal* labor. For figures see Anuário de Lourenço Marques, Manual de informações da Cidade e Porto de Lourenço Marques e Restantes Distritos da Colónia de Moçambique, 32ª edição, (Lourenço Marques:Tipografia A.W. Bayly & C0. LTD), 1946, pp.792-793.

taxation seems to have encountered a fierce opposition among Africans. Outcries and criticisms against taxation of women became louder and louder. *Régulos*, acting on the behalf of peasants, repeatedly demanded that women be exempted from taxes even if that meant an increase of men's taxes. In the face of a potential unrest in rural areas, certain colonial officials began questioning the validity of a link between women's taxation and polygamy. In 1946, a compromise between the advocates of taxation as weapon of combating polygamy and those who disagreed with that approach was finally reached. An ordinance exempting all women from poll taxes was passed. The preamble of this ordinance reflected clearly that compromise:

There are still those who think that polygamous marriages ought to be fought against by fiscal laws...We do not believe that this is the appropriate approach. Polygamy must be combated by using all means available and above all through education...(Portaria n° 6.401, 1946).

Taxation was, however, still considered an incentive for the promotion of monogamous marriages. Thus the ordinance ascertained that all men, who had a monogamous marriage and had four or more children under 18 years old, were to be exempted from taxes. The 1946 ordinance, which exempted all women from taxation, was hailed by provincial governments as "a salutary measure with an overreaching impact on the lives of the natives." (Portaria n° 6.401, 1946).

In spite of this official women's tax exemption, compelling women to work on roads did not end immediately. Oral testimonies from different parts of Nampula province (the former colonial district of Moçambique) are unanimous in depicting the horror inflicted onto women on road construction. In Murrupula, for example, recollections from local elderly women contain plenty of horrifying scenes on the construction of roads. Teniha Paissuana, from Chinga, vividly recalled that roughly in the late 1940s the *cypais*:

came repeatedly to my village looking for my husband. Because they did not find him, they decided to arrest me. I was sent to the construction of a bridge over the Nadjiuè River. There I had to carry stones, wood, tree trunks... I

was there three months. I saw two women dying of exhaustion (Group interview with Teniha Paissuana, Saculana Nahassare, Luisa Mwanamulele and Amina Muíta. Murrupula, 1993).

The above testimony suggests that women in the late 1940 were still subject to forced labor for failing to pay taxes. Harsh sentences like the one told by Paissuana might have subsided after World War II. But periods of five days to a week of forced labor in public works were still very common. As a group of rural workers from Iapala recalled, "there was a time when women were compelled to work on roads. They had to work at least a week, leaving behind their cotton fields." (Group interview with Maliheque Musseta, Rojeque Vaheque and Araibo Nikhalava, 1993).

Even in the situations where women were spared from direct involvement on road and bridge construction, the social and economic cost of the absence of their male relatives was quite high. Women's lyrics from that period are a poignant evidence of how desolate most women felt when their husbands were taken away for forced labor. As lyrics from Mecubúri ascertain:

Aiyaka yavariwaru kinimwatcaratcara
Onrowaya yireke ekeleka iwe
Ni mi kirwaka nno
Kinlaka, kinlaka ohawa (Group interview with Manuessa Mukwashe et al)

If my husband will be captured,
 I'll follow him.
 Wherever he'll be sent, he'll go.
 I'll, though, come back crying for misfortune.

Women did indeed follow their husbands. They tried hard to feed their husbands while they were on road or bridge construction. As the last verse points out, the departure of husbands for forced labor meant misfortune for wives and for the entire household.

Women wasted much time carrying food to their male relatives. *Contribuição braçal* workers did not have the right to food rations at the workplace. Relatives, mostly women left behind, had the responsibility of sending or personally supplying the men with food.

Depending on the distance from their villages to the work site women would bring food everyday or once a week. (Group interview with Armando Nicula, Liassa Lohaninté, and Murinvona Mpemo, and Clavito Mtanaco, 1991). In fact, women coped differently with this situation.

Whenever her husband was captured for public works Teniha Paissuana from Iapala, would throughout the day cultivate her land, do some domestic chores, and every evening would take food to her husband at the workplace. However, when the workplace was far away from her village,⁹ journeys back and forth became literally a nightmare. In such circumstances:

... I took raw food, pots, sieves and many other appliances needed for cooking and I went to the vicinity of my husband's work place. Once there I ask random households whether I could spend few days cooking for my husband, who had been captured for road or bridge work (Group interview with Teniha Paissuana, Saculana Nahassare, Luisa Mwanamulele and Amina Muíta, 1993).

As long as the provisions lasted, Paissuana continued cooking and feeding her husband. These trips and sojourns to the neighborhood of her husband's workplace had a devastating effect for the family. Nearly everything left undone halted. Because most of the conscriptions occurred in the rainy season, during the week, while away attending her husband, the shrubs in the cotton fields grew fast. As a result, she and many women in her position "were harshly beaten by the cotton overseers." (Group interview with Teniha Paissuana, Saculana Nahassare, Luisa Mwanamulele and Amina Muíta, 1993).

Ms. Mukunakuna, also from Iapala, was one of the two wives of the same man. Unlike the common practice among the Makua, according to which co-wives did not live in the same village, both wives shared the same household,¹⁰ both worked in the same field,

⁹. Even assuming that colonial officers strictly respected the law, peasants working for *contribuição braçal* tax could be sent as far as 20 kilometers away from their villages. Some women had to walk everyday some 40 kilometers just to feed their male relatives.

¹⁰. Coresidence of co-wives, a strange phenomenom among the Makua, might have occurred as one of coping strategies of women while their husband was absent in the migrant labor.

and helped each other in the domestic chores. When their husband was captured for road and bridge construction, the collaboration between the two became still more critical. Because their husband did not have enough food at the construction site, one of them had to go to the compound where the husband was staying to bring him food.

The effects of the improvement of land transport on the daily lives of women were underway even before construction was completed. Both the railway and roads had eased the expansion of the colonial administration into the hinterland. The subsequent tax obligation and the expansion of the settler economy accompanied the increasing demand for labor. All of these changes affected the core of the Makua household. The traditional division of labor and balance of power within the Makua family had also been deeply altered.

IV. The impact of the diffusion of the railroad and road transport on women's lives.

The improvement of land transport affected women's daily lives even before the completion of the railroad and improved roads. Although women's direct physical involvement in the building of the railroad and roads was marginal compared to men's, it is undeniable that women were instrumental in the whole process of railroad and road construction (Group interview with Matias Mbara et al., see also AHM, Pinto Corrêa, (1936-1937)", Vol. II:17). Even women who had not been physically involved in the construction of roads were directly affected by the seizure of their husbands. Women's contribution to the maintenance and reproduction of male labor force was crucial. In addition to all domestic chores commonly carried out by women, they still had to feed their male relatives on bridge and road construction. Women had to learn how to cope with the absence of the critical men's manpower.

Even in the absence of their husbands or other male guardians, women continued to cultivate the land. Baptista Linha recalled with sadness how his mother courageously struggled to feed her children when his father was captured to work on the construction of the railroad:

Because we were still too young to help our mother, she farmed alone. We often experienced shortage of foodstuffs, because she could not do everything on her own. In the village there were only children and elderly people. Even the latter were sometimes forced by the *régulo* to work on his *machambas* and on [local] roads (Group interview with Pedro Barreque, pastor Lavaneque, Baptista Linha, and Gabriel Armando, 1991).

At first, the absence of their husbands was felt at all levels of the household economy. Women were suddenly deprived of men who could help them with heavy tasks in the field, but later, whenever they felt overwhelmed by the work in the fields, they brewed *otheka* (local beer made of millet) and invited friends from the village to help them (Group interview with Teniha Paissuana, et al.; Group interview with Mukunakuna and Ethako Virane; Interview with Mukhalelia Mukoa; and Group interview with Nikakoro Phakala and Luísa João). For instance, Ms. Mukunakuna, from Iapala, along with the co-wife with whom she shared a household, resorted to *otheka* whenever their husband was away on the railroad or road contract labor. They would resort to *otheka* to bring in help with tree felling and field clearing.

Despite their hard work in the field, these women found it difficult to sell their crops for cash because there were no stores in Iapala. Only when their husband came back from the contract labor, could these beans and peanuts be taken to Ribáuè, thirty to fifty kilometers away from their village for cash or barter for clothing. If the husband had not earned enough money from his contract labor for taxes, the women's produce, sold in Ribáuè, became the means that enabled him to meet his tax obligations.

The railway and the subsequent establishment of *cantinas* (stores) in the Iapala rail station in the early 1940s helped to modify the dynamics of household economics in

important ways. These rural stores eased the incorporation of local peasants' communities into the world commodity market. *Cantinas* meant new opportunities for local rural women who had previously lacked direct access to cash and commodity market.

Peasant households which were formerly locked into their rural economy cycle, were transformed into either cash-cropping producers or both cash-cropping producers and labor-export units. Mukunakuna's family was a typical example of the latter household type. While her husband continued working on roads as a road-mender, Mrs. Mukunakuna and her co-wife continued producing cash crops. After the establishment of *cantinas* in Iapala, as Mukunakuna recalls, she and the co-wife, like many other women, could, without waiting for their husbands, go to the *cantina* with beans or peanuts and barter them for sugar, salt and other commodities (Group interview with Mukunakuna and Ethako Virane).

As the expansion of both rail and road transport progressed, the hinterland became increasingly incorporated into world commodity market. Portuguese officials, who had all along believed that the expansion of efficient modes of transport would automatically boost cotton output, started regarding force as an inducement to cultivate this staple, in the early 1930s.¹¹ In the circumscription of Meconta, specifically in administrative posts of Corrane and Itoculo, scores of single, divorced and widowed women were coerced to cultivate cotton in state-owned experimental cotton fields.¹² A family-based system of

¹¹. An experimental forced scheme of cotton cultivation had been initiated in Mogovolas as early as 1923.[See José Torres, "A Agricultura no Distrito de Moçambique", in Boletim da Sociedade de Estudos da Colónia de Moçambique, (1932), p.74.] However, only in the early 1930s the colonial administration tried to supervise and control experimental cotton plantations.[See AHM, "Relatório de Uma Inspeção às Circunscrições do Distrito de Moçambique (1936-1937)", Vol. II, op.cit.] The system of forced cotton cultivation by individual peasants households became a state policy in 1938.

¹². AHM, "Relatório de Uma Inspeção às Circunscrições do Distrito de Moçambique (1936-1937)", Vol. II, by Inspector administrativo A.Pinto Corrêa. Inspeção dos Serviços Administrativos e dos Negócios Indígenas. Lourenço Marques, 5 de Abril de 1938.p. 73. The inspector was referring to the Deodoro da Cruz diary. The resort to women instead of men for labor in these experimental cotton plantations might be partially explained by the prevailing notion that women were more docile, and therefore less likely to resist and easier to control. Although there is no evidence suggesting that these women ever tried to resist forced labor, it does not mean that they were not unhappy with the situation. They had forcibly left behind their children, their homes, and their own fields in order to produce cotton for the administration. To show their grief and repugnance to the envied cotton, women might have resorted to a silent and subtle way of

forced cotton cultivation was introduced in 1938 (For more on cotton, see Allen Isaacman: Cotton is The Mother of Poverty). Cotton had to be cultivated by both men and women. While a couple had to cultivate a hectare, single women, divorcees, widows, and other wives than the first had to cultivate a half hectare. However violent and disruptive the cotton scheme was, it changed the dynamics of household economics and social relations. The staple enabled certain women to pay taxes. For instance, in Lalaua prior to the introduction of cotton, local peasants were wrestling with how to pay their taxes. Many, in order to sell their products, had to march all the way up Meconta, or even up Momba where they sold their surplus for cash. In Lalaua, before the introduction of cotton cultivation, the number of tax-defaulters used to be considerably high. With cotton, however, the number of delinquents, especially women decreased significantly. As a colonial officer said, "Some of them are now coming to pay outstanding taxes of two or three years ago." [AHM, "Relatório de Uma Inspeção (1936-1937)", Vol. II:123].

Because of the improvement of road transport, cotton could be sold in seasonal markets opened for the sole purpose of purchasing this staple. In this case, the lack of stores was not a constraint. Unlike peanuts, beans, corn and other products that could only be sold in stores, cotton was salable in annual seasonal markets. Cotton, though a forced crop, 'relieved' peasants, especially women, from the perpetual cycle of delinquency for failing to pay taxes.

In the early days of cotton cultivation, however, the number of female tax-defaulters was very high. Cases of women with at least five delayed tax payments were common [AHM, "Relatório de Uma Inspeção (1936-1937)", Vol. II:123]. This involuntary delinquency made them vulnerable to frequent social and physical harassment

protest. In 1935, shortly after the cotton harvest in August, more than a ton of cotton stored in a warehouse near a women's shanty was devoured by fire. A question remains unanswered: 'Wasn't this fire a women's form of silent protest against this ruthless cotton plantation which destroyed the very core of their daily lives?' I suspect that the fire was an act of arson than an accident. Families were torn apart because of these experimental cotton plantations, and the victims did not receive anything, but the remission of their taxes.

by *cypais*, cotton overseers and local chiefs. As time wore on women learned many ways of coping with this new situation. Besides cotton, which was labor intensive and left little time available for other crops, women would cultivate other cash crops like peanuts, and beans. Cotton sold in the concessionary seasonal markets, along with other cash crops sold in rural stores, which were established after the the expansion of the railroad and road transportation, gave women a certain financial autonomy.

