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## Crisis in the Great Lakes

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## Book Reviews

# The Great Lakes Crises

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## INTRODUCTION

In the third week of October this year, the "Cobra" militia, commanded by the former president of Congo-Brazzaville, Dennis Sessou-Ngueso, took control of the national airport and the presidential palace in Brazzaville thus bringing to an end the two-way civil war that pitted him against the forces of the democratically-elected president of the country, Pascal Lissouba. The war, which reduced Brazzaville to rubble and exiled most of the city's estimated 700,000 population to the countryside or neighboring Kinshasa, had been fought intermittently since last June. Regional and international mediation had failed to stop it. In the wake of his defeat, Lissouba fled to Burkina Faso while the leader of the neutral third force, Brazzaville's former mayor, Bernard Kolelas, escaped to Kinshasa. So ended the fragile "consolidation" of democracy in this ethnically-divided country whose fate, according to John F. Clark, lay in the evolving compromise and statesmanship of its three main leaders[1]. And with that, this frequently unstable republic has unwittingly been restored to the pre-1992 situation when Sessou-Ngueso ruled the country as the unchallenged military dictator in the thinly-veiled disguise of a Marxist ideologist heading a party and bureaucratic framework to match. As international TV crews filmed the pillage of the city by unruly gunmen and interviewed victorious "Cobra" amidst the ruins of the Brazzaville airport, the backdrop was composed of a population fleeing to Kinshasa across the Congo River. It made for an irony that was impossible to forget: as Mobutu fled Kinshasa last May in advance of the rebel coalition led by Laurent Desire Kabila, Mobutu loyalists and nervous foreigners had crossed the river for safety to Brazzaville, where US marines waited (in vain it turned out) to evacuate them.

That dramatic switch in roles is symbolic of how unpredictable the politics of this region have become. The events in Congo-Brazzaville constitute the latest in a series of interlocking tragedies in Central Africa that began with the genocide of the Rwandan Tutsi in 1994. Political violence was of course never far from the surface. Burundi's ethnic carnage had resumed after the October 1993 coup d'etat that destroyed the elected Melchior Ndadaye government. Insurgency against the central government in Southern Sudan and Northern Uganda had lasted for decades. But after 1994, violent conflicts in the Great Lakes region and the neighboring countries have at once assumed an unprecedented ferocity and a regional if not international character.

This special issue of *African Studies Quarterly* examines the underlying causes of political instability in the region and how lessons drawn from it might aid the search for a lasting solution. At a time when Africa's fragile economic recovery calls for greater regional security, the problems of central Africa are sending political seismic waves to other parts of the




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continent: to Eastern Africa via Uganda and the lingering refugee problem in Tanzania, to Southern Africa as Angola's problematic search for peace becomes intertwined with the fate of governments' in Kinshasa and Brazzaville, to Sudan in the north as Uganda becomes a key player among the new "front-line states" (with Ethiopia and Eritrea) opposed to the National Islamic Front government in Khartoum.

The Great Lakes region--comprised roughly of Uganda, Western Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, and the northeastern part of Democratic Republic of the Congo--lies in the eye of the storm. In the brief span of time between 1994 and 1997, it has rapidly replaced Southern Africa and the Horn of Africa as the most violence-prone of the continent's major regions. The unprecedented 1994 horror in Rwanda may have led to the annihilation of up to 850,000 Tutsi, according to Gerard Prunier's authoritative account of the events leading to the genocide[2]. But the horror, as René Lemarchand has argued in his presentation here and writings elsewhere, lay deep in the widely-shared Hutu-Tutsi "exclusionary" political calculus in which accession to power by one group is automatically considered by the losers as the precursor to their own destruction. In these circumstances, Lemarchand says, there is no room for compromise: "the preservation of ethnic hegemony is perceived as a condition for physical survival" by the incumbents, with "the elimination of rival claimants as the only means by which survival can be assured"[3]. In the effort to show how conflict in Rwanda since 1959 has been filtered through those lenses in Burundi (and vice versa) Lemarchand traces the hardening of the attitudes of the Rwandan genocidaires to the overthrow of the Ndadaye government in Burundi (by the country's Tutsi army) that culminated in his assassination. The mass exile of over one million Hutu (many of them accomplices in the genocide) to the then eastern Zaire, and north-western Tanzania only set the stage for the next round of the conflict.

To strengthen its declining political fortunes, the Mobutu regime (evidently with the support of France) took up the cause of the Hutu exiles. This served as a counterbalance to the perceived emergence of Tutsi (or Hima) regional hegemony that was symbolized by the victorious alliance of Paul Kagame in Rwanda (Tutsi) and Yoweri K. Museveni of Uganda (Ankole Hima). Both groups are somewhat related, if one goes by the profuse myths of the "imagined communities" of this region. Among the many conspiracy theories in the region, this one extends the reach of Tutsi hegemony to Burundi, where the predominantly Tutsi government of Pierre Buyoya took over power in mid-1996. Others see the diplomatic and military tentacles of the Tutsi-Hima alliance and counter-alliance as expanding further outward with the United States (and the "Anglo-Saxon" world as Prunier calls it, following the codewords of Paris) taking sides with Kagame and Museveni, while France supported the disgraced pre-1994 Hutu regime in Rwanda and the tottering Mobutu regime in then Zaire. In an opinion piece that appears in our "At Issue" section, Tony Waters deals with the construction of improbable "conventional wisdoms" about the genocide and its fall-out in the realms of humanitarian relief, ethic rivalries and regional power politics. It is a salutary reminder for caution to those instant-experts of Africa who lurch to "ancient tribal animosities" as the cure-all explanation for Africa's political problems[4].

As we know now, the Mobutu regime overplayed its hand in its attempt to use the Hutu refugees as a pawn in its struggle for self-preservation, using them alternately to play to the galleries of the international humanitarian lobby (and its largesse), French diplomatic

ambitions, and its embattled regional allies, like Daniel arap Moi of Kenya and Omar el Bashir of Sudan. But Mobutu's calculations proved most self-destructive in his government's efforts to disenfranchise the Zairian Tutsi (the Banyamulenge) in Kivu, adjoining Rwanda and Burundi. For at this stage the memories of 1994 in Rwandese government circles and zero-sum political calculations (which Lemarchand writes about) kicked in, bringing Uganda and Rwanda on the side of the coalition of the Banyamulenge and forces loyal to Kabila. The immediate goal was to break the Hutu refugees in Kivu loose from the control of the Interhamwe militiamen who had constituted the vanguard in the Rwandan genocide, giving them a chance to go home to Rwanda. That task, which had eluded the UNHCR and the humanitarian activists, was accomplished by the end of November. For their part, the Interhamwe and some of the refugees (nobody knows how many) fled to the Congo interior. With the Banyamulenge and their allies in hot pursuit, some made for the Gabon border and yet others to Congo-Brazzaville, only to be caught in the civil war there. Such were the rapid regional permutations of the troubles. But the most significant long-term consequence of the fighting in 1996 was the demise of the Mobutu regime. In a lightening series of military maneuvers, most of which were preceded by outpourings of massive local support in favor of the "liberators", this armed coalition took over most of Congo between October 1996 and May 1997. By the time this motley army marched to Kinshasa, Kabila had the regional support not just of Rwanda and Uganda, but also--most importantly--of South Africa, Angola, Zambia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and the international business lobby keen to invest in the country's ample natural resources.