For example, Ethako Virane, from Iapala was adamant in underscoring that because she worked on the cotton fields in the absence of her husband she had the right to keep the money. If she needed anything while her husband was away, she would ask a man to go to the *cantina* because,

I was scared. I could not dare on my own go to the store. However, in most of the cases, I would keep the money waiting for my husband. Then, when he came back from the contract - he was a carpenter - he brought some money with him. We would then count his and my money. Then, I kept all the money safely. After paying taxes, we both went shopping. We would buy some clothing and other things we needed home, like hoes and axes. (Group interview with Mukunakuna and Ethako Virane)

Although Mrs. Virane could not go to the store on her own, she gradually learned that her labor could contribute significantly not just to raising children or to feeding her family, but to acquire cash for taxes and clothing. This gradual awareness that her work was worth more than feeding her family significantly helped to change the balance of power within the household in her favor. The absolute dependence upon her husband had diminished. As Mukhalelia Mukoa, the spouse of a former *cypai* in Malema, put it, when she started acquiring cash on her own "my husband learned to respect me more." (Interview with Mukhalelia Mukoa)

Luísa João, also from Iapala, told her story in a different way. When her husband was home, she would never go to the *cantina* to sell beans without telling him. "[When] we needed some salt, I would just tell him that we need to sell some beans to buy salt".

However, when her husband was gone for a three- to six-month contract, she would never tolerate any deprivation. As she pointed out:

[In the long absence of her husband] a woman became indignant: 'My husband is not here, and I'm suffering. I produce my own [crops], but I don't have salt!' The woman then would take part of her beans and would sell it for salt in Iapala (Group interview Nikakoro Phakala and Luísa João).

It is evident that women's position within the household strengthened over time. Likewise in Mecubúri, another hinterland region, that was served only by road transport, a group of peasants recalled that:

When stores were established here in Mecubúri, clusters of two, three, or four women would come alone, without men, to sell cashew nuts, peanuts... Some of the women would buy a par of shorts and a shirt for their husbands (Group interview with Manuessa Mukwashe et al.).

"Why should a woman who produces crops on her own suffer, when she could go to a store and buy whatever she wanted?" The coming of stores contributed extensively to breaking the male monopoly of selling agricultural surpluses and buying cloth and other commodities. After the establishment of *cantinas* near their villages, women could sell and purchase commodities without the knowledge or consent of their husbands or male guardians.

Women, though with some constraints, could acquire cash for their own needs or, as Luísa João hinted, even help their husbands to pay taxes (Group interview Nikakoro Phakala and Luísa João). Women's contributions to household incomes became crucial. Women could easily free themselves from unwanted marriages, without the fear of failing to pay taxes or to buy a decent *capulana* (cloth) (Interview with Vachaneque Othako).

Household income, mainly from cash crops produced by women, became a point of power contestation. At stake was the control of resources and decision-making within the household. Disputes over household incomes sometimes led to divorces. As Vachaneque Othako pointed out, a man, while on the contract labor (on a plantation or on the railroad), expected his wife to cultivate the land and produce foodstuffs and other

crops. If she failed to work in the *machamba*, the man could ask for divorce, because "*ekali yapweya wokina ennathakuleliwa wokina*" (when a side of a glass is broken, the other is useless) (Interview with Vachaneque Othako). Similarly, women expected some help from their husbands, especially in clearing the land or other heavy domestic tasks. If a man failed to fulfil his obligations, namely pay taxes and buy clothing for his wife and children, his wife would simply divorce him. She could go to a *régulo* and complain about her 'lazy' husband:

‘My husband does not help me. I understand that he works [on the contract labor], but he should help me, too. So, I prefer a divorce’. And the *régulo* would simply say ‘You have got the right to divorce him, because he could help you when he returns from the contract’ (Interview with Vachaneque Othako).

I have argued earlier that in the early days of colonial administration, historical relationships between men and women were deeply affected, by both forced labor and taxation. As I pointed out, male dominated long-distance trade during the pre-colonial and early colonial periods had a detrimental effect on women. As a result, even salt, an important seasoning, was controlled by men. However, the expansion of modern means of transport and with them the trade network into the hinterland lessened men's predominance in many ways. As a group of women in Murrupula keenly stressed “the building of stores in Chinga area helped a lot of people. We could buy salt, *ekuwo* (cloth) and many other things.” (Group interview with Teniha Paissuana et al.). The expansion of stores brought women more opportunities to recover their dignity and pride (Group interview with Teniha Paissuana et al.; Group interview with Mukunakuna and Ethako Virane; Interview with Mukhalelia Mukoa and Group interview Nikakoro Phakala et al.). The sense of sharing the household space as an economic unit was enhanced by the possibility of women being able to acquire cash through selling parts of their agricultural product while their husbands were on contract labor. Women from various regions of the Moçambique district hinterland were unanimous in stating that besides the cotton field, whenever possible, they opened other *machambas*

(small farms) where they cultivated peanuts, sesame and other cash-crops for sale. Although women had control over the money, they had to show it to their husbands when they came back from contract labor (Group interview with Paulo José, et al.; Group interview with Atia Momola et al.; Group interview with Manuessa Mukwashe et. al.; Group interview with Teniha Paissuana et al.; Group interview with Mukunakuna et al. Interview with Mukhalelia Mukoa; Group interview Nikakoro Phakala et al.) This action must not be understood as a sign of women's subordination, but rather a hint of mutual respect and sharing within the household, because she could decide without consulting her husband to buy domestic utilities and clothing for herself and the children. The woman would then inform her husband of the things she bought or how she spent the money acquired from the sale of cash crops (Group interview with Bernardo Santos de Muía, José Artur Berta Chiquebo, et al.). Informing her husband, she strengthened her power position within the household. She made him aware of the fact that she, as well as the husband was able to acquire cash to buy certain goods necessary in the household, without having to rely only on the husband. It was an act of counterbalancing, eventually denying the concept of the male being the sole cash-winner in the household. When a man returned from contract labor, he would show her wife the money he brought. As Bernardo Santos de Muía stated in a group interview in Namapa, a husband coming from the contract labor would say, "Listen, my wife, this is the money I brought from the place where I was suffering." (Group interview with Bernardo Santos de Muía et al.).

Despite these new opportunities, women were still far from challenging the conventional notion of marriage, which stressed men's power over the women. Women contented themselves with partial and relative autonomy, as married women did not dare attempt to claim the control of cash in the household. A husband's control of his wife's money meant caring for his wife in the eyes of the Makua man. As a rural male railroad worker put it, "If a man refused to control his wife's money, this meant that he was not anymore interested in her." (Interview with Vachaneque Othako). Despite evidence that in

many cases women were able to acquire more cash than men, married women were often socially compelled to 'voluntarily' give up control and decision-making within the household. (Group interview with Atia Momola et al.; Interview with Murinvona Mpemo, ; Group interview with Paulo José et al.). Any attempt to challenge the masculine authority within the household could put the marriage in jeopardy. As Luísa João put it:

How could I restrain myself from telling him what I had bought while he was absent, and from handing the remainder of the money over to him, when he came back from the contract? *Mutthu kanaithele! Kiwiravo pahi, mwamuteiteimihanavo vate.* (A person cannot marry to himself. We respected each other) (Group interview Nikakoro Phakala and Luísa João).

Many women I spoke with repeatedly stressed respect and dignity. Most were unanimous in pointing out that men respected their wives more when women's cash contribution to the household was substantial (Group interview with Teniha Paissuana et al., Group interview with Mukunakuna et al.; Interview with Mukhalelia Mukoa, Group interview with Nikakoro Phakala et al.).

The picture would be more incomplete if one saw the stores as instruments of women's liberation, or as easing their absolute dependence upon men. In fact, as a result of the expansion of modern land means of transport the social impact of trade network expansion had an ambiguous effect on women. While the expansion of rural stores brought women an opportunity to sell and buy goods directly for the first time,¹³ the

¹³. The creation of colonial villages took place in three successive phases. The villages' geographical location was contingent on the means of transport then utilized. Thus it is not surprising that first villages were created along the coast, because the only means of transport widely at usage were boats, and because the Moçambique district hinterland does not have navigable rivers. This situation remained unchanged for centuries. Only the coming of land transport revolution changed both social and physical landscape of the Moçambique district hinterland.

This revolution was preceded by a massive military occupation of the vast hinterland in the 1880s, which marked the beginning of the second phase of the expansion of colonial villages. In their attempt to expand an effective colonial occupation of the Moçambique district hinterland, first tracks and trails for the *machilas* and portage. Because of the tse-tse fly presence, the utilization of ox-wagon remained only marginal and limited to the regions along the coast. It was still during this phase that the building of the railroad was initiated. Because of the railroad's limited scope, though complemented by *machilas* and portage, up to the early 1920s only few new villages were created.

The coming of motor vehicles in the 1920s heightened both the social and physical occupational process of the hinterland, marking therefore the beginning of the last phase of village creation. Massive expansion of colonial commercial villages started occurring in the mid-1940s and throughout the 1950s,

coming of rural stores into the vicinities of their villages also meant an increased workload. The lack of intermediate means of transport (like ox-wagons) that could have helped both men and women to carry their surpluses to the nearest store had a detrimental effect on most of women's welfare. I have argued that before the establishment of stores near peasant villages, most agricultural surpluses were carried by men over long distances. However, the diffusion of the rural trade network gave men room to withdraw part of their labor in cash crops hauling. After the establishment of a number of stores in the hinterland, most of the cash crops started being carried by women instead of men. Carrying agricultural cash crops to the store became an additional women's chore – along with the so-called conventional women's tasks of fetching water, firewood, and carrying foodstuffs from the farm home – which further limited women's ability to increase agricultural output. Thus the lack of an intermediate means of transport and shift in responsibility of transporting cash crops from men to women inhibited women from taking advantage of the transport revolution.

A recent survey undertaken in Makete district of Tanzania and in Ghana on household division of transport tasks has clearly shown that the lack of efficient intermediate means of transport is heavily and unevenly felt by women. Women in both Makete and Ghana, according to Dawson and Barwell, shoulder a disproportionately large share of the transport burden. In Makete, they contend, women are responsible for about 75 percent of transport undertaken in terms of time taken and about 85 per cent in terms of tonne-kilometer transport effort (Jonathan Dawson and Ian Barwell, 1993:27). Although I have not undertaken a meticulous statistical inquiry to assess how much weight the Makua women did carry, the available qualitative information allows me to draw a similar picture in the colonial district of Moçambique.

when the land transportation revolution was reaching its climax. Hundreds of kilometers of railway along with thousands kilometers of roads and tracks, facilitated and speeded both the communication and transportation. Thanks to the flexibility of motor vehicles dozens of hinterland regions were tapped into the web of regional and world economy.

Oral testimony points out that when certain men decided to go to the store along with their wives, the women carried the produce to be sold, and the men simply followed or led their overburdened women (Group interview with Nikakoro Phakala et al.; Group interview with Teniha Paissuana et al.; Group interview with Mukunakuna et al.; Interview with Mukhalelia Mukoa). Under the guise of protecting women from eventual cheating by shopkeepers men found a new way of justifying their presence in the store in order to control cash or direct what could be bought and what could not (Interview with Vachaneque Othako).

Despite this evident increase in women's workload, the transport revolution brought tangible opportunities. The diffusion of both the railroad and road transport helped expand the market frontier and seems to have enhanced women's coping abilities. By the 1940s, as the trade network expanded its influence, thanks to the flexibility of automobile transport, the transport revolution seems to have helped women lessen their absolute dependence upon men.

The empowerment of rural women through the sale of cash crops also helped to destroy the myth that matrilineal societies were a hindrance to rural capitalist development. Rita-Ferreira, writing on the matrilineal Chewa in central Mozambique, has emphatically stressed the stifling effect of matrilineality upon the expansion of cash crops. A man, as a 'stranger' in his wife's village, he argued, was naturally reluctant to invest efforts and money towards the improvement of the land allocated to his family. He was seemingly deterred by the fear that sooner or later he would be called upon to leave the land behind (A. Rita-Ferreira, Os Cheuas :157). According to Chanock it was felt that the matrilineal system was part and parcel of 'backwardness', as man apparently had no incentive to improve his land, "over which he had tenuous and transitory tenure and no prospect of handing it on to his son."(Martin Chanock, "Agricultural Change...", 1977:404). However, the agricultural role played by women in the colonial district of Moçambique shows that they were the ones who became the main producers of cash crops.

It is true that after the imposition of forced cotton cultivation in areas like the hinterland of the district with less demand for labor by the incipient capitalist enterprises, both men and women were compelled to grow cotton. It is equally undeniable that this policy affected the commonly gendered division of labor. In the pre-cotton period, all agricultural tasks but tree-felling and clearing of the fields were considered women's tasks. However, from then on, an increasing number of men were coerced to work side-by-side with their wives. Forcing men and women to produce cotton did not mean that both worked together in all phases of agricultural cycle, as the cotton scheme planners had hoped and wished. In many ways, at the household level the recourse to historical division of labor did not subside. On the contrary, the imposition of forced cotton cultivation in practice deepened women's and children's exploitation by both men and concessionary companies. For example, a Governor General observed in the early 1940s that in their attempt to pay taxes, men relied more and more on the labor of their wives and children. As he put it:

Agriculture is, in most tribes of the Colony, considered a women's task. Only some violent tasks like tree-felling are performed by men... while women work on the fields (*machamba*), men took advantage of the latter to pay their own taxes. Thus, men (with their taxes always paid) were not compelled to seek wage labor (José Tristão de Bettencourt, "Relatório do Governador, Vol.II:78 and 79).

The expansion of transportation infrastructures helped the spread of concessionary companies, and plantations in the early 1940s. The expansion of these economic activities increased the shortage of male labor within rural households. The absence of much male labor power would have important consequences on the agriculture. As Van den Berg, studying the effect of migrant labor on agriculture in Southern Mozambique, pointed out: "more labor-intensive crops, which were better adapted to the climate, were replaced by less labor-intensive but climatically less well-adapted crops, [such as maize]." (Van den Berg, Jelle::375)

IV. Conclusion:

Overall evidence suggests that the coming of the railway and improved road transport deepened the exploitation of women. At the same time, it broadened the range of coping strategies. Women could, though with some difficulty, cope without having to be married. In the pre- and early colonial period, marriage was often seen as the most efficient coping strategy. As the opportunities multiplied in the countryside, continuing in a marriage became more optional. Women were no longer forced to enter into unwanted marriages in the search for protection. Economic reasons became less and less a factor in coercing women into undesirable relationships. Single, divorced and widowed women could pay their own taxes; they could buy their own cloth.

One of the important effects of these new economic opportunities was the strengthening of matrilineality. In the pre- and early colonial period, as argued above, men attempted to seize all economic opportunities that could help them control women. Taxation and the lack of cash opportunities in the first decades of colonialism weakened women's position within the household. However, the expansion of modern land transport and of cash opportunities in remote rural areas greatly retarded the erosion of matrilineality.

Notwithstanding the changes of economic roles played by women, their political/domestic roles within villages did not change significantly over the course of time or as a result of external influence.¹⁴ One should not forget that most changes among the Makua were the result of colonial 'social engineering' policies. Forced labor on roads and railroad, and forced cotton cultivation are blunt examples of how exogenous economic and social forces affected, and to a certain degree, changed and shaped the relationships between men and women in Makua households. As the cornerstone of all colonial

¹⁴ Similar accounts come from the Avatime of Ghana. For more on this issue, see Lynne Brydon, "Women in the Family: Cultural Change in Avatime, Ghana, 1900-80", in Development and Change-Conceptualizing the Household: Issues of Theory and Policy in Africa, Eds. Jane I. Guyer and Pauline E. Peters. Vol.18, No. 2, (April 1987), p. 263.

economic policies, transportation fundamentally changed the context in which African household and kinship relations functioned.

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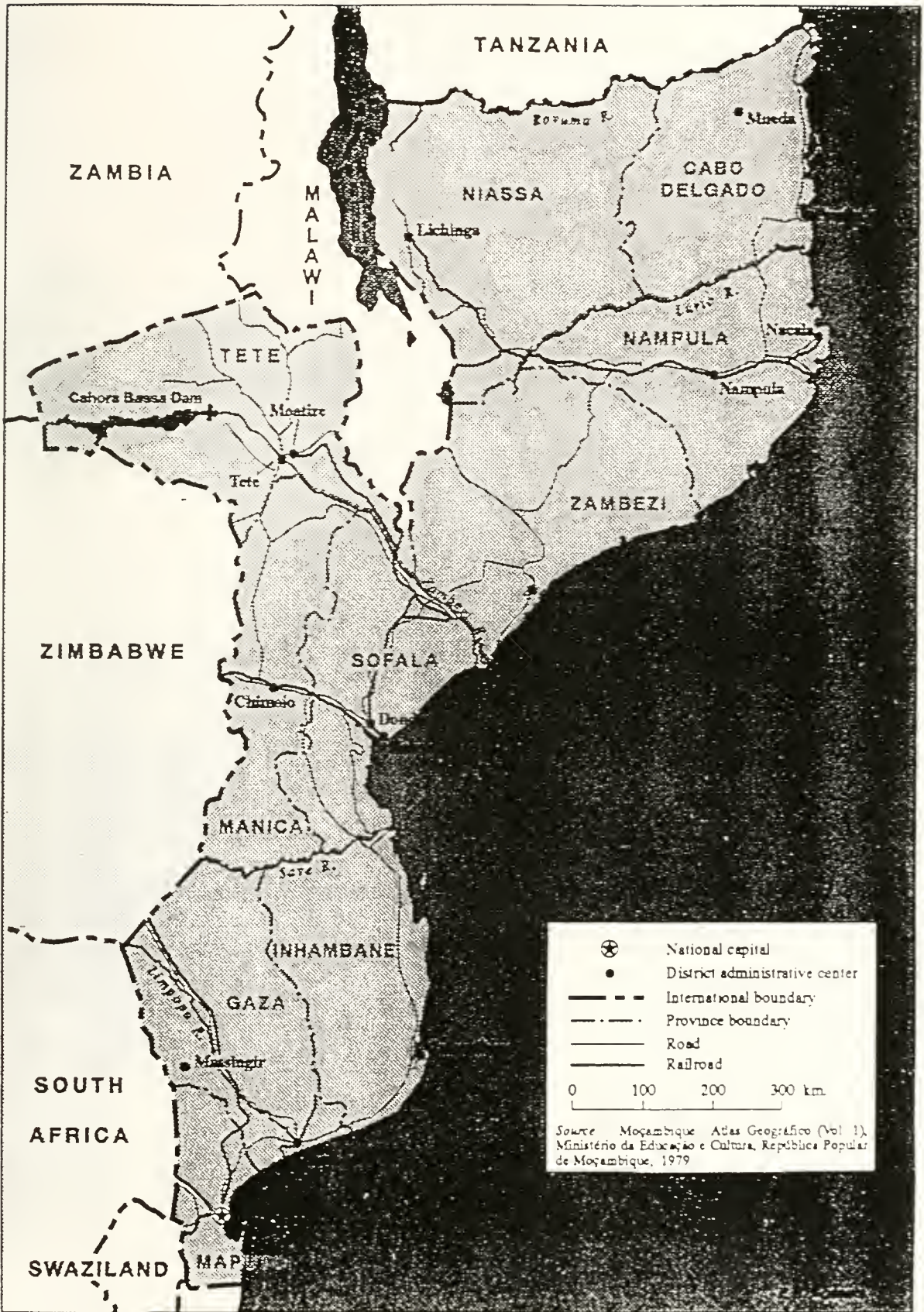
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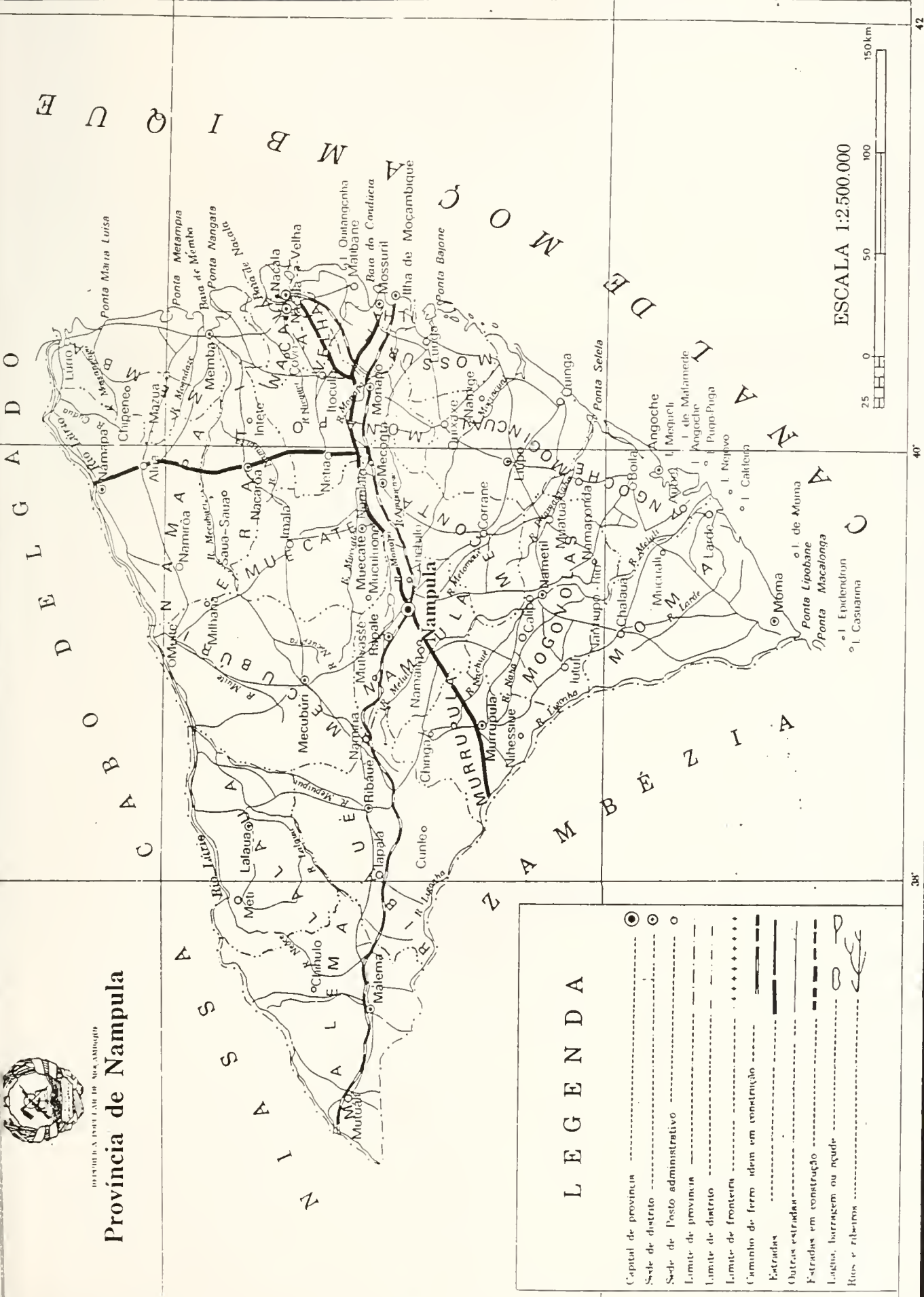


Map 1: Mozambique



INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE CARTOGRAFIA E CADASTRO

Provincia de Nampula



ESCALA 1:2.500.000



LEGENDA

- Capital de provincia
- Sede de distrito
- Sede de Posto administrativo
- Limite de provincia
- Limite de distrito
- Limite de fronteira
- Caminho de ferro ideado em construçao
- Estradas
- Outras estradas
- Estradas em construçao
- Locais, barragem ou açude
- Rios e ribeiros

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03

Land Restitution, the Chieftaincy and Territoriality: The Case of the Mmaboi Land Claim in South Africa's Northern Province

Paper to be presented at the Spring Symposium, Center for African Studies, University of
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Introduction

The land question and national democratic transformation are closely interrelated issues in South Africa. Colonialism, capitalism and apartheid all developed on the foundation of land dispossession and land partition. Private property and associated understandings of social relations were deeply inscribed within the political economic history of the development of racial discrimination in South Africa. Now, in the new South Africa, the search is on for a reconstruction and development path which will overcome the historical inequities of a racially divided society. The restructuring of land relations must be located at the core of such a project.

The Government of National Unity (GNU) led by the ANC has evolved a three-pronged approach to land reform. These are: land restitution, land redistribution through the market, and land tenure reform¹. This paper is concerned with land restitution, and the problems associated with this mechanism of land reform as manifest within a particular land claim lodged in the Northern Province. Land reform is understood as being central to reconstruction and development, not simply in terms of it being a prerequisite of national democratic transformation, but also in terms of the pursuit of a developmentalist vision for South Africa. The miracle of the "East Asian Tigers" is increasingly a reference point for debates around developmental growth paths for the new South Africa². Nevertheless, little reference is made to the fact that South Korean and Taiwanese development was predicated on fundamental land reform which stimulated the growth of an internal market, paving the way for rapid industrialisation, and leading ultimately to a relative narrowing of rural and urban differentials³.

Land restitution through a land claims procedure was the first clear land reform mechanism emerging out of the ANC policy-making process following its unbanning in 1990⁴. *The Restitution of Land Rights Act* (1994) was also arguably the most significant piece of legislation promulgated by the new democratic Parliament in South Africa during its first year of business, following the country's first democratic elections held in April 1994. Minister Hanekom pointed to the huge symbolic significance of the legislation after receiving a standing ovation in Parliament, while President Mandela assured white landowners that the Act did not signify that they were all about to have their land expropriated from them. The new legislation has raised the hopes of South Africa's dispossessed masses, but weaknesses in the legislation itself, as well as changing political dynamics could well see the new legislation producing outcomes which differ widely from the original intentions of establishing a land claims procedure to drive the land reform

¹ *Our Land*, Green Paper on South African Land Policy, Department of Land Affairs, 1 February 1996.

² R Levin and D Weiner, "The Agrarian Question and Politics in the 'New' South Africa", *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 57, (1993:29).

³ See for instance R Jenkins, "Capitalist Development in the NICs", in L Sklair (ed.), *Capitalism and Development*, London: Routledge, (1994:78) and C Edwards, "Industrialisation in South Korea", in T Hewitt, H Johnson and D Wield, *Industrialisation and Development*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, (1992:106).

⁴ See for example *ANC Position on the Land Question*, Discussion Document for the ANC National Conference, June 1991.

process. In particular, the resuscitation of the chieftaincy as a key emerging institution in the land claims process, poses a threat to the democratisation of land relations in extensive parts of the countryside while raising the spectre of new spatial conflicts. It also undermines political and constitutional commitments to restructuring gender relations.