Yet, as the papers by Thomas Turner and William Reno in this issue remind us, the triumph of Laurent Kabila brings formidable problems to the political and economic fronts. In reports that are likely to delay development assistance to the Kabila government from Western governments, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International in October accused the victorious Congolese soldiers of a series of massacres of fleeing Hutu refugees. The Kabila government, with the support of Rwanda and Uganda, has resisted UN-sponsored investigation of these alleged massacres. Furthermore, as Turner remarks, although a nationalist, Kabila is an outsider to the complex politics of Kinshasa and his unwillingness to engage established political leaders there like Etienne Tshisekedi will cost him local support. His legitimacy has in any case been substantially eroded by the popular perception of him as a captive of a "foreign" Tutsi army and of his forces as external occupiers who do not understand the capital city's lingua franca, Lingala. And, as William Reno demonstrates, any efforts to reconstitute the country's economic base as a unitary system is bound to run into complicated local and international networks, based on local political patronage, mineral and other resource extraction. The private companies, local bosses with an ethnic following, and an assortment of freebooters who established themselves in the shadow of the decaying Mobutu state, are likely to resist any rationalization of the economic system, even if it is based on free enterprise as the World Bank and donors insist it should be.

Taken together, the contributors to this issue have made a commendable effort to elucidate the most salient factors in the evolving crises in the Great Lakes area and Central Africa generally, an area of great potential to the future of the continent. Apart from its vast size (2.4 million square kilometers) and comparatively huge population (48 million), the Democratic Republic of the Congo borders nine African states: Angola, Congo-Brazzaville, Central African

Republic, Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, and Zambia. It is also, as so many have remarked, "a geological scandal" in view of its vast and varied mineral potential. Historically, Congo has had cultural, political, and economic ties to all these countries that look set to expand especially southwards to South Africa and the Southern African Development Community, which Kinshasa is now slated to join. Political speeches have been made about a prosperous future scenario already in the making. There have been press reports about a vigorous alliance of new, younger, well-educated African leaders--like Yoweri Museveni, Paul Kagame, Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia and Isayas Aferworki of Eritrea--that will carry the torch forward to that future[5]. Most of the contributors to this issue are more cautious. But the debate has been joined. As all Africanists continue to observe the events in this region, we hope this issue can provide some guidance to their thinking, research, and personal judgment on that and related issues.

**Notes**

1. Clark, John F. "Congo: Transition and the Struggle to Consolidate" in John F. Clark and David E. Gardinier, eds., Political Reform in Francophone Africa. Boulder: Westview Press, 1997, pp.62-85.
2. Prunier, Gerard. The Rwandan Crisis: History of a Genocide. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995, p.265.
3. Lemarchand, René. "Patterns of State Collapse and Reconstruction in Central Africa", in this issue, and Lemarchand, Burundi: Ethnic Conflict and Genocide. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995, pp.17-33.
4. The most publicized recent product of this genre is Keith Richburg, Out of America. New York: New Republic Books, 1997.
5. Gourevitch, Philip. "Continental Shift", New Yorker, August 4, 1997.

# Patterns of State Collapse and Reconstruction in Central Africa: Reflections on the Crisis in the Great Lakes

RENÉ LEMARCHAND

In a matter of days last October, a large swathe of eastern Zaire erupted into an orgy of violence, sending tremors through the Great Lakes region and beyond. What brought Armageddon to the shores of Lake Kivu were the search and destroy operations launched by units of Rwanda's Armée Patriotique Rwandaise (APR) on a Hutu refugee population of over a million people distributed among a dozen camps, many of which had been used as launching pads for cross-border raids into Rwanda and Burundi [1].

The awesome nemesis visited upon the refugees is both epilogue and beginning. It brings to a close the threats posed to the Rwanda state by Hutu extremists, and opens up a new chapter in the tortured history of Zaire (now renamed the Democratic Congo Republic [DCR]). The violence unleashed by the APR had its source in Zaire, but its logic came from Rwanda; the Kabiliste insurrection, on the other hand, has a logic of its own, but its impetus came from Rwanda.

Out of the dialectic that so closely links retribution to insurrection emerged--or resurfaced--a "revolutionary" movement dedicated to the overthrow of Mobutu's dictatorship: Laurent-Desire Kabila's Alliance des Forces Démocratique pour la Libération du Congo (AFDL). Its spectacular success, only six months after its birth, in carrying the banner of "liberation" to the gates of Kinshasa is a commentary on the extent of popular disaffection generated by the Mobutist state--and, parenthetically, on the naiveté of those analysts who failed to recognize, or refused to admit, that its disease, like that of Mobutu himself, was very clearly terminal.

This is not the place to speculate about the long-term impact of the seismic aftershocks sweeping across the Great Lakes region and the neighboring states. The aim here is to reflect on what the current crisis tells us about the patterns of decay and collapse affecting the state systems of Rwanda, Burundi, and Zaire, and briefly consider the prospects for reconstruction. But first something must be said of the human costs of the crisis, and its geopolitical implications for the region.

## THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL

Ostensibly aimed at Habyalimana's "willing executioners" -- i. e., the so-called Interhamwe and remnants of the ex-Forces Armées Rwandaise (FAR), together accounting for approximately seven per cent of the refugee population--the destruction of the camps sowed chaos and bloodshed in much of North and South Kivu, causing massive social dislocations and untold casualties among civilians. How many died in the course of the attacks is any one's




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guess; estimates vary from a few thousand to tens of thousands. There can be little doubt, however, about the fate of the survivors.

To the loss of approximately one million lives resulting from the Rwanda genocide and its aftermath must now be added at least 300,000 "unaccounted for" among those refugees who could not or did not want to go back to Rwanda, as well as thousands of Banyarwanda residents of North and South Kivu, Hutu and Tutsi, who died of hunger or disease, or at each other's hands, or fell under the blows of the rampaging Zairian soldiers or the bullets of Kabila's troops. If any credence is to be given to the report recently published by Médecins Sans Frontières accusing the AFDL of pursuing a "deliberate strategy of elimination of all Rwandan refugees, including women and children," genocide is evidently not the monopoly of any single state or community. In the history of man's inhumanity to man, few chapters are as horrific as the carnage suffered by Hutu and Tutsi since 1972.