This paper will examine a particular land claim, lodged by the Mojapelo people now resident in the village of Mmaboi in the Northern Province. The claim highlights several issues. It demonstrates that the land claims process, grounded as it is in bourgeois legal discourse undermines formal commitments to popular participatory reconstruction and development processes. It also shows how land claims are themselves contested by other dispossessed communities, and how this contestation is rooted in the institutions of the chieftaincy and territoriality. The claim also reveals shortcomings in the legislation itself, as well as the need for the South African legal fraternity to engage seriously in debates around redefining historical bourgeois understandings of property, rights and tenure relations.

Forced Removals and Private Property Relations in South African History

Forced removals, land dispossession and the creation of private property were at the centre of racially-based oppression in South Africa. Six years after the first white settlers landed in the country in 1652, Jan Van Riebeeck notified indigenous Khoi communities that they could no longer dwell to the west of the Salt and Liesbeck rivers. This was effectively, the first formal act of forced relocation since white settlement in the country's history⁵. The process continued through colonial wars of dispossession and colonial government policy into the 20th century and the promulgation of the 1913 Land Act. The act continued an ongoing settler onslaught against African squatters, lessees or sharers on white settled land, and transformed them into a dependent wage-earning class⁶. The offensive intensified during the final decade of the 19th century, and was in large part a response to the emergence of a vibrant African peasantry which had responded positively to market opportunities created by the rapid development of capitalism following the mineral discoveries in the latter half of the 19th century. A major objective of the 1913 Land Act, was the eradication of independent black tenant farmers⁷. The act thus outlawed any:

agreement or arrangement whereby a (black) person, in consideration of his being permitted to occupy land, renders or promises to render to any person a share of the produce thereof, or any valuable consideration of any kind whatever other than his own labour or services or the labour services of any of his family.⁸

⁵L Platzky and C Walker for the Surplus People Project, *The Surplus People: Forced Removals in South Africa*, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, (1985:71).

⁶ C Bundy, *The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry*, London: Heinemann, (1979:134).

⁷ TJ Keegan, *Rural Transformations in Industrialising South Africa*, Johannesburg: Ravan, (1986:183)

⁸*Union of South Africa*, Act 27 of 1913, Section 7(3).

This meant that the only legal rent payment by black tenants to white landlords was the provision of labour service⁹. This established labour tenancy as the dominant social relation of production on land designated for white occupation and use, and in many cases converted *de facto* black occupants and land users into labour tenants. The act also prohibited land purchases by blacks outside of scheduled reserve territory, making these the only places where Africans could occupy land. Within the reserves, the state encouraged the Natal practice of indigenous or customary forms of land tenure rather than the Cape-based strategy of encouraging individual forms of tenure¹⁰. One consequence was the reproduction and reshaping of the chieftaincy as the institution through which “communal” forms of tenure could be guaranteed, as well as the redefinition of customary land law.

Land scheduled for African occupation was essentially land reserved for Africans in the four provinces which collectively were amalgamated under the Union of South Africa in 1910. It amounted to about 9 million ha or 7 per cent of all land in South Africa¹¹. This meant that large expanses of African freehold land and unsurveyed state land, long viewed as African areas were omitted from the schedule. In 1936, steps were taken to allocate more land for African occupation, through the passage of the 1936 Development Trust and Land Act. This legislation added 6.2 million ha of land to the reserves and created the South African Native Trust to acquire and administer that land. The Trust became the registered owner of most reserve land¹². This legislation also created the framework within which the post World War II apartheid policies of the Afrikaner National Party were developed, and laid the basis for further forced removals of Africans from their land.

Forced removals were intensified by apartheid, but must be understood broadly in the context of colonial dispossession, and land partition implemented by the Union government as well. They took a variety of historical forms, including “black spot” removals of Africans who acquired freehold land; “betterment planning” removals to make way for “rational” land use in the reserves; bantustan consolidation removals to join fragments black territory; farmworker and labour tenant retrenchments and evictions; and the privatisation of state-owned land¹³.

The full extent of colonial land dispossession or even post-1913 forced removals has not been quantified. Most observers quote a figure of 3.5 million, emanating from the path-breaking study undertaken by the Surplus People’s Project (SPP) in the early 1980s. This figure was likely an underestimation, and excluded victims of betterment planning removals in the bantustans, while it also was confined to forced removals implemented between 1960 and 1980 through apartheid policies. At the time of writing, the SPP

⁹ Keegan, *op.cit.*

¹⁰ Platzky and Walker, *op.cit.* at 84.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.* at 89.

¹³ These different forms of forced removal are discussed in greater detail in R Levin, “Land Restitution and Democracy in South Africa”, Paper presented at the 8th General Assembly of CODESRIA, Dakar, June-July, 1995.

estimated that a further 1.9 million people were under threat of removal. More recently, de Wet, estimated that there were at least 7 million victims of forced removals since 1913¹⁴, but this may also be an underestimate. While it may not be possible to accurately quantify the extent of land dispossession, numbers are important in assessing whether the judicial process which has been inaugurated by the GNU through *The Restitution of Land Rights Act* will be able to cope with the problem it aims to solve within the time-frames set.

Land Restitution and Property Rights in the New South Africa

The *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act* of 1994, included property in its Fundamental Rights Chapter, but also facilitated the establishment of a statutory land claims court. Section 8 of the Fundamental Rights chapter included a provision that:

Every person or community dispossessed of rights in land before the commencement of this Constitution under any law inconsistent with subsection 2 (which outlaws discrimination on the basis of race, gender, sex, ethnic origin etc.) had that subsection been in operation at the time of the dispossession, shall be entitled to claim restitution of such rights...¹⁵

Chapter 8, Sections 121-123, includes a section on Land Rights making provisions for restitution of rights in land through the establishment of a "Commission on Restitution of Land Rights" which could investigate land claims, mediate or settle such disputes as may arise out of land claims and draw up submissions which could be used as evidence in the courts. This clause has been put into effect by *The Restitution of Land Rights Act* of November 1994.

The Restitution of Land Rights Act aims to "provide for the restitution of rights in land" of communities whose land was dispossessed "for the purpose of furthering the objects of any racially based discriminatory law"¹⁶. This will be achieved through the establishment of a Commission on Restitution of Land Rights and a Land Claims Court. In order for claims to be processed, they must be lodged within three years of a date fixed by the Minister of Land Affairs¹⁷. Claims may be lodged if claimants were prevented from obtaining or retaining land on account of racially-based legislation. The central institution for the processing of claims is the Commission on Restitution, established early in 1995. It consists of a Chief Land Claims Commissioner, a Deputy and a number of regional commissioners who were appointed after inviting nominations from the public. The Commission, which is independent from government, is charged with the responsibility of receiving claims and assisting claimants in the preparation and submission of claims. If the claim is undisputed, the Commission can make a ruling, whereas if there is an objection or

¹⁴ C de Wet, "Resettlement and Land Reform in South Africa", *Review of African Political Economy*, No 60, (1994:359).

¹⁵ Republic of South Africa, *Constitution of Republic of South Africa Act*, (1994:10).

¹⁶ Republic of South Africa, *The Restitution of Land Rights Act*, Act No 22, 1994.

¹⁷ The date fixed by Minister Hanekom was 1 May 1995.

counter-claim, the claim can be referred for mediation. If this fails, then the claim must be referred by the Commission to the Land Claims Court.

The Land Claims Court is empowered to determine cases of restitution as well as the payment of compensation, taking a number of key factors into account. These include the desirability of:

- providing for restitution of rights or payment of compensation to the victims of forced removals;
- remedying historical violations of human rights;
- meeting the requirements of equity and justice;
- avoiding major social disruption.¹⁸

The court is empowered to determine the form of land title under which restituted land will be held, and to “adjust the nature of the right previously held by the claimant”¹⁹. It may also order the state to expropriate land to restore land rights to a claimant. In such cases, the owner of such land will be “entitled to the payment of just and equitable compensation, determined either by agreement or by the Court according to the principles laid down”²⁰ in the Constitution.

There is little doubt that the act opens up possibilities for communities to reclaim land from which they were forcibly removed. Nevertheless, a number of questions emerge around the practicalities of land claims, including the potential for their rapid resolution. Claims must be lodged within three years of May 1 1995; five years have been set aside for the Commission and the Court to finalise all claims, while all Court orders should be implemented within a ten year period²¹. On the ground, expectations are very high; people expect their land demands to be realised immediately. Real questions arise as to how rapidly and effectively, a “Commission on Restitution of Land Rights” will be able to deal with specific cases. Communities will require assistance in formulating clear and realisable land claims, while the capacity of the newly formed Land Claims Commission is limited. Complicated legal procedures and rules make it difficult for a people-led land claims procedure to be realised in line with Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) commitments²². The most serious questions, however, centre on the constraints which property rights clauses in the new constitution will impose on the restitution process.

During the later stages of negotiations, concerns were expressed about entrenching property rights in a new Constitution as well as payment of compensation to current landowners in the event of successful land claims. The conceptions which rural people have of land ownership and property rights show how problematic the interim

¹⁸ Republic of South Africa, *The Restitution of Land Rights Act*, Act No 22, 1994.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Our Land*, *op.cit.*, p. 35.

²² The RDP prioritises a “people-driven” development process as one of “six basic Principles” which, “linked together make up the political and economic philosophy that underlies the whole RDP”. African National Congress, *The Reconstruction and Development Programme*, Johannesburg: Umanyano Publications, (1994:5).

constitution's property rights clause is. Payment of compensation, is rejected by most rural black people. This is clearly illustrated in the resolution on land restoration taken at the National Community Land Conference held in Bloemfontein in February 1994: "Communities who were forcibly removed should have their land and mineral rights returned immediately, unconditionally and at no cost to the community"²³.

The process by which land rights are restored is crucial to democratisation and development in South Africa. Legal land claims procedures have been developed with specific communities in mind. The legislation was in many respects shaped by the experiences of victims of apartheid black spot removals where communities held title deeds to land, although it also attempts to provide some opportunities for victims of other forms of removal to lodge claims. Nevertheless, the legislation assumes that homogenous and identifiable communities will, as victims of apartheid, be claiming unitary pieces of land. It is important to consider whether the communities suit the process, but it is also necessary to ask whether the process suits the communities. The potential for participation is restricted by criteria such as cut off date and types of claims, as well as the complicated legal discourse contained within a judicial process. If viewed from the perspective of the land needs of rural communities, then the process may well prove inadequate in terms of handling millions of dispossessed South Africans. The 1994 act does allow the President of the Court to provide for circumstances under which oral evidence may be submitted to the Court, and to conduct parts of the proceedings in an informal way. This is fortunate, since many claimants require a process that does not demand written evidence.

More problematic is the question of *who* will lodge a claim since the process is biased towards the submission of unitary claims from homogenous communities. "Who is the community" and "who decides" are crucial questions that will emerge in the land claims process. Some bantustan villages which have been constituted by forced removals, comprise people with different historical origins. The scattering of labour tenants over vast areas in the former Transvaal provinces, for example, could lead to competing and overlapping claims from communities in different localities. Historical rivalries between different chieftaincies over territory and followership, could similarly lead to competing and overlapping claims. The process clearly favours communities who can be represented by a single institution or organisation. The chieftaincy is likely to emerge as the key institution for filing successful claims, since alternatives like the civics are far too tentatively organised in most areas. The act stipulates that:

If a claim is lodged on behalf of a community the basis on which it is contended that the person submitting the form represents such a community, shall be declared in full

²³ The Community Land Conference (CLC) was convened by the National Land Committee (NLC), a network of NGOs working on land and rural issues. The conference was attended by representatives from over 350 rural communities from different parts of the country. See *Report from the Community Land Conference*, 12 and 13 February 1994 at p. 12.

and any appropriate resolution or document supporting such contention shall accompany the form at the time of lodgement.²⁴

Against this background, the paper now turns to a case study of the Mojapelo Land Claim, and attempts to analyse the extent to which government restitution policies and legislation will meet the land aspirations of this community, as well as the contradictions to which the restitution process is giving rise.

The Mojapelo Land Claim

Origins and History of the Mojapelo

The Mojapelo tribe originates from the Ndebele, through Nkumane, the eldest son of Chief Kekana. Nkumane ate *phohu*, the heart of an eland, which is only supposed to be eaten by a chief. Having breached tradition, he was humiliated by the people and royal councillors, called "*lehlalerwa*" (a wild dog), and expelled from the community. That is where the Mojapelo genealogy started²⁵. Nkumane is viewed as the grandfather of the tribe. He settled at a place known as Kgaditse with his followers, and they began to marry and establish kraals. Nkumane's royal name was Ramakanyane, and three kraals were established at GaKadiaka, GaMello and GaMadiba. From Kgaditse, Nkumane and his subjects went on to Mphahlele, where Nkumane fell in love with Sebopa's daughter and wanted to marry her. In order to do so, he had to satisfy a circumcision ritual, which he did²⁶. It is not known whether Ramakanyane was asked to marry *Ngwana* WaSebopa as the mother of the tribe or not, but she was barren²⁷. Nkumane then married a second wife who eventually gave birth to a son, Ramakanyane I.

Nkumane stayed at Mphahlele in Motsetsamong, the area of his wife from Sebopa, but he remained independent of the Mphahlele's, retaining his own totem of *Bahlalerwa*. Nevertheless, in order to maintain their identity, the Mojapelos left Mphahlele and drove their cattle across the Sego mountains to the Mphogodiba mountains where they made contact with the Molepo tribe. Following custom, the Mojapelos introduced themselves to the Molepo chief, to whom they were required to pay tribute. They did this for some time, co-existing "uncomfortably" with the Molepos²⁸, before they decided to move on.