Behind the wreckage of the refugee camps and ensuing human tragedy lies an underlying design, for which Vice-President Kagame of Rwanda and President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda deserve full credit. The aim was to combine several objectives: first and foremost, to bring to a halt the armed incursions mounted from the camps in North Kivu and thus restore security on Rwanda's western border; second, to extend the search and destroy operations in North Kivu to the camp sites in and around Uvira (South Kivu) where some 150,000 Barundi refugees of Hutu origins had found shelter since 1995, and in so doing deal a crippling blow to Leonard Nyangoma's Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie (CNDD), the leading faction of the Hutu rebellion in Burundi; third, to deny two of Uganda's armed opposition movements, Tabliq and the West Nile Liberation Front (WNLF), access to safe havens in Zaire; fourth, to pave the way for Kabila's "second coming", and in so doing repay Mobutu in kind for his military assistance to the Habyalimana government after the October 1990 invasion, and subsequent covert support of the Interhamwe militias.

On each count, the Kagame-Museveni strategy succeeded beyond all expectations. Built around a hard-core faction of ethnic Tutsi from North and South Kivu (the so-called Banyamulenge) and with the backing of APR units, Kabila's AFDL emerged as the spearhead of a local rebellion which quickly snowballed into a mass movement. Unlike what happened during the 1964-65 eastern rebellion, Kabila's second try at capturing power was conducted with considerable skill; the evidence indicates the AFDL leader made excellent use of the lessons learned from his more experienced "sponsors"(Kagame and Museveni). Amazingly, the fall of Kinshasa, on May 17, with hardly a shot fired, anticipated by a month Kabila's earlier prediction of capturing the capital by mid-June.

What all this adds up to is a fundamental alteration of the geopolitical map of former Belgian Africa. In Burundi, the Hutu rebellion has yet to recover from the loss of its privileged sanctuaries in and around Uvira. While Burundi appears to be sinking ever deeper into the near anarchy of an endless civil war, Rwanda is discovering the costs of refugee repatriation. Here the security gains achieved by the destruction of the refugee camps must be weighed against the infiltration of scores of Interhamwe and ex-FAR through the return to their homeland of half a million refugees (approximately half of the total refugee population living in the camps in Zaire and Tanzania). Countless murders of civilians are reported to have been committed by Hutu extremists, in turn provoking retributions in kind by the Rwanda military.

In Zaire, the Mobutu era has come to an end, but the contours of the successor state remain uncertain. What does emerge with reasonable clarity is Kabila's heavy indebtedness, politically and militarily, to his external patrons. His meteoric rise from obscurity to the presidency of the Democratic Congo Republic (DCR) could not have happened without their military backing; similarly, his capacity to maintain himself in power will depend, to a large extent, on their continued support. For Kabila to ignore the circumstances of his military prowess would entail costs that he cannot afford. Rwanda and Uganda (along with Angola) are now key players in the regional power equation, and will probably remain so for the foreseeable future.

## THE CHALLENGE TO CONVENTIONAL WISDOM

Looked at from a broader perspective, the crisis in the Great Lakes challenges a sizable slice of received wisdom about "the clash of civilizations". As will be remembered, the phrase borrowed from Samuel Huntington's celebrated Foreign Affairs article [2], refers to the mortal threats to world peace posed by fundamental cultural incompatibilities among civilizations. That the Huntingtonian model is singularly inappropriate to explain the agonies of Rwanda and Burundi is made abundantly clear by their remarkable cultural homogeneity. It would be difficult indeed to imagine any two groups in the continent that have more in common in terms of language and culture, history and social organization, as Hutu and Tutsi. Nor does Huntington's reference to "the bloody clash of tribes in Rwanda" [3] to describe the horrors of 1994 bring us any closer to resolving the paradox of ethnically diverse, yet culturally coherent, societies dissolving into genocide.

Political exclusion, not clashing civilizations, is the key to conflicting identity formation in each state. To view Hutu and Tutsi as "tribes" can only make for confusion. Unlike what can be observed in virtually every other African society, where "tribes" are juxtaposed against each other in cookie cutter fashion, in Rwanda, and to a lesser extent in Burundi, ethnic relations revolved around a vertical system of stratification in which Tutsi and Hutu stood in ranked relationship to each other, with the Tutsi minority claiming the lion's share of power, wealth and status, and the Hutu majority assuming a more modest position on the traditional totem pole. What we are dealing with are not "tribes" in the usual (and misleading) sense of the word, but status groups, whose distinctiveness was reinforced by occupational differences between the Tutsi pastoralists and the Hutu agriculturists [4] .

In this kind of ethnically stratified pecking order lies an extraordinary potential for violent conflict. All it takes is for ethnic entrepreneurs to manipulate this potential for political advantage. Nowhere is the temptation to tap this potential greater than in an electoral context where appeals to ethnicity translate into a victory of the majority and defeat of the minority. This is the instrumental face of ethnicity, which in Rwanda, as in Burundi, quickly led to the reconstruction of ethnic selves in Manichean terms, in short to a constructivist frame of ethnic reference [5].

The threats posed to the state in both instances are inseparable from the introduction of the vote, and more generally from the ethos of democracy. The collapse of their state systems can best be seen as the ineluctable outcome of a head-on collision between the "premise of inequality" inherent in their traditional value orientation and the egalitarian message of liberal

democracy. In vertically structured, minority-dominated societies, the verdict of the polls is never neutral, any more than the state systems to which they give birth. Rather than a "society-wide epiphany," to use Thomas Carothers' phrase [6], the result is violent conflict.
It is one thing to admit the potential for violence inherent in the electoral process, and quite another to gauge the scale of ensuing conflict. What needs to be underscored is that both states have experienced violence on a genocidal scale, and in both cases violence has generated massive outflows of refugees to neighboring territories. Theories of state collapse make little or no mention of the implications of genocide, both as an empirical fact and a phenomenon that profoundly alters the perceptions that one group has of the other. A notable exception is Alex De Waal's [7] lucid commentary on "the genocidal state": "Rwanda," he wrote,

is more than another collapsing state. The interim government of Rwanda is fighting for the right -- as it sees it -- to free itself from the moral claims of the rest of the world. This requires not just the eradication of the Tutsi minority but the annihilation of the human-rights and democracy movement in Rwanda, and all the values it stands for. In this furnace extremist politicians are reforging the identity of the Hutu people. It is frightening to watch.

In a society exonerated of moral constraints, and where the capture of power implies domination of one group by another, killing becomes a moral duty. The preservation of ethnic hegemony is perceived as a condition of physical survival, and the elimination of rival claimants the only means by which survival can be assured. Conversely, in such circumstances, the excluded community feels free to retaliate in kind. "An eye for an eye" becomes a license to kill. The result is endless bloodshed. In this hellish universe of mutually inflicted mass murder no one can claim innocence, nor is there any room for reconciliation and compromise. As a result, the obstacles that stand in the path of state reconstruction are exceptionally daunting.

Nor indeed is there any room in contemporary discourse on state collapse for the rise of armed refugee movements organized outside their homeland with the active support of external actors. Although the significance of the phenomenon transcends the cases at hand to include Somalia, Chad and Liberia, it is in Rwanda, Burundi, and Zaire that the collapse of state systems is most patently traceable to insurgencies born of refugee flows [8].

What needs to be stressed here is the potentially explosive mix arising from the involvement of conflict-generating refugee diasporas in electoral processes, a phenomenon made dramatically clear by the recent history of Rwanda. The decomposition of the state machinery on the eve of the genocide is traceable to the projection of electoral competition onto intra-Hutu power struggles involving alliances, real or presumed, with the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), the external vehicle of Tutsi interests.