Ramakanyane I gave birth to a son called Kwena I or Leshalagae, who was responsible for most royal matters during this time. He married at GaRamakalela now known as Mohwelereng-Sebobeng. All kraals were asked to contribute cattle for Kwena I to marry the mother of the tribe (*Ngwana* Ramakalela). She gave birth to Kwena II. The Mojapelos realised that the Ramakalelas were weak in comparison with themselves, and

²⁴ Republic of South Africa, *The Restitution of Land Rights Act*, Act No 22, 1994.

²⁵ Ramakanyane Griffiths Mojapelo, *BaGaMojapelo*, Potgietersrus Printers, Potgietersrus, No Date, pp.8-9.

²⁶ RG Mojapelo, *op.cit.*, p.10.

²⁷ Interview, Monica Mojapelo, Gilbert's wife and Griffiths' mother (Previous Chieftainess), Mmaboi, 22 February 1995.

²⁸ Interview, Patrick Mojapelo, Mathibaskraal, 19 January 1996.

when they left the Molepos, they subordinated the Ramakalelas and established themselves in the area now known as Laastehoop. Ramakanyane I died there and was buried at Teejane. The Mojapelos moved on from there to Sebobeng where they stayed at a place called Meumo²⁹. They encountered another tribe there, the Kadiakas, but they were weaker than the Mojapelos who established themselves at Mohwelereng.

Contact with White Settlers and Confrontation with Neighbouring Tribes

In addition to contact with other tribes, the Mojapelos also made contact with the Voortrekkers during the 1830s. Evidence of this can be found in Louis Trigardt's diaries where Trigardt refers to the "Mapielie" tribe who pilfered some of his goats³⁰. Dicke, writing in 1941, interprets the incident in the following way:

What tribe was it which had the impertinence to seize the Voortrekkers' goats? The tribe of Mapielie...Who then is this chief "Mapielie"? His correct name is Mojapelo...Mojapelo was a petty chief. He never had more than two hundred and fifty warriors. But the country he occupied was of such difficult nature that he was able to uphold his independence, and he repeatedly defeated raids made by Zulus or Swazis. These raiders hardly ever managed even to drive off some of the Mojapelo livestock. The men, women and children would take refuge on impregnable, fortified koppies, from which boulders and stones would be rolled and thrown down, and the livestock would be secreted in a maze of inaccessible creeks and crevices, in which anybody trying to steal the animals would be ambushed with little hope of escaping. That was the kind of country where Trigardt did not think it wise to press his claim for lifted stock.³¹

More importantly, he goes on to state that:

Mojapelo's territory was small. It covered what later became the farms Matjeskraal (346), Palmietfontein (343), Klipspruit (351), and Kleinfontein (347). These farms form a wild mountain complex that rises out of the surrounding flat. To Mojapelo's territory belonged the slopes which descend from the four farms into the adjoining farms, for example, down to Majebaskraal (145) eastward and Weltevreeden (140) north westward...Mojapelo's chief kraal was at Majebaskraal. One of his strongholds was the Matjiani Kop at Matjeskraal. The name Matjeskraal is a corruption of "Matjiana's Kraal"...The Sterkloopspruit is the boundary of the Amandebele (from Maune) and Mojapelo.³²

²⁹ Interview, Monica Mojapelo, 22 February 1995.

³⁰ TH Le Roux, *Die Dagboek Van Louis Trigardt*, JL Van Schaik, Bepers, Pretoria, (1964), p.96: "waar wij voor ons vee en geleentheid heb dat wij aldan te rug zal keeren na Mapielie...".

³¹ BH Dicke, "The Northern Transvaal Voortrekkers", in *Archives Year Book for South African History*, Cape Times Limited for Government Printer, (1941), p115

³² *Op. Cit.*, pp.115-116 and p. 126.

In the meantime, the Mojapelos interacted with a number of other tribes beside the Molepos and the Ramakalelas, and some of these interactions were confrontational, particularly with the Mothibas. Confrontation was generally generated by pasturage trespassing, whereby cattle from one or the other tribe would wander into grazing lands of a neighbouring tribe. During one confrontation with the Mothibas, the Mojapelos killed a Mothiba woman, signifying the beginning of ongoing animosity between the two tribes, when the Mothibas pledged vengeance for their deceased³³. The result was that Kwena III was ambushed by the Mothibas on his return from a journey to Matome (Zebediela), and killed at Mmabolepu pass. The animosity between the two tribes then reached extreme proportions. The Mojapelos also fought against the various Ndebele groups such as the Maune whom they defeated, as well as against Chief Malebogo who was fighting against the Voortrekkers. The Mojapelos fought on the side of the Voortrekkers³⁴.

Griffiths written history of the Mojapelos and oral accounts suggest that the Mojapelos were completely oblivious to the fact that the Boer Colonial Government of the Transvaal Republic, enacted legislation through its Volksraad in 1853 which prohibited Africans from owning land in the Transvaal, while permitting whites to demarcate plots for themselves and declare themselves landowners. Although it has been claimed that “farms were only surveyed and given names after the formation of the old Transvaal Government in 1852”³⁵, Trapido has argued that a partial land market existed “from the beginning of white Afrikaner occupation of the territory north of the Vaal River”³⁶. Certainly, one would be painting a false historical picture of the Transvaal in the mid-19th century were one to argue that once the process of land titling began, whites established neat and clearly demarcated farms. Rather land was accumulated and held for speculation purposes by Afrikaner notables and land companies owned by South African-based entrepreneurs with European financial connections³⁷. Indeed, between 1850 and 1876, the period when title deeds were first issued in Mojapelo territories, land was used to secure debts by the Transvaal Volksraad which, in view of its inability to secure revenue, also engaged in financial manipulations involving the provision of land in lieu salaries for administrators and the issuing of exchequer bills secured by government farms. In 1865, paper currency, also secured by government farms was issued, but this was insufficient to match government expenditure, and a 1868 finance commission proposed that additional notes should only be issued against one thousand farms or 3 million morgen³⁸. The upshot of all of this is that land was continually being sub-divided and changing hands, in many cases without whites actually occupying the land. This becomes evident when examining the title deeds of the farms surrounding the Mojapelo royal kraal at Mmaboi on Majebaskraal. It also explains why it is that Mojapelo oral history is adamant that the first white to settle

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ RG Mojapelo *op.cit.*, p. 17.

³⁵ PJ Steytler to Regional Land Claims Commissioner, 27 November 1995.

³⁶ S Trapido, “Reflections on land, office and wealth in the South African Republic, 1850-1900”, in S Marks and A Atmore (eds), *Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa*, Longman, London, (1980), p. 350.

³⁷ S Trapido, *op.cit.*, p. 350.

³⁸ *Op. Cit.*, p. 352.

Majebaskraal was Granville Nicholson, despite the fact that the land was originally registered in the name of SJ Marais in May 1865³⁹.

Tenancy Relations, Evictions, Resistance and the Dispersal of the Mojapelo

Nicholson was issued the title deed in 1893, although Ellen Nicholson b1890 was buried at Mmaboi in February 1892. Freddy Swafo born c1906, remembers having grown up in an era when agriculture was vigorously practised by the Mojapelos who grew sorghum, millet and maize on unmeasured fields with abundant land at their disposal. According to his testimony, Nicholson arrived on the farm shortly before the Anglo-Boer War. He was not sure whether he negotiated with the chief, but asserted that Nicholson measured out fields for himself and drew the Mojapelos into labour tenancy relations⁴⁰. The ruling chief at the time was Gilbert Mojapelo, whose relationship with Nicholson was generally cordial. A conflict was precipitated in 1928, however, when a certain individual cut the fence. Nicholson tried to find out who the culprit was, and eventually summoned the chief. Gilbert took responsibility for the incident which was actually perpetrated by his father-in-law Joel's children, as he did not want to expose his in-laws to Nicholson⁴¹. Nicholson then evicted the chief. Gilbert's subjects could not remain behind, so they decided to follow him. Only a few remained on at Mmaboi. This led to the dispersal of the Mojapelos.

Gilbert and some of his followers went to Kleinfontein. Some of the others went to work for other white farmers, while others went to Pretoria and Johannesburg. Some ended up under the jurisdiction of other chiefs including Molepo, Mphahlele, Mashashane, Moletji, Matome, Maja and Mothiba. A sizeable grouping returned to the Zebediela area where the tribe originated and settled at Moletlane. These movements should be understood as forms of "covert" resistance to the practices of labour tenancy and the dominance of certain parts of the countryside by racist white farmers. There is little doubt that the history of the Transvaal in South Africa, as elsewhere in Africa, has entailed bitter struggles between rural people and forces bent on extracting surpluses in the form of labour, rent, taxes and food. This provides the focus for historians concerned with exploring the concepts of "everyday" or "hidden" forms of peasant resistance. Beinart and Bundy's studies of the Transkei and Ciskei areas of the Eastern Cape provide an analysis of some of these processes in South Africa⁴². These forms of resistance have not been thoroughly documented in the Transvaal, but the movements of the Mojapelo people through the 20th century must be cast in this light.

This kind of analysis of the African countryside, illustrates how rural men and women shaped their own history and developed their own weapons of resistance through work slowdowns, pilfering, sabotage, dissimulation and flight. The historian Allan Isaacman

³⁹ Department of Land Affairs, *Mmaboi Community (Matjeskraal 1047-LS and 10 Adjacent Farms), District of Pieteresburg, Northern Province, Report No. 66/1995, November 1995, p. 5.*

⁴⁰ Interview, Freddy Swafo, Mmaboi, 14 February 1995.

⁴¹ Interview, Thomas Mothipa Mojapelo, Motamo, 23 February, 1995 and Monica Mojapelo, 22 February 1995.

⁴² W Beinart and C Bundy, *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa*, Johannesburg: Ravan, (1987).

warns, that the concept of everyday or hidden forms of resistance can “distort or render meaningless the notion of resistance itself”, when “used crudely or taken out of context”⁴³. This is because these daily acts are not seen as constitutive of rebellion or revolution or broad-based resistance, but are seen rather as individualised and localised. As Isaacman points out, however, “to the perpetrators the actions embodied at least some vague notion of collective identity and possessed an internal structure and logic even if it is not easily discernible to scholars”⁴⁴. The point is to see the cutting of the fence, and the resultant Mojapelo exodus as an act of resistance to the forces of white domination.

Indeed Mojapelo resistance to and mistrust of white rule took other forms which contributed to their dispossession and landlessness. The Mojapelos did not attend the meeting of chiefs convened by the Union Government in 1910. According to Thomas Mothipa Mojapelo:

In 1910, chiefs were called to Bloemfontein after the formation of the Union of South Africa to be allocated their chiefdoms and boundaries in order to avoid further tribal wars. Since Mothipa (Gilbert) never went, we were denied our tribal land rights. People did not want Mothipa to go since they feared that he would be ambushed and killed like Kwena III.⁴⁵

Moreover, although Chief Mojapelo did release a handful of his men for service during World War I, he declined an invitation to Pretoria after the war when the Pretoria Government summoned chiefs who had contributed to the war effort in order to be given lands as a gesture of gratitude and compensation⁴⁶. Once again, Chief Mojapelo did not go to Pretoria due to fears on the part of his councillors that he would be ambushed on the way. The failure of the Mojapelos to attend these meetings may well explain why the Union government failed to formally recognise the Mojapelo chieftaincy and allocate them land. The question of the legitimacy of the Mojapelo chieftaincy (as discussed below) has become a major issue for present counter-claimants to Mojapelo territory.

While Gilbert was in Kleinfontein, the Central Government promised him a place to stay. Philip Petja was born at Mmaboi in 1928, but moved to Kleinfontein shortly after his birth following the eviction of the Mojapelos by Nicholson. At the time, the farm was registered under “The South African Townships, Mining and Finance Corporation Limited”⁴⁷. Petja’s testimony reveals how many registered ‘landowners’ in the Transvaal were absentee landlords. Kleinfontein, was originally registered on 5 July 1886 in the name of Johannes du Preez, and ownership subsequently changed hands several times

⁴³ AF Isaacman “Peasants and Rural Social Protest in Africa”, in F Cooper, FE Mallon, SJ Stern, AF Isaacman and W Roseberry, *Confronting Historical Paradigms: Peasants, Labor and the Capitalist World System in Africa and Latin America*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, (1993:236).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Interview, Zebediela, 23 February 1995.

⁴⁶ RG Mojapelo, *op.cit.*, p. 19.

⁴⁷ Department of Land Affairs, *Report No 66/1995*.

before the farm was transferred to Jozua Naude on 30 April 1940⁴⁸. According to Petja no whites actually occupied the farm before Naude, although the Mojapelo subjects used to pay 1 shilling tax per head of cattle. He described how he grew up and became a labour tenant at Kleinfontein:

I was born in Mmaboi, but moved to Kleinfontein when I was very young. There was a German man called Makurukuru staying in Pietersburg who administered the various farms⁴⁹. Kleinfontein was under the Mojapelo chiefs, and old man Mothipa (Gilbert) was the chief at the time. My parents had abundant land and we cultivated sorghum, maize, millet, groundnuts and beans. We kept a lot of cattle, more than was necessary. Mr Naude arrived in 1942. He stayed with us, and made arrangements with the tribal elders at Kleinfontein to do so. Naude cultivated tobacco and he kept dairy cattle. People living at Kleinfontein were compelled to work for him. They worked for “*sommer*”. Their parents forced them to accept tenancy relations because they were old and could not do much labour themselves. Naude told us that we must work for him because he had bought the farm from Makurukuru in Pietersburg, and he forced us to become labour tenants. We continued to cultivate our own lands. We stayed with Naude until 1962 before leaving. Between 1942 and 1962, many people left the farm. Naude told them to leave as he did not want overcultivation on his farm, and they should get off his land. This was an ongoing and gradual process. In 1962, 5 families remained on the farm. They told Naude that he had found them there, and that it was their historical place and they were not going to move from there. Naude came with lorries at the end of 1962, and forced the people off the land and dumped them at Klipspruit.⁵⁰

Gilbert moved from Kleinfontein before the arrival of Naude, after the government promised him refuge in Vaalfontein in 1938. Vaalfontein was transferred to the South African Native Trust on 26 July 1937, but was not formally handed over to the Mojapelos. In July 1957, Government Notice No 1102 included the Trust Farm Vaalfontein No. 418 (now 179 KS) in the area of the Molepo Tribal Authority⁵¹.

When Gilbert was issued a *trekpas* by Nicholson, not all the Mojapelos moved off. Mac Kgadi Mojapelo born c1914-1918 during the war and great locust invasion of the area gave the following account:

When I was young, we lived in Mmaboi growing sorghum and millet. *Matialla* (literally “hit until they cry”) Nicholson was living here. The relationship between us

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹According to the Department of Land Affairs Report (op. cit.):

“In 1892 the South Western 1/4, today known as Portion 2 of Kleinfontein was transferred to BJ Vorster (Jnr) and in 1902 the Northern 3/4 (Portion 1) was transferred to WHA Cooper leaving no remainder. Cooper transferred portion 1 to “The African Farms” on 9 June 1902. On 24 January 1920 African Farms (in Liquidation) transferred to the South African Townships, Mining and Finance Corporation Limited who in turn transferred to JF Naude on 30 April 1940”.

⁵⁰ Interview, Mmaboi, 23 February 1995.

⁵¹ Department of Land Affairs, *Report No. 66/1995*, p. 10.

was bad because our people were performing unpaid labour for him...When the fence was cut, I was staying with my brother at Moletje looking after his cattle. I was still young when I returned, but people were still working for nothing. People were still moving away from Nicholson, some because they were fired, others in resistance to the unfair work relation. Between 1938-39, we moved away to Mahuma (Matjeskraal). We found a certain boer called "Masemola" who allocated us land and allowed us to keep our cattle, but once again the snag was the labour tenancy relation which forced us to work for "sommer". Ultimately I was issued with a *trekpas* and moved to Manthoroane (Quayle) where I stayed until we eventually moved back to Mmaboi.⁵²

These narratives demonstrate how the Mojapelo's were pressured by the existing status quo (white land ownership and associated social relations) to move around the broad area of the Mojapelo tribal lands in an attempt to cling to their tenuous access to land rights. They also demonstrate the complex character of forced removals, which in many cases were not a single event, but rather a protracted process. An additional pressure upon them was the failure of both the central government and bantustan government of Lebowa to recognise the Mojapelos as a tribal grouping with their own sovereign chief.

The Struggle by the Mojapelos for Tribal Recognition and their "Back to the Land" Campaign

In 1935, the respected Government Ethnologist NJ Van Warmelo published his *Preliminary Survey of the Bantu Tribes of South Africa*. In this survey, he lists the Mojapelo as an independent tribe ("*baHlalerwa, baxaMojapelo*") with their own chief and own totem ("*lehlalerwa*"), residing in the Pietersburg district⁵³. The dispossession of the Mojapelo tribal land has been associated with the loss of their tribal identity. It has already been observed that the Mojapelos generally engaged in covert forms of resistance to the undemocratic government regimes of the Transvaal Republic and the Union of South Africa and all associated discriminatory forms of legislation. Thus although they participated minimally in World War I, their suspicion of the existing regime led them to decline an invitation to Pretoria in the wake of the war. The decision by the Molepos to participate with government structures explains why the apartheid government and its structures attempted to subordinate the Mojapelos to the Molepos, and the animosity between the two groups to which this gave rise. The case of Vaalfontein, as we shall see provides a good example of this.

The role of the chieftaincy within customary land relations facilitates an understanding of why issues of chieftainship have become embroiled within the Mojapelo's struggle to reclaim their land rights. In 1962, the Mojapelos organised a committee to reclaim their land. This committee consisted of the following members:

⁵² Interview, Mmaboi, 21 February 1995.

⁵³ NJ Van Warmelo, *A Preliminary Survey of the Bantu Tribes of South Africa*, Union of South Africa, Department of Native affairs, Ethnological Publications, Vol. V, The Government printer, Pretoria, (1935), p. 115.

Chairman: Schoeman Mojapelo
Secretary: John Mashiane
Organiser: Johannes Mojapelo
Additional: Dace Mojapelo
Mafeufeu Mojapelo
Magomatlodi Mojapelo
Mathena Meekoa⁵⁴

The community took their land petition to the Native Commissioner in Pietersburg in 1962. He was assisted by a number of chiefs, including Chief Chuene, Chief Tseke, Chief Maboia and Chief Molepo. With no response forthcoming, the committee appealed to the central government in Pretoria in writing. They then sent a delegation directly to Pretoria who met with a Mr Bothma from Native Affairs. Bothma sent his fieldworker, Dr Wiid, to investigate whether the Mojapelo people did indeed constitute a chiefdom recognised by government. His report included a genealogy which recognised the Mojapelos and their claim to a chiefdom⁵⁵.

Any progress which the Mojapelos believed they were making in their negotiations with the apartheid central government, were reversed, however, when Lebowa obtained self-governing status in 1972 under Chief MM Matlala. The Lebowa government wrote a letter to the Mojapelos stating:

With reference to your plea or request for chieftaincy and land, we would like to inform you that we reject and do not recognise your chief and therefore you are not liable to any such piece of land as a sovereign. You are requested to return to the jurisdiction of the Matebeles under Kekana. Those who wish to remain behind must be ruled by Molepo.⁵⁶

In 1974, the Chief Minister of Lebowa, Chief Phatudi, met with a delegation of the Mojapelos who accounted for their genealogy. Phatudi and his secretary accused the Mojapelos of fabricating their genealogy, although they promised them that they would investigate the whole issue and speak to Chief Kekana. The Lebowa government then agreed to allocate the Mojapelos land if they would elect a leader, but not a chief, instructing them to owe allegiance to either Chief Kekana or Chief Molepo⁵⁷. In 1978, the Lebowa government decided to allocate the Mojapelos a portion of Mothibaskraal (Majebaskraal) while another was allocated to the University of the North for Agricultural Research⁵⁸.

⁵⁴ Interview, Fixwell Mojapelo, Mmaboi, 13 February 1996.

⁵⁵ Report by Government Ethnologist Dr FGJ Wiid, *Hoofbantoesakekomissaris, Noordelike Gebiede*, K54/1525/19, 37-22, Pietersburg, 10 May 1974.

⁵⁶ RG Mojapelo, *op.cit.*, p. 23.

⁵⁷ RG Mojapelo, *op.cit.*, p. 24.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* which also cites Lebowa Government, Department of Foreign Affairs, D45/1524/450/1, 18/7/1978.

Controversy surrounding the Mojapelo chieftaincy continued, however, and following the implementation of the 1978 decision in 1985, a series of meetings and exchanges between the Mojapelos and the Lebowa government took place. Essentially, these exchanges centred on whether the Mojapelos would be assigned community or tribal authority status. At a community meeting attended by Mr MF Chuene from the department of the Governor of Lebowa, he told the Mojapelos that:

Mojapelo wanted bogoshis even before the existence of the Lebowa government. The Republican Government never gave Mojapelo bogoshi and thereafter withdrew bogoshi from him. I want to emphasise that the government is not in a position to give Mojapelo bogoshi and does not refuse to do so. One can have a rubber stamp and say that he is a kgoshi but he may not have an official appointment. Mojapelo did deserve bogoshi but was not given bogoshi. I am not here to force the Mojapelo people to accept a community authority but I say the government is prepared to give the Mojapelo people a community authority in order to build up the Mojapelo people.⁵⁹

Nevertheless, the Lebowa Government went ahead, and in August 1988, established the Mojapelo Community Authority, with jurisdiction over Portion 1 of the farm Majebraskaal No 1005 LS⁶⁰. The Mojapelos took legal advice and with the assistance of Bell, Dewar & Hall attempted to contest the establishment of the Community Authority. In reply to letters sent by the Mojapelo lawyers, the Lebowa government stated:

According to our records these people (the Mojapelos) never had any bogoshi in the past; a search for it prior to the establishment of the community authority, even in the records of the Department of Development Aid, was all in vain. We could therefore be pleased if we could be supplied with a copy in terms of which the alleged bogoshi was established. Whereas it would not be difficult for the government to disband the community authority as requested in the penultimate paragraph of your letter, it would nonetheless take such a step at the express and specific request of the community as a whole and on the express understanding that such a dissolution of the community authority may not in itself result in the institution of bogoshi in the place of the community authority.⁶¹

Further correspondence between the two parties continued, but the matter remained unresolved. It did, however, generate divisions within the Mojapelos between pro- and anti-Lebowa Government groups, divisions which the post-apartheid land claim process seems to have a large extent overcome⁶².

⁵⁹ Minutes of a Meeting of the Mojapelo Group held on Friday 4 September 1987 at Mathibaskraal.

⁶⁰ Lebowa Government, Republic of South Africa, *Government Notice No R19*, 26 August 1988, "Establishment of the Mojapelo Community Authority: ThabaMoopo District".

⁶¹ Lebowa Government, Office of the Department of the Chief Minister, to Bell, Dewar and Hall, 23 August 1989.

⁶² Interview with Barnard Mojapelo, Pietersburg, 14 February 1995.

The Mojapelo Land Claim

The Mojapelo's land claim rests on the notion that historical tribal boundaries should be restored, because racially based discriminatory colonial land law and the 1913 Land Act led to the systematic erosion of their tribal land rights and converted them into labour tenants. Moreover, it should be recognised that forced removals in this area, were not an event, but an ongoing process. This process was characterised by the arrival of white settlers who demarcated plots and coerced local villagers into working on their farms as labour tenants and sharecroppers. Some villagers fled the area to avoid "working for *sommer*", while others preferred to stay, but were later removed by farmers who cut down and rationalised their labour force over time, and issued "surplus labourers" with *trekpassie*.

As noted, the 1962, "back to the land" campaign initiated by the Mojapelos under the leadership of Schoeman Mojapelo, culminated in their return to a portion of Mathibaskraal at Mmaboi in 1985. Nevertheless, the Mojapelos are claiming a far more extensive area. The following table lists the names, numbers, size and current occupation of the farms being claimed:

Table 1: Farms being Claimed by the Mmaboi Community

European Name and Size	African Name	District	New No.	Occupation
Matjeskraal 4,081.6106 ha	Mamasolo Dithabeng	Pietersburg	1047	White Farmer
Mathibaskraal 8,998.3445 ha	GaMmaboi Sepobeng	Pietersburg	1002	Unoccupied
Klipspruit 3,636.3580 ha	Makgobaneng	Pietersburg	178	White Farmer, rents out land to villagers for ceremonial
Kleinfontein 3,737.9722 ha	Maphosane	Pietersburg	172	White Farmer, absentee. Land leased out to local villagers
Palmietfontein 3,407.5352	Gakganyago Motokolo	Pietersburg	1049	White smallholdings
Kuil/Quayle 299.3222 ha	Mmathaoroane	Pietersburg	180	State owned, allocated to Chief Molepo, semi-occupied by his subjects
Vaalfontein 602.9985 ha	Dipshiring Mokudutswaneng	Pietersburg	179	Unoccupied, allocated to Chief Molepo by former Lebowa government and used for grazing
Kraalfontein 681.6653 ha	Konyama	Pietersburg	181	Semi-occupied by Chief Molepo
Laastehoop 5,960.6132 ha	Sekuto, Sekgophaneng	Pietersburg	1050	Occupied by Chief Molepo
Kalkfontein 5,654.7247 ha	Mahuma	Pietersburg	1001	All 53 portions privately operated
Tweefontein 659.9379 ha	Tshweung	Pietersburg	173	White farmer
Grysfontein 291.7605 ha	Marakudu	Pietersburg	176	Rented out to White Farmers for pasturage

Table 2: Title Deeds of Farms being Claimed by the Mmaboi Community

NAME OF FARM	CURRENT OWNER
Matjeskraal 1047	AP Bolon
Portion 1 of Matjeskraal	Agsam Pty Ltd
Portion 2 of Matjeskraal	Roman Catholic Missions of N Tvl
Mathibaskraal (Majebaskraal)	Government of Lebowa
Klipspruit	HM Van Aswegen JH Van Aswegen
Kleinfontein	Portions 1,2,3,5,6,7 owned by white farmers; A subdivision of Portion 2, Portion 4 was transferred to the state in October 1956, and to Chief Maja in 1994
Palmietfontein	KS Van Eeden
Quayle	Government of Lebowa*, transferred to Chief Molepo
Vaalfontein	Government of Lebowa*, transferred to Chief Molepo
Kraalfontein	Government of Lebowa*, transferred to Chief Molepo
Laastehoop	Government of Lebowa*, transferred to Chief Molepo
Kalkfontein	HH Dales
Tweefontein	Portion 1: JM Van der Walt Remainder: PJ Van Niekerk
Grysfontein	Anton Bothma

*These farms do not appear to have been transferred from SADT to the Lebowa Government. They have the same title deeds indicating that there must have been an endorsement made on the title deeds in terms of a statute passed.