There are significant variations on this theme in Burundi and Zaire. In Burundi, the emergent Hutu-dominant state system born of the transitional elections of June 1993 was virtually blown to bits by the military coup of October 21, a move patently aimed at reversing the verdict of the polls. The assassination of the newly elected Hutu president, Melchior Ndadaye, did more than bring to a halt a five year transition to multiparty democracy; it created a deep split within Ndadaye's party (the Front Démocratique du Burundi -- Frodebu), between those who still wanted to give democracy a chance, and those who felt that recourse to force was their only option. Ambushed by extremists on both sides of the political spectrum, the

Burundi state expired under the combined assault of Tutsi militias and army men, on the one hand, and Hutu rebels, on the other, the latter for the most part identified with the armed wing of the Frodebu in exile, now renamed the Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie (CNDD).

In eastern Zaire the nationality issue -- who has the right to vote and who doesn't--lay at the heart of the "Kivu war" of 1993, pitting Banyarwanda (Hutu and Tutsi) against so-called "native" Zairois. More recently, the withdrawal of their citizenship rights was seen by many Tutsi as perfectly consistent with the threats voiced by the South Kivu authorities against "foreigners" and the exceptionally brutal "cleansing" operations directed against them by the Interhamwe and local units of the Forces Armées Zairoises (FAZ) in early 1996. After the wholesale slaughter of Tutsi civilians in Mokoto, in April 1996, thousands of them left the Masisi area to find refuge in Rwanda. The result of all this, as we now realize, was to create a set of mutually reinforcing conditions for a tactical alliance between the Banyamulenge and the APR, culminating in the shooting up of the refugee camps in October 1996 and the rise to power of Kabila.

The significance of such critical moments and events -- whether traceable to the surge of refugees across boundaries, the holding of transition elections or the intervention of the military -- points to yet another flaw in theories of state collapse: the very limited attention paid to triggering events in sharpening the edge of conflict, and accelerating the process of internal decomposition. A case in point is William Zartman's [9] casual dismissal of "turning points, warning signals, thresholds, or pressure spots," all of which offer important clues to an understanding of the disintegration of state systems in former Belgian Africa. Although there can be no quibbling over Zartman's characterization of state collapse as a "long-term degenerative disease", there is more to it than a "slippery slope" phenomenon. To these challenging thoughts we shall return in a moment. Let us, for the time being, take a closer look at the regional dimensions of state collapse.

## REGIONAL FAULT LINES: The Kin-Country Syndrome

However wide of the mark the "clash of civilizations" may be in uncovering the roots of the Hutu-Tutsi conflict, what Huntington [10] refers to as the "kin country syndrome" is basic to an understanding of the process of escalation in the Great Lakes. Where ethnic fault-lines cut across national boundaries, conflict tends to spill-over from one arena to the next, transforming kin solidarities into a powerful vector of transnational violence. An action-reaction pattern sets in whereby victims in one setting become aggressors in the other. Such, in a nutshell, is the essence of the kin-rallying syndrome behind the escalation of violence in the region.
In such circumstances, as Huntington [11] reminds us, "conflict does not flow down from above, it bubbles up from below." At the heart of this bottom-up dynamic lies a phenomenon whose devastating effects are nowhere more dramatically revealed than in the three states under consideration -- the transformation of refugee-generating conflicts into conflict-generating refugees.

A critical aspect of regional escalation lies in the presence in each country of a large number of refugees, most of them with searing memories of the violence they experienced -- or inflicted

-- in their homelands. Refugee flows can best be seen as the vehicles through which emotions are unleashed, ethnic ties manipulated, collective energies mobilized, and external support secured. What is at stake here is not simply the physical survival of human beings, but the political survival of specific ethnic communities. Whether as instruments in the hands of extremists for extracting assistance from humanitarian agencies, making deals with local authorities, or forging alliances with local kin groups -- or indeed as a political resource used by host governments or secondary level participants to further their foreign policy goals -- refugee movements, as one observer noted, are intensely political: "they create domestic instability, generate interstate tension and threaten international security"[12].

Much of the history of Hutu-Tutsi confrontations in Rwanda and Burundi is indeed reducible to the polarization of group identities that has accompanied the movement of refugee populations from one state to the other. Consider, for a moment, what happened in Burundi in the wake of the Rwanda revolution [1]959-196[2]: of all the factors that have contributed to sharpen the edge of the Hutu-Tutsi conflict none has been more decisive than the flight into Burundi of some 60,000 Tutsi refugees from Rwanda in 1960-61, rendered homeless by Hutu-instigated violence, many mourning the death of relatives [13]. By 1990 their number had grown to 180,000. Little wonder if some took an active part in the Burundi genocide of Hutu in 1972. But by then the shoe was on the other foot, with more than 50,000 Hutu from Burundi seeking asylum in neighboring states. Another major exodus of Hutu took place after the so-called "Ntega and Marangara incidents", in 1988, when in the wake of a local uprising thousands of Hutu fled to Rwanda to escape retribution from the army. Until the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, the most significant of such migrations took place immediately after Ndadaye's assassination, in October 1993, and the subsequent killing of thousands of Tutsi civilians by Hutu. As the all-Tutsi army proceeded to restore "peace and order" with its customary brutality, an estimated 300,000 Hutu poured across the boundary into Rwanda. As much as the devastating news of Ndadaye's death, their presence in Rwanda contributed in no small way to sharpen ethnic tensions. Although the evidence is lacking, there is every reason to believe that among the participants in the 1994 genocide were a fair number of Hutu from Burundi.

If domestic instability and interstate tensions are prominent features of the "kin country" syndrome in Rwanda and Burundi, the threats to regional security posed by the Kabiliste insurrection are equally clear. So also is the part played by violence-generating refugees in precipitating the crisis that paved the way for the insurrection.

To get our bearings on the significance of ethnic fault lines in North and South Kivu, and properly grasp the factors behind the abrupt reconfiguration of the social landscape of the area, we need to go back in time to the pre-genocide situation. A glance at the ethnic map of eastern Zaire reveals notable contrasts with what can be observed in Rwanda and Burundi. First and most obvious is the co-existence within the same provincial arenas of so-called "Banyarwanda" (Hutu and Tutsi) and a variety of ethnic communities indigenous to the region (Hunde, Nande, Banyanga, etc.). In 1993 the Banyarwanda were said to represent approximately half of the total population of 3.5 million in North Kivu. Of these, approximately 80 percent were Hutu and 20 per cent Tutsi [14]. Furthermore, although neither Hutu nor Tutsi are a homogeneous lot, until recently the tendency among the "native tribes" has been to lump them together as "Banyarwanda," and to use the label as synonym for "foreign intruders." That a sizable number

of them happened to be long-time residents of the area, that many were born in Zaire, or traced the origins of their families to pre-colonial migrations, seemingly made no difference.

Looked at in terms of clan and regional ties, and length of residence, there are of course marked differences among both Hutu and Tutsi. Some Hutu clans migrated into North Kivu long before the advent of colonial rule. The same is true of the Tutsi. Especially relevant in this regard is the case of the Banyamulenge, a Tutsi sub-group of South Kivu, numbering in the tens of thousands [15]. The label, in its pre-genocide connotation, suggests a sense of identity derived from the locality where they first settled, that is "the people of Mulenge." The Banyamulenge are only one of a number of Banyarwanda communities that might be referred to as "the early settlers," people who migrated to North and South Kivu in the early or mid-nineteenth century, if not before; another category are the so-called "transplantes" i.e., the thousands of workers (mostly Hutu) who were brought to the Kivu at the request of the colonial administration to work on tea and coffee plantations; a third group are the mostly Tutsi refugees who left Rwanda in the early sixties during the Hutu revolution, numbering anywhere from 30,000 to 50,000. For all these differences, the Banyarwanda never ceased to be seen by the soi-disant Zairois otherwise than as foreigners, and therefore disqualified to claim citizenship rights. No other issue has had a more decisive impact on the rise of a collective self-awareness among the Banyarwanda than the withdrawal of their citizenship rights by the 1981 Nationality Act [16]. After the RPF invasion of Rwanda in 1990 incipient Hutu-Tutsi tensions began to emerge, but these were consistently kept in check by their common awareness of anti-Banyarwanda sentiment among "native tribes."

With the massive outpouring of Hutu refugees and Interhamwe from Rwanda in 1994 the Banyarwanda frame of reference quickly dissolved into a rigid Hutu-Tutsi dichotomy. An instant sea-change occurred both in the perceptions that the Banyarwanda had of each other, and in the images that Hutu and Tutsi projected of themselves in the social milieu of eastern Zaire. The "kin-country syndrome" asserted itself with a vengeance, driving Hutu and Tutsi, irrespective of other distinctions, into opposing camps. Meanwhile, the communities indigenous to North Kivu began to cast about for tactical alliances. While "native" Hutu joined hands with the Interhamwe, FAR and Hunde elements against the "native" Tutsi, the latter responded by casting their lot with the RPA (Rwandan Patriotic Army), but not before thousands of them had been slaughtered by Interhamwe and FAZ elements in the Spring of 1996.

Before long the Banyamulenge label was freely used as an all-encompassing identity marker by all Tutsi in Zaire, irrespective of regional ties or length of residence. Behind this curious case of ethno-genesis lies a clear political objective: to openly proclaim their Zairian roots and their full rights to Zairian citizenship. At the semantic level at least the term Banyamulenge has settled once and for all the nationality issue. This is not the place for a full-scale discussion of how the fault-line war in eastern Zaire escalated into a regional conflict, with Rwanda, Uganda, and to a lesser extent Burundi, as secondary participants, and Angola and the Sudan as tertiary parties. Suffice it to note that the collapse of the Zairian state could not have happened so swiftly, and with so little resistance from the FAZ, unless the Mobutist state had already shown alarming signs of decomposition.

## STATE COLLAPSE: The Longue Durée Dimension

State decay does not happen overnight. It is a long-term process, which brings to mind Braudel's 'long duration' (longue durée) dimension. Although the Braudelian facet of state collapse applies to all three countries, the cases of Rwanda and Burundi reveal contextual specificities that mark them off sharply from their neighbor to the west.

In bi-ethnic, vertically structured social arenas, exclusionary policies are a major source of erosion of state legitimacy. With the benefit of hindsight, one can better appreciate the long-term implications of such policies for the Rwanda state. The more or less systematic exclusion of Tutsi residents in Rwanda from meaningful political participation (beyond a quota system that left few illusions in the minds of its presumptive beneficiaries), along with the refusal of virtually every government to allow the Tutsi population in exile to return to their homeland, made the Rwanda state doubly vulnerable. It created a deep and lasting sense of alienation among the resident Tutsi population--in time making them highly receptive to the appeals of their kin-group in exile -- while providing the exiles with justification for the 1990 invasion.

There is an obvious parallel between the exclusion of Tutsi in Rwanda and of Hutu in Burundi, except for the fact that the latter formed the overwhelming majority of the population. Moreover, the exclusion of Hutu in Burundi occurred more gradually, at a later stage, and did not reach completion until the 1972 genocide, when anywhere from 100,000 to 200,000 Hutu were massacred in the wake of an abortive insurrection, and tens of thousands forced into exile. Again, at no time did they benefit from anything comparable to the massive military and logistical support extended by Uganda to the RPF. What needs to be stressed is that in both Rwanda and Burundi, ethnic exclusion resulted in the birth of an ethnocratic state made all the more vulnerable by the rapid shrinking of its power base (of which more later).

As the recent history of the Banyarwanda in eastern Zaire cruelly shows, the denial of their citizenship rights was certainly a factor in the concatenation of events leading to the unraveling of the Mobutist state. Unlike what happened in Rwanda and Burundi, however, ethnic exclusion did not hold the same implications. As long as it involved peripheral communities -- the Banyarwanda in Kivu, the Luba in Shaba, the Bakongo in the Lower Congo -- the threats to the center seemed manageable. Although very much part of Mobutu's manipulative tactics, ethnic exclusion has never been a systematic, guiding principle of Zairian policies. If anything, the striking policy inconsistencies surrounding the nationality question in the Kivu are better seen as the symptom rather than the cause of the incoherence of the Mobutist state.

The threat of Malthusian trends is the second major source of state erosion that needs to be stressed, in part because it gave justification to the first. Long before they reached the edge of the precipice both states were faced with demographic pressures which neither had the capacity to contain. Rwanda and Burundi claim the highest population densities in the continent. At the turn of the century each state had a population of roughly 1.5 million. Today their combined populations are close to 15 million. In comparative terms this is as if one third of Zaire's population were enclosed in a space one-sixtieth of its size. While raising serious questions about the long-term viability of their state systems, the ever-expanding size of their population retrospectively explains the past reluctance of their governments to accept the return of large numbers of refugees. Moreover, it focuses attention on land shortage as a major ingredient of

ethnic strife (particularly in Rwanda, but also in eastern Zaire) and the inability of the state to develop policies designed to reallocate land effectively and equitably, the reason in part being that land eventually became a key resource in the arsenal of the state to build faithful clienteles among privileged social groupings.

We touch here on a third aspect of the long-term processes of state decay, with relevance to all three cases at hand: the shrinking of the political bases of state authority. Nothing is more revealing of the weakening of the Rwanda state under Habyalimana than the steady erosion of its power base. The shift of power accomplished by the revolution, from Tutsi to Hutu, uncovered deep regional fractures among Hutu, northerners vs. southerners, Bashiru vs. Bagoye, etc. As the regional struggles over patronage intensified, the point was reached where power and authority tended to gravitate increasingly around the presidential household and his immediate family, the so-called akazu ("small house" in Kinyarwanda). At the time of the RPF invasion, on October 1, 1990, the Rwanda state was little more than a caricature of the neo-patrimonial polity.