From the perspective of the Mojapelos, the Mojapelo chief is reclaiming tribal land rights, which were expropriated through colonial land legislation, as well as the 1913 Land Act, on behalf of the Mojapelo community. The Land Restitution Act defines “right in land” as

any right in land whether registered or unregistered, and may include the interest of a labour tenant and sharecropper, a customary law interest, the interest of a beneficiary under a trust arrangement and beneficial occupation for a continuous period of not less than 10 years prior to the dispossession in question.⁶³

The right in land which the Mojapelos are claiming pertains to a customary law interest, and/or the interest of a labour tenant, although the claim itself is framed in the former sense. The drawback here, is the cut-off date in the constitution, because although their removal as labour-tenants took place in 1928 and therefore qualifies for a claim, their tribal rights were effectively nullified when the process of land titling began.

⁶³ Republic of South Africa, *The Restitution of Land Rights Act*, Act No 22, 1994, p. 3.

A further problem with the claim is that it overlaps with claims of neighbouring communities. This became evident in a meeting convened by the Regional Land Claims commission in Pietersburg on 14 December 1995, involving the Mojapelos, the Majas, the Mothibas, the Mothapos and the Molepos. All groups are claiming extensive lands, with particular farms being claimed by two or more communities. The following table illustrates the extent of the overlapping claims in relation to the Mojapelo Land Claim:

Table 3: How the Mojapelo Claim overlaps with Neighbouring Community Claims

Mojapelo Claim	Maja	Mothiba	Mothapo	Molepo
Matjeskraal	*	-	-	-
	(one portion)			
Majebaskraal	-	*	*	-
Klipspruit	*	-	-	*
Kleinfontein	*	-	-	*
Palmietfontein	*	-	-	-
Quayle	-	-	-	*
				(occupants)
Vaalfontein	-	-	-	*
				(occupants)
Kraalfontein	-	-	-	*
				(occupants)
Laastehoop	-	-	*	*
			(occupants)	(occupants)
Kalkfontein	-	*	-	-
Tweefontein	-	-	-	-
Grysfontein	*	-	-	-

In its attempts to mediate between counter-claiming communities, the Regional Land Claims Commission was able to make some progress in terms of developing a clearer understanding of the Mojapelo claim, a certain amount of progress in clarifying whether or not overlapping claims actually existed, and less progress in terms of facilitating co-operation between different land claiming communities. One solution sought was to attempt to define areas being claimed in terms of their Sotho names, but this line of negotiation yielded little once in the field, where communities themselves ended up deliberating about the farms using the European names, although constant references were made to Sotho names of rivers and mountains.

A major issue which emerged was the status of the Mojapelos, their lack of a recognised chief, and the absence of the Queen Regent in the negotiating process. Chief Molepo made this point very strongly, and during field visits undertaken with the Regional Land

Claims Commission to disputed farms, referred to the Mojapelos as his subjects and “children”⁶⁴.

The field visits did demonstrate quite clearly, however, very consistent accounts of Mojapelo history by their various informants. In the case of counter-claimants, the historical accounts rendered were generally less coherent, leaving the impression that land was in cases being claimed in order to meet land needs rather than for purposes of restitution. Chief Molepo openly stated that:

We are claiming Kleinfontein and Klipspruit because there are many of us and we need to expand the area of land at our disposal. The farms are vacant and adjacent to our own farms.⁶⁵

When the claim was being prepared, the Mojapelo Development Association was asked whether they want to proceed with claims to particular farms that were allocated to and occupied by other black people, with particular reference to Laastehoop. Patrick Mojapelo replied, saying:

We want to claim all our land to reassert the Mojapelos rights to the soil. If for example, people under Chief Molepo do not want to accept that authority which our rights will give us, they can leave. If they are happy to owe allegiance to the Mojapelos and accept our authority, they can gladly remain.⁶⁶

The account of Mojapelo history provided above does demonstrate that during the 19th century, the Mojapelos settled on Laastehoop before shifting their headquarters to Mmaboi. At the same time, there is no disputing the fact that the Molepos and the Mothapos were allocated portions of Laastehoop in 1922, and that both portions are now densely populated.

The cases of Quayle, Kraalfontein and Vaalfontein are different, however. All these farms feature in the Mojapelo history, and also represent pieces of state land through which the Mojapelo royal family passed following the eviction of Gilbert and others from Majebaskraal. They also are pieces of land which the Mojapelos were denied secure access to as resisters of the status quo of white domination of land relations, and which the Molepos were ultimately allocated as participants in apartheid structures. This becomes clear from the following Mojapelo account of the history of these lands:

When the white man came here, he defeated us, but because Schoeman (the initiator of the “back to the land campaign”) refused to work on the farms he left. He found Mojapelo subjects tilling the soil and grazing their cattle as far as Vaalfontein. Even these three farms (Vaalfontein, Kraalfontein and Quayle) were later occupied by

⁶⁴ Field Visit to Laastehoop with the Mojapelos, Molepos and Mothapos, 18 January 1996. He also referred to the Mothapos as his “children”.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Group interview with Mojapelo Development Association, Mmaboi, 15 February 1995.

whites. Later they were turned into trust lands. Gilbert was then in Kleinfontein. Government officials told him to go and stay in Vaalfontein. When we got there, we were not under any chief except our own. Later on we heard that Quayle, Vaalfontein and Kraalfontein were given to Molepo. The government told us that if Molepo is our chief we should obey him; if he is not, we should not. Chief Molepo insisted that we are his subjects and sent his messengers to Vaalfontein. They found the Mojapelo guards there. They told the Molepos not to enter, but to go and fetch their chief. Chief Molepo refused to come. Chief Gilbert never paid his levies to Chief Molepo, and Gilbert himself was a poor man. He rode in a donkey cart. When we lived in Vaalfontein, the place was inaccessible by roads and had no services like schools and clinics. We then left the place for Quayle. It is true that Molepo's subjects the Molemas herded their cattle there, but they did so illegally, as it was not yet a trust farm. No one forced us to leave Quayle, but the government gave us back our original place of chieftainship (Mmaboi). The Molepos are telling the truth when they say that the government allocated these land to them in the 1960s. Now Mojapelo says that he never disappeared, he is still here and is demanding his land, despite the fact that Vaalfontein, Kraalfontein and Quayle have been given to Molepo on a silver platter.⁶⁷

Elaborating on the Mojapelos claims to Vaalfontein and Kraalfontein, Patrick Mojapelo added:

Because of Betterment Planning, the government wanted to move us from Vaalfontein to Kraalfontein. During those days if you wanted to work in a white area, you needed a permit from the chief. Gilbert was the one issuing those permits, but after our land at Vaalfontein was given to Molepo, they stopped Gilbert from issuing permits. We resisted the move from Vaalfontein, but some of us grew tired of the back to the land campaign and were prepared to move and live under Chief Molepo. Kraalfontein was where Schoeman Mojapelo was staying with his followers and we have our burial sites there. That site is used until today. Today the land belongs to Molepo because the government gave it to him. We are saying, we want our land back. That is all.⁶⁸

Chief Molepo's response was:

If someone is staying on one chief's land and one of his family members dies, he will bury him on that land. If he leaves, he will leave the grave behind. All the graves and ruins were there when Mojapelo was under Molepo. Where you die, you are buried. Because we believe in ancestor invoking, if your ancestors call upon you, you will visit your ancestral lands. We conclude. We are not claiming Vaalfontein and Kraalfontein. They are ours.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Field visit to Quayle, Vaalfontein and Kleinfontein with the Mojapelos and the Molepos, 19 January 1996.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

Land Restitution, the Chieftaincy, Gender Relations and Customary Land Law

Historically, chiefs have played a pivotal role in the allocation of land in South Africa. The search for a new system of land allocation and tenure will have to involve a systematic analysis of the historical role of chiefs and their popularity on the ground. Despite a groundswell of opposition to the institution of the chieftaincy within certain localities during the 1980s, the ANC as leader of the national liberation movement and leader of the GNU has tended to vacillate on the question of the future role of chiefs. In the interests of alliance building, this hesitancy ultimately gave way to cautious support for “progressive chiefs” and their organisations. This conciliatory position can be traced to liberation struggle alliances forged with the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (Contralesa), a group formed in the late 1980s comprising chiefs opposed to apartheid rule. Contralesa aligned itself with the Mass Democratic Movement and this facilitated the subsequent formation of coalitions between the ANC and Intando Yesizwe of Kwandebele, Inyandza of Kangwane, the UPP of Lebowa and the bantustan regimes of Venda and Transkei. The Patriotic Front electoral alliance strengthened the position of chiefs eager to consolidate their hold over land allocation. As Mackintosh has observed, “rights of land allocation are certainly a central basis of power for tribal authorities”⁷⁰.

Control which chiefs exert over land allocation continues to constitute the fundamental material basis of their power, and as Haines and Tapscott point out, is also the “most crucial mechanism for the interplay of corruption and control”⁷¹. There is widespread recognition of this in rural villages and a growing resentment at the way in which the chieftaincy, through bantustan tribal authority structures and its control over the allocation of land has become an increasingly oppressive and corrupt institution. Increasingly, the chieftaincy has employed extra-economic coercion to develop strategies of accumulation, accumulation of followership and territory in order to facilitate ongoing reproduction of its hegemony. The process has been contradictory however, since extra-economic coercion has meshed with corruption and ultimately served to delegitimise the chieftaincy.

The main base of opposition to the chieftaincy in areas where it is under threat (in certain parts of the former Transvaal provinces and the Eastern Cape), is the civic movement under the aegis of the South African national Civic Association (SANCO). Nevertheless, in the run-up to local government elections in 1995, the ANC was at pains to effect reconciliation between local civics and chiefs, with President Mandela personally appealing to both sides for restraint and co-operation. This ANC ambivalence around the institutions of the chieftaincy reflects a broader ambivalence on the ground, where a thin line exists between opposition to the chieftaincy, and opposition to individual (often corrupt) chiefs.

⁷⁰ A Mackintosh, “Rethinking Chieftaincy and the Future of Rural Local Government: A Preliminary Investigation”, *Transformation*, 13, (1990:30).

⁷¹ R Haines and CPG Tapscott, “The silence of poverty: tribal administration and development in rural Transkei”, in CR Cross and RJ Haines (eds), *Towards Freehold? Options for Land and Development in Black Rural Areas*, Cape Town: Juta, (1989:169).

While the alliance between the ANC and progressive chiefs has been predicated upon a pragmatic politics of building electoral support, ANC branch and civic structures have clashed with the chiefs in their struggle for the control over political space. In some areas, including within the Northern Province, chiefs treat the land as part of their personal fiefdom, breeding conflict at the grassroots. This poses a major challenge to ANC provincial cadre:

As the ANC, we do not have a clear position with regards to the chiefs. We are avoiding the issue. It is sensitive in the sense that chiefs regard themselves as the sole owners of the land. This is why SANCO and ANC structures on the ground are in conflict with the chiefs. The chiefs do not want to part with the land. The question often becomes: who is going to allocate the land for development. In one case, Eskom was ready to embark on a project following negotiations with the people. But when Eskom wanted to implement the project, the chief said he did not know anything about it.⁷²

Debates around the role of chiefs in local government and land allocation also impinge directly on women's issues, and if the restitution process is likely to reinforce and help restore the institutions of the chieftaincy, then key questions around gender relations and land access emerge. As in the case of the majority of sub-Saharan land tenure systems, women's access to land is tenuous and contingent upon husbands and/or male kin. As noted above, the Land Claims Court is empowered to influence land rights on restituted land and to take steps to ensure that:

...all the dispossessed members of the community concerned shall have access to the land or compensation in question, on a basis which is fair and non-discriminatory towards any person, including a woman and a tenant, and which ensures the accountability of the person who holds the land or compensation on behalf of the community to the members of such a community.⁷³

The RDP itself recognises the problems of women's land rights. It states:

Women face specific disabilities in obtaining land. The land redistribution programme must therefore target women. Institutions, practices and laws that discriminate against women's access to land must be reviewed and brought in line with national policy. In particular, tenure and matrimonial laws must be revised appropriately.⁷⁴

While legislators and policy makers should be commended for the attention given to women's land rights, the experience of other countries suggests that these cannot be guaranteed through legislation or policy alone. They can only be realised through organisation aimed at ending women's oppression.

⁷² Group interview with ANC Northern Province Provincial Organisers, Pietersburg, 23 February 1995.

⁷³ *The Restitution of Land Rights Act, op.cit.*

⁷⁴ African National Congress, *The Reconstruction and Development Programme, op.cit.*, p.21.

The lack of land rights is central to an understanding of women's' oppression in the South African countryside. The evolution of customary tenure under colonialism to the present, has meant that land is allocated to male household heads through the practice of owing allegiance to a chief, or through inheritance where eldest sons are the major beneficiaries. Customary law must of course be understood as continually being recreated and redefined, and deployed to preserve aspects of existing relations, while serving to legitimise and reproduce relations created under colonialism and apartheid. At the same time, customary law must be seen as highly contested, and in the case of land, an ongoing site of gender conflict. In South Africa, the acute landlessness generated by the process of forced removals has meant that women in black rural areas are particularly hard hit. While in the bantustans, as elsewhere in Africa, women are able to generate strategies at a local level to secure tenuous access to land, this is no solution to the problem. Under conditions of transition, opportunities for a fundamental restructuring of land tenure systems which will be free from gender discrimination are arising.