Much the same contraction of the political arena can be seen in Burundi. From 1972 onwards, power became the exclusive privilege of Tutsi-Hima elements from the south (Bururi), a situation that came to reflect the dominant position of Tutsi-Hima officers in the military. If nothing comparable to the akazu phenomenon characterized the Burundi situation, there can be little doubt about the inherent fragility of a state system where key decisions are made by a handful of army officers, and where the army itself is subject to ceaseless internecine struggles. The overall implications are well summed up by Rothchild and Groth [17]:

Because state institutions are fragile and lacking in effectiveness and legitimacy, they are a poor vantage point to mediate the struggle between competing groups. Unable to channel participation along predetermined lines, the overloaded state becomes isolated and aloof from society, unable to structure the relations between social interests or between these interests and itself.

Nowhere is this loss of legitimacy and growing isolation more palpably evident than in Zaire. For a quarter of a century the Mobutist state was able to compensate for its lack of internal legitimacy by drawing huge dividends from its international status as the staunchest ally of the United States in Africa. The end of the Cold War could not but sharply increase its international isolation and legitimacy deficit; bartering its anti-communist credentials for external assistance was no longer a feasible option. Just as Mobutu owed his rise to power to the incidence of East-West rivalries in the continent, in the last analysis the collapse of the Zairian state must be seen as a casualty of the Cold War's end.

Intimations of the mortality of the Mobutist state were felt long before its downfall. Its multiple afflictions have been diagnosed in considerable detail by Turner and Young [18]. Some are rooted in the cumulative effect of economic and financial constraints ranging from the plummeting of copper prices in the 1970s and the ineptitudes of "Zairianisation", to a growing debt burden and a widening gulf between a soaring supply of money and the availability of basic commodities, leading to runaway inflation. Others are clearly traceable to Mobutu's own neo-patrimonial style, which conjures up mixed images--Bula Matari working in tandem with the Medellin cartel or Cosa Nostra. The result has been a process of political involution centered around a handful of rent-seeking cronies, leading to what Crawford Young pithily describes as

"self-cannibalization": "the state consumes itself to live for another day". "The decay of the public realm," he goes on to note [19],

is marked by a cumulative deflation of the state apparatus in terms of its competence, probity and credibility. Institutions of rule lose their capacity to translate public resources into sustenance of infrastructures or valued amenities. A pervasive venality surrounds most public transactions. As a consequence, the subject comes to experience rule as simple predation; the aura of the state as powerful and nurturant protector vanishes.

While the image of the state as protector receded, that of the state as predator came increasingly into focus. To compensate for the unpaid salaries of his troops, Mobutu in effect gave them a blank check to ransom and loot. The privileged ethno-regional clienteles built around the Ngbandi-dominated Division Spéciale Présidentielle (DSP) only reinforced the disaffection of the troops, whose principal source of livelihood was plunder and theft. The phenomenon was already patently clear in the early 1990s if not earlier, and became all more threatening during the Kabiliste insurrection. For the majority of the troops sent out to crush the rebellion the purpose of their assignment was not to defeat the enemy, but to take maximum advantage of the situation to engage in one "pillage" after another. As the tide began to turn many ended up selling their weapons to potential rebels, or joining their ranks.

In the catalog of forces that conspired to produce the ultimate collapse of the state in Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire, some are specific to their history and socio-ethnic configurations, others to the complex pattern of interaction arising from the "kin-country" syndrome. Yet in all three states emerges a common denominator: the extension of the dysfunctions of the state to their militaries. The privatization of the Zairian army and its propensity to instigate civil violence for purposes of personal profit, the active participation of the FAR in the Rwanda genocide, and the murderous intervention of the Burundi army to block the transition to democracy--all are reflective of the declining capacity of the state to control its instruments of coercion. From all evidence, the Weberian definition of the state may well provide a more useful thread for identifying the roots of its disintegration than some of the more fashionable extant taxonomies [20].

## TRIGGERS AND THRESHOLDS

In an otherwise inspired essay, Zartman [21] makes surprisingly short shrift of the multiplier effect of decisive events on processes of state collapse. His use of metaphors is revealing: "What is notable in these scenarios (of state collapse) is the absence of clear turning points, warning signals, thresholds, or pressure spots. . . The slippery slope, the descending spiral,and the downward trend are the mark of state collapse rather than deadlines and triggers."

The least that can be said of this curiously ahistorical construction is that it is difficult to reconcile with the evidence at hand--not unlike trying to explain the fall of the French monarchy without reference to the seizure of the Bastille, the Tennis Court Oath, or the Flight to Varenne. Triggers are not to be dismissed lightly, least of all when directed against entire ethnic communities--or when perceived as such. From this vantage the October 1, 1990 invasion of

Rwanda by the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) can only be seen as a watershed. Against heavy odds, almost four years later, the RPF was able to claim victory, but at an appalling cost.

Immediately seen by the Habyalimana government as evidence of a Tutsi conspiracy, the invasion was the signal for arresting tens of thousands of Tutsi civilians, and not a few Hutu, throughout the country. In the capital city an estimated 100,000 people were brought at gun point into the national stadium for questioning. Only months later were they finally allowed to return home. By then, however, ethnic violence had crossed new thresholds of intensity. In January and February 1991, in response to a daring RPF raid on the Ruhengeri jail, local Hutu militias massacred hundreds of Bagogwe pastoralists (a Tutsi subgroup). This was only the first in a series of anti-Tutsi pogroms culminating in March 1992 with the cold-blooded massacre of thousands of Tutsi civilians in the Bugesera region. Predictably, the Tutsi invaders for their part showed little restraint in dealing with Hutu civilians in the "liberated" areas. Tens of thousands are said to have been slaughtered by advancing RPF troops. By January 1993, an estimated one million Hutu civilians were forced into camps throughout the country. Only if one remembers their desperate condition--having lost all their possessions and sometimes their relatives--and the depth of anti-Tutsi sentiment, can one understand why so many of them ended up supplying the bulk of Habyalimana's "genocidaires."

With the assassination of Burundi's first elected Hutu president, on October 21, 1993, another threshold was crossed in the rising tide of ethnic hatreds. In Rwanda, Ndadaye's murder carried enormous symbolic significance. The message, in its devastating simplicity, came through loud and clear: "You just cannot trust the Tutsi!" Relayed in the countryside by thousands of panic-stricken refugees, the warning also found an immediate echo in the media, including the racist Radio Mille Collines. Not only did the news of Ndadaye's death virtually destroy the fragile consensus built around the Arusha accords; from then on the Hutu militancy was clearly on the ascendant, transforming the state into a battle ground between moderates and radicals.

The third, most lethal trigger was the two surface-to-air missiles that brought down President Habyalimana's plane over Kigali, on April 6, 1994, killing, along with Habyalimana and his closest aides, President Cyprien Ntaryamira of Burundi. To this day the identity of the men who fired the missiles remains a mystery [22]. Most Hutu, however, immediately detected the hand of the RPF behind the dastardly deed. The killings began within hours.