The Department of Land Affairs has created a joint directorate of Land Restitution, Tenure and Land Administration Reform, so that the institutions are in place to transform tenure relations and restructure gendered relations of land access and control. The foregoing analysis of *The Restitution of Land Rights Act* also suggests that conditions are now present for the judiciary to intersect with customary legal processes around land in order to contest gender discrimination. This cannot, however, be left to the courts on their own. Institutions can only be effective if participation on the ground, within civil society is facilitated. Political mobilisation and organisation of social forces is a necessary condition for achieving this. The prognosis is not good, however, as demobilisation has followed the 1994 general elections in a context where, historically, relatively little emphasis has been placed on rural mobilisation by the national liberation movement. Post-liberation, the ANC has been sensitive to women's issues, and guaranteed 30 per cent representation for women on its parliamentary lists. While this has given women significant representation in Parliament, it has also drained the women's movement of some of its most dynamic leadership. Moreover, in keeping with the general trends in South African politics, the women's movement has tended to be stronger in urban than in rural areas. Despite the existence of a plethora of women's rural groupings, these have rarely made an impact on mainstream politics. This is a general problem, identified by South African Communist Party (SACP) Central Committee member and ANC MP, Jenny Schreiner:

Part of our problem is that we have failed to take gender into the mainstream of politics. (That voice) has been replaced by strong women's lobbies and voices heard at the policy-making level, which means we are empowering each other instead of women at the grassroots. It's elitist.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ *Weekly Mail and Guardian*, May 5 to 11, (1995:8).

Overcoming this elitism will be crucial if spaces opened up by the new political dispensation will lead to an organised onslaught by the women's movement on gendered access to land in South Africa.

The importance of this reaches down to Mmaboi village. Skosana Mongalo is a 42-year-old villager interviewed in February 1995. She said that the ANC had not been active in the village since the April 1994 elections. "The ANC is weak here, it has minimum involvement with people" she said, adding that land "is a central aspiration here. If people had access to land, they could use it for pasturage and cropping". She expressed concern over existing systems of land allocation, complaining that she had approached the chief for agricultural land but heard no response. She also argued that in future, land should be allocated by democratically elected village committees, "since the chief is not responsive to the people's needs", and observed that "women need to be recognised as farmers and should be the first to benefit from land reform since they have been discriminated against in the past"⁷⁶.

Interestingly enough, when the Mojapelo community was grappling with the issue of whether to agree to establish a community authority, or to push for their demand of recognition of their *bogoshi*, it was women who swayed the vote:

We have voted twice (for *bogoshi* or a community authority). It was said that we should choose between *bogoshi* and a community authority. Women outnumbered us and they wanted a community authority.⁷⁷

The women's' vote must be seen in the context of the relationship between the chieftaincy, land rights and gender, where the changing role of the chieftaincy and definitions of customary law under colonial rule and apartheid, denied totally the idea of women as landowners. While this denial was absolute, there was, more broadly, an ambivalence surrounding land ownership rights of Africans in general.

Martin Chanock argues that:

There is a profound connection between the use of the chieftaincy as an institution of colonial government and the development of the customary law of land tenure. The development of the concept of a leading customary role for chiefs with regard to the ownership and allocation of land was fundamental to the evolution of the paradigm of customary tenure.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Interview, Mmaboi, 14 February 1995.

⁷⁷ Daniel Mojapelo, "Minutes of a Meeting of the Mojapelo Group held on Friday 4 September 1987", with Mr MF Chuene, Representative from the department of His Excellency, the Governor of Lebowa.

⁷⁸ M Chanock, "Paradigms, Policies and Property: A Review of the Customary Law of Land Tenure", in K Mann and R Roberts (eds.), *Law in Colonial Africa*, London: James Currey, (1991:64).

With chiefs at the heart of colonial constructions of customary land tenure, rights to land were only secured through political allegiance to the chieftaincy and territoriality⁷⁹. In a democratic South Africa, with constitutional recognition of indigenous land rights established, the new government will have to “disentangle indigenous land rights” from this colonial legacy⁸⁰. But this legacy in turn carries with it a double bind: the link between land rights and political allegiance, and the political subjugation of Africans, meant that through colonialism and later apartheid, Africans lost both property and land rights outside of reserve territory. This leads Klug to ask whether “the refusal to recognise a right of indigenous ownership is not merely an extension of the original refusal to recognise any rights at all”⁸¹.

The need for a redefinition of property rights becomes crucial for South Africa if the *Restitution of Land Rights Act*, is going to succeed as a land reform mechanism, and overcome its fundamental weakness: the 1913 cut-off date. The Mojapelo land claim has been contested by white land owners on the basis that:

Registered full ownership includes all land rights and it excludes the rights of all other people to the land in question. If the Mojapelos ever had land rights to any of these farms (which is denied) they lost it (sic.) completely between 1864 and 1889. Their alleged dispossession is nowhere near the cut off date of 19 June 1913.⁸²

The argument goes further to claim that the eviction of the Mojapelos in 1928 by Granville Nicholson “had nothing whatsoever to do with any discriminating law. The angry Mr Nicholson merely exercised his common law rights as a registered land owner”⁸³. Within this conception of colonial law and history, Mojapelo territory was “occupied by well established white farmers long before the turn of the century”⁸⁴.

This romantic view of settler colonial history contains within it bourgeois conceptions of property and common law, which although sufficiently flexible to incorporate a variety of tenure forms including joint ownership and sectional title, have persistently viewed the land rights of indigenous people as “falling short of ownership”⁸⁵. This means that in order for land restitution to succeed, fierce legal battles will have to be fought over what constitutes a “right in land”, in order to ensure that white South Africa’s antiquated absolute concepts of ownership of property are turned around to incorporate both registered and unregistered rights in land⁸⁶.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ H Klug, “Defining the Property Rights of Others: Political Power, Indigenous Tenure and the Construction of Customary Law”, *Centre for Applied Legal Studies: Working Paper 23*, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, (1995:4).

⁸¹ *Op. Cit.*, p. 41.

⁸² PJ Steytler to Regional Land Claims Commissioner, *op.cit.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Klug, *op.cit.*, p. 41.

⁸⁶ Of course within South Africa there is growing recognition that the ownership of landed property can no longer be understood as absolute, but in order for this to be realised in legal practice, the new legal

Conclusion

During the early 1960s, Chief Molepo attempted to assert his authority over the Mojapelos, who resisted these attempts by refusing to pay their tribal levy to him. According to Fixwell Mojapelo, "Chief Molepo then started collecting Mojapelo people's Identity Documents (IDs) because of their refusal to pay the tribal levy. Then the chief threatened to shoot, because people resisted this"⁸⁷. Patrick Mojapelo continued the account:

The day when the chief came to collect the IDs, I found him at Quayle having collected the IDs. Because we approached in numbers, the chief got into his car and left. At some distance they stopped and the chief got out of the car with a gun in his hand. I was there with women and children and told them to pick up stones. The chief then got into his car and left.⁸⁸

One of the unintended consequences of the *Restitution of Land Rights Act* appears to be the revival of tribal identities and conflicts through the central role which chiefs are playing in land claims⁸⁹. With the power of chiefs being based on the control of land, territory and followership this is not altogether surprising, but it does not bode well for a democratic land claims process.

This paper has argued that the act is a step forward in providing opportunities for the dispossessed to reclaim their land rights. Nevertheless, the process entailed in the act is problematic, because it does not allow for sufficient participation by the communities involved. When the Mojapelos first sought to pursue their land claim, they were advised by the Regional Director of the Department of Land Affairs to go and put all necessary information together, without being offered any assistance in terms of clarifying what kind of information was required for them to lodge their claim⁹⁰. Without any clear guidelines of how to do this, the community was disempowered, and began to seek the assistance of outside agencies.

Land needs of the dispossessed are complex and diverse, but the restitution process is not well suited to individuals lodging their own claims, although this is possible under the act. The question of *who* should claim is in many cases being resolved through chiefs lodging claims on behalf of their communities. This is both strengthening, and in cases resuscitating the chieftaincy, as well as generating the basis for chiefly conflict over land and territory. While restitution seeks to redress the injustices of the past, and implicitly

discourses of the interim and new constitutions will have to be brought to play in order to realise its potential as a powerful tool of interpreting new legislation such as the *Restitution of Land Rights Act*.

⁸⁷ Field visit with the Molepos and the Mojapelos, Quayle, 19 January 1996.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ It is too early to quantify this, but it is certainly true in the provinces formerly constitutive of the Transvaal. This point was made by the Regional Land Claims Commissioner for Gauteng, Mpumalanga, North-West and Northern Province, Ms Emma Mashinini, in a meeting with the Chief Land Claims Commissioner, Mr Joe Seremane, Pretoria, 7 February 1996.

⁹⁰ Interview, Patrick Mojapelo, Mmaboi, 22 February 1995.

therefore seeks to address land needs, these, in the case study area at least, are being subordinated to the legal requirements of having to prove the validity of the claim. Clearly the village of Mmaboi has land needs: there are currently about 600 households settled in the village, but only 42 of these have agricultural plots of about 1 ha in size. It can also be assumed that villagers under neighbouring chiefs competing for land also have genuine land needs. There is no guarantee that a chief-led process will lead to land needs being met in a democratic way; rather, as has been argued, given the patriarchal character of the chieftaincy, it is more likely that these needs will not be met. They will more likely be met through democratic public action entailing a partnership between the state and civil society through participatory sub-regional planning.

Over and above these concerns is the need for a systematic rethinking of property rights in South Africa. Private property rights have historically been seen as absolute, while customary rights have been reformulated by colonialism and apartheid, but only been recognised in territory reserved for African occupation. The failure to recognise customary rights of occupation beyond these territories has been linked to a denial of all rights. With bourgeois property rights firmly entrenched in the constitution, current white land owners have the upper hand in the judicial process. The 1913 cut-off date does not simplify matters, and as has been argued, the history of land law and land partition in the Transvaal means that many communities continued to live on their land, oblivious to the fact that it had been demarcated as private property. Many communities claiming land will therefore find themselves being channelled to the land redistribution process which is now being piloted in all nine provinces. Administrative bottlenecks are currently paralysing this initiative as the Department of Land Affairs faces a delivery crisis; but that is another story.

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Africans on the Land? Land Tenure and Land Conflicts in Zimbabwe

Veronica V. M. Na

Synopsis

Land in Zimbabwe like in most societies is an economic asset. For the peasant population, it is their only source of wealth that determines their economic survival or well-being. The Lancaster House Constitution (or independence agreement) forbade the then new government of Zimbabwe from expropriating land that had been forcibly taken from blacks during colonialism.

The government was in an unenviable position as the pressure on land reform became more pronounced or acute. This was in part fired up by the slowing down or downward trend of that country's economy and rising unemployment.

The 1992 Land Acquisition bill became a landmark legislation on land reform as the bill empowered the government to take land from farmers (to a large extent white owned and controlled farms).

This bill was popular with the majority of the peasant or black population, however, for the white commercial farmers the Act was especially troublesome as they thought that the legislation was racially motivated and unconstitutional particularly with regards to compensation. However, the 1992 land bill was to compensate farmers or landowners with amount that was to be decided as fair compensation (lower-than-market price). For many blacks, the question then became what compensation? Their views being that the land was actually taken by the European settlers from their fathers without compensation.

On the other side, representatives of the white commercial farmers argued that redistribution of land to peasants lacking technical skills, training and farming experience and management will be detrimental to the country's economy.

Meanwhile the government's aim is to achieve equity and justice through land reforms. The government had envisaged resettling one million peasants on 14 million acres or 5.5 million hectares. Before then, at independence, government planned on resettling some 162,000 peasants or landless families on commercial farmland.

In view of the Lancaster House Agreement, the government would acquire land through negotiations rather than compulsion with payment in foreign currency and land price was to be based on market rate.

Ten years after independence, the government was far from accomplishing the goal of resettling some 162,000 peasant families. The explanation or government view was that it was too restricted by the Lancaster Agreement. Therefore, it decided on a major amendment to the constitution following the expiration of the agreement in 1990. Meanwhile, and after a decade, most blacks (about 70 percent) continued to live in the communal areas which are less fertile, overcrowded and resource depleted.

On the other hand, less than 5,000 white commercial farmers (4,500) owned and controlled 28 million acres or nearly one third of Zimbabwe's land area.

The growing discontent was captured when Mugabe stated that "you cannot run a society of haves and have-nots and hope that that society will continue to accept the situation. Even after independence, Zimbabwe's roughly 100,000 whites, have remained

to be in greater comfort, greater wealth than the blacks, and we have not seized their property. We have not become vindictive in any way."

The major argument against land distribution and resettlement to peasants is that the consequences may depress the economy and frustrate foreign investment. A view also held by the World Bank. However, this view tends to portray a negative image or connotation in that blacks or resettled peasants are incapable of fostering development. This paper's main argument rest on the premise that given the opportunity, fertile land, technical support, incentives and other supportive services as were bestowed to the whites in the pre-independence period, resettled farmers will be just as successful as the white commercial farmers. Both then will foster development in Zimbabwe.

Implementation of the 1992 Act????

The interest of the white commercial farmers have been protected by their powerful political and economic union who basically court the government as well as Western aid donors. Many of whom had threatened withdrawing foreign aid.

Meanwhile, government hand is tied. The necessary resources to implement the 1992 Act are simply not there. Unfortunately the consequences of 1991, 1992, 1994 and 1995 drought had left the government hanging. Therefore, with the government spending over \$2 billion in food importation and with the threat of aid withdrawal, the Zimbabwe government is in a dilemma with successfully implementing the 1992 Land Acquisition Bill.

Presently, where does this leave the peasant families, the white commercial farmers and the Zimbabwe government? Negotiation and Concession?

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