As the Rwanda state finally collapsed, awash in a sea of blood, its counterpart in Burundi was barely able to sustain the backlash of the genocide next door. As in a game of mirrors, reflecting symmetrical images, the Rwanda genocide quickly entered the consciousness of the Tutsi community of Burundi in the form of a self-fulfilling fantasy, giving retrospective justification to Ndadaye's assassination, thus becoming part and parcel of what Paul Veyne calls "l'imagination constituante"[23]. The killings in Rwanda were not just an omen of what could happen to the Tutsi in Burundi; genocide had already happened. What some erroneously viewed as a spontaneous explosion of violence after Ndadaye's death, was nothing less than genocide. Indeed, it was part and parcel of Ndadaye's dastardly plans (which is why he had to be killed). It mattered little that (a) Burundi was the scene of the first genocide recorded on the continent, and (b) that it was a genocide of Hutu by Tutsi. The only point that mattered for the more militant elements of the Tutsi community was to capture the moral high ground by

holding the majority of Frodebu politicians collectively responsible for the genocide of their kin group. The drawing of a wholly arbitrary line of demarcation around the "genocidaires" also meant drawing of state boundaries. As parliament ceased to function, and as governments were made and unmade by pressures from the street, orchestrated by Tutsi militias, what was left of the state fell into the hands of the Tutsi-dominated army, which to this day remains the principal arbiter of conflict.

Space limitations do not permit more than the briefest reference to the equally devastating impact of the Rwanda genocide in eastern Zaire. Here again it is the catalytic effect on group identities that needs to be stressed. With the massive surge of Hutu refugees into the Goma area, followed in early 1996 by countless atrocities committed by Interhamwe against local Tutsi, collective identities quickly sorted themselves out into rival communities. Once allies and victims in their fight for Zairian citizenship, they suddenly turned against each other with appalling ferocity. Long before eastern Zaire became the launching pad of Kabila's revolution, by courtesy of Vice-President Kagame, North Kivu had been the scene of a hideous slaughter of Banyarwanda in 1993 [24]. As much as anything else about the Zairian state, its inability to come to grips with the nationality question, and with the roots of the 1993 carnage, revealed the extent of its paralysis.

If the foregoing does illuminate certain critical dimensions of state collapse, it also hints at some of the more intractable problems that lie ahead on the road to reconstruction.

## PROSPECTS FOR RECONSTRUCTION

After the descent into hell, comes the purgatory of national reconstruction. Each of the three states under consideration is entering this somewhat opaque halfway house with uneven indulgences, and at different speeds. Although Rwanda has already made commendable progress, Congo/Zaire has barely crossed the threshold of redemption. Only in Burundi is the state fated to remain in limbo for the foreseeable future. Clearly, given the extreme fluidity of the regional context, any attempt to assess the prospects for reconstruction must be highly speculative. By way of a starting point, two remarks are worth noting. Firstly, only in Rwanda has something resembling a state system re-emerged from the chaos of genocide; in Burundi and Zaire, on the other hand, the nearest thing to the state is what Misha Glenny, in his classic work on the fall of Yugoslavia, calls "the parastate," i.e. "the mutant offspring of an expiring failed state. . . boasting certain essential attributes of a normal state but grotesquely lacking in others"[25]. Because of its much greater degree of "stateness," Rwanda was able to play a critical role in destabilizing Burundi's "genocidaires" in exile and in "facilitating" the Zairian transition. There is every reason to believe that Rwanda will expect substantial dividends in return, primarily in the form of continued influence in Kinshasa and Bujumbura.

Secondly, just as Habyalimana's Rwanda was the model polity which many Hutu would have liked to transpose into Burundi, many are the Tutsi politicians in Bujumbura, including some that might be described as "moderates," who today look to Kagame's Rwanda for inspiration. Kagame's Rwanda has all the earmarks of an ethnocracy, but with just enough power sharing at the top to enlist a measure of Hutu collaboration. Thus, if the substance of

power is to remain in Tutsi hands, via the military, no effort should be spared to give Hutu elements willing to collaborate a prudent share of participation in decision-making.

Even the most cursory glance at the pattern of reconstruction in Rwanda cannot fail to notice the characteristic traits of a military ethnocracy. The emergent polity is one in which the 45,000 strong, all-Tutsi army provides the critical underpinning of the formal government institutions. Key decisions are made by Kagame and his trusted lieutenants, flowing from the top down. The appointed parliament is little more than a fig leaf that barely conceals the dominant position of the RPF. The civil service, the judiciary, the economy, the schools and university are all under Tutsi control [26]. The closest thing to a constitution are the Arusha accords of August 1993. Although intended to provide the basis for an all-embracing power-sharing formula, extending to the armed forces, the accords have been consistently "adapted" and manipulated to serve the policy goals of the regime. Efforts to rebuild the judicial system are proceeding with less than optimal results. While the trials of genocide suspects are said to be relatively fair, there are still some 100,000 Hutu languishing in Rwanda's jails. Quite aside from the fact that approximately half of the detainees are said to have been incarcerated for reasons having little to do with their presumed involvement in genocide, but rather as the quickest way for their neighbors to grab their property, the conditions in which most prisoners are being held can only be described as inhuman.

With ethnic violence picking up momentum in the north -- largely as a result of armed raids by repatriated Interhamwe and ex-FAR, inevitably followed by a devastating retribution in kind by the APR -- the prospects for enlarging the ethnic base of the state appear extremely remote. The implications transcend the Rwanda arena. In Burundi, where the radical fringe of the Tutsi community remains extremely sensitive to the lessons of Rwanda, there are signs that the current efforts at mediation will be violently rejected by certain units of the army and the militias, with the Bagazistes trying to draw maximum advantage of the situation to further advance their ethnocratic claims. In Zaire/Congo, any move designed to curtail the influence of Rwanda's "near abroad" will probably be met with stiff resistance from Kagame, and indeed from the Banyamulenge currently in charge of the security and the local administration in North and South Kivu. Clearly, issues of ethnicity will continue to set the key parameters for reconstruction in all three states. Which brings us to a brief consideration of the impending avatars of the Kabiliste take-over in the DCR.

The difficulties facing Kabila are inscribed, in part, in the circumstances of his astoundingly rapid military victory. Three factors are particularly worth noting: (a) the critical role played by Banyamulenge elements trained in Rwanda in cementing the politico-military armature of the rebellion; (b) the all-pervasive, overwhelming anti-Mobutu sentiment that infused the civil society, and caused hundreds of thousands of Zairians to cast their lot with the rebels, long before they even came into view; (c) the widespread assumption among anti-Mobutist forces that "liberation" means a swift transition from dictatorship to democracy.

For Kabila to break out of the ethnic enclave in which he is now entrapped is a key priority if his reconstruction project is to gain legitimacy. The task will not be easy. With the rapid advance of the rebellion into the interior, a growing number of Zairians from almost every province were brought into the armed forces of the Alliance, thus diluting the salience of the Banyamulenge presence in the military, but not to the point of allaying fears of "foreign

domination." Banyamulenge form the hard core of Kabila's troops; many occupy key positions in the administrative machinery of North and South Kivu. Anti-Banyamulenge feelings run high in both provinces, particularly among Hunde and Babembe. Despite efforts to incorporate Bashi elements in the provincial power structure their loyalty is open to question. The same is true of the Baluba/Kasai, who bitterly resent the exclusion of their "favorite son" (Etienne Tshisekedi) from the ruling government coalition. Kabila is thus faced with a Hobsons's choice: failure to meet the imperative of a broadly based coalition, meaning also a genuine effort to scale down the influence of the Banyamulenge in the Kivus and elsewhere, can only lead to a loss of legitimacy; turning against the architects of his victory against Mobutu, on the other hand, would be tantamount to political suicide.

Kabila must bear the unanticipated costs of a military conquest that quickly outpaced his capacity to put in place a viable administration. The abrupt collapse of the Mobutist state has created a political vacuum that has yet to be filled. The most notable exception is North and South Kivu. Even so, the picture conveyed to outside observers is one of considerable improvisation, with little attention paid to the potential support that could be derived from the civil society. If the situation in the Kivus is any index, many are the civil society organizations (CSO) that could have provided the social ballast needed to reconstruct the new polity, but so far their place in the new dispensation appears extremely nebulous. Many have been torn apart by ethnic rivalries born of the rebellion; some were simply dismantled, while others were brought under the tight control of Alliance cadres. Fear that the CSOs could transform themselves into "contre-pouvoirs" is all pervasive.

In the absence of a civil society capable of providing effective linkages with the state, the day-to-day tasks of administering the liberated territories have been entrusted to the Commissaires de Zone. Although in many instances local incumbents were allowed to remain in office, there can be little doubt as to where power lies -- in the hands of the Commissaires, acting hand in hand with local units of the armed forces. Though decidedly more disciplined than the FAZ, at times the enforcement of discipline on the civilian population is ominously reminiscent of the Bula Matari scenarios. "The attitude of the army," according to a first-hand witness, "is designed to bring back a taste of civic mores ('kuleta morale'), with an introduction of the chicotte. . . What is unacceptable by any modern standard of justice is the fact that whip lashing (on the legs) takes place on the spot, lying down face on the ground, by the same people who observe the alleged misdemeanor" [27]. If this testimony -- eerily evocative of the most somber of Tshibumba's paintings (most notably "Colonie Belge") -- is any indication, recourse to force could figure prominently in Kabila's strategies of state reconstruction. This impression is strongly reinforced by the deliberate, wanton killings of tens of thousands of Hutu refugees at the hands of Alliance troops, prompting the EU Head of Humanitarian Affairs Commission, Emma Bonino, to describe the killing grounds of eastern Zaire as a "slaughter house."

As the foregoing plainly suggests, the focus of Kabila's efforts at reconstruction is less on democracy than on the creation of spaces for discipline and moralization. In view of his own background as an Afro-Marxist guerrilla fighter during the 1964 rebellion, and his subsequent checkered career, it is easy to see why the virtues of the Civic Culture should only have a limited appeal to his **projet de société**. His early exposure to Marxism has left an ideological legacy that points to a systematic effort at the re-socialization of Zairian society. In the Kivu this

finds expression in the ideological seminars conducted by the secrétaires généraux charges de la coordination, in which the emphasis is on a class analysis of Zairian society; in terms of organization the aim is to reach out to the grassroots through the local cells (Chembe Chembe) set up to assist the administration; ultimately it is for centrally appointed village officials to filter and sanction the "general will" expected to emanate from the rural masses. It is evidently far too early to draw definitive conclusions from the situation observable in the Kivus; the ambivalence of Kabila's project [28] is well captured in the description offered by a recent visitor to eastern Zaire:

Whereas certain statements of the AFDL (Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo) (interviews with Kabila, etc.) stress a liberal approach, the ideological courses to which all functionaries are subjected rather stress a Marxist approach (class struggle, national bourgeoisie, etc.). An article in the Rwandese official newspaper La Nouvelle Releve (no. 339 of 7/4/97) gives yet another viewpoint, which centers around "a new social order in a rural environment" comparable to the ideas of Guinea-Bissau's Cabral for an African Socialism. Summarized in very short order, it states that organizing the rural society is first and foremost in solving the country's problems. This can be concretized in three points: changing political structures in favor of small producers, changing the mode of production, and increasing the productivity. To enable this accelerated development, a combination of state efforts (parastatals) and private efforts (via cooperatives) will be necessary.

It will be some time before the contours of the new state can be discerned with any degree of precision -- beyond what few tentative conclusions one may draw from the profile of the newly appointed government. Whether the expectations of the Zairian/Congolese masses can be met in time to prevent a major political backlash remains unclear. What is beyond doubt is that more will be required than a formal commitment to democracy, or Afro-Marxism, to reinvigorate private enterprise, restart the production of the industrial and manufacturing sectors, get the parastatals back on the rails, and restore the infrastructures. From Mobutu's kleptocratic rule Kabila has inherited a devastated economy, a society driven by ethno-regional enmities, plagued by deep poverty and shocking social inequalities, a country which, as one rebel radio broadcast noted, "has been crushed to a pulp." Rebuilding the DCR on the ashes of the Zairian state promises to be a Herculean task. Whether Kabila proves equal to the challenge remains to be seen.

**Notes**

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1. The question of how many refugees returned to Rwanda, and how many stayed behind, is a highly controversial issue. By and large pro-Rwanda analysts tend to greatly inflate the number of returnees (up to 700,000) and scale down the number of those who stayed in Zaire. Typical of this tendency to manipulate statistics is the following statement from a US official in Kigali: "Half a million refugees did not remain behind, but only about

100 to 200,000. . . . The UNHCR and NGOs grossly over-counted the refugees by mistake or probably more likely for their own motives -- continued western funding" (Personal communication). According to UNHCR figures, the total refugee population, before October 1996, was in the order of 1.1 million distributed among some fifteen camps from Mugunga in the north to Uvira in the south. Some 316,000 were reported in the camps around Bukavu, 715,000 around Goma, and 180,000 around Uvira, of whom 117,000 were Barundi. Assuming that as many as 700,000 returned to Rwanda, which has yet to be confirmed, this still leaves some 400,000 "unaccounted for." For an excellent survey of the refugee situation in eastern Zaire see the special issue of Dialogue ("Les Oublies de l'Afrique des Grands Lacs"), No. 196 (February 1997), as well as Johann Pottier's outstanding discussion, "The 'Self' in Self-Repatriation: Closing Down Mugunga Camp (Eastern Zaire)", forthcoming, in Richard Black and Khalid Koser, eds., The End of the Refugee Cycle? Refugee Repatriation and Reconstruction, Bergahm Books.

2. Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order." Foreign Affairs, V. 72, N. 3, Summer 1993, p22 (28). The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996.
3. Ibid. , p. 28.
4. For further elaboration on this theme, see René Lemarchand, Burundi: Ethnic Conflict and Genocide. New York: Cambridge University Press and Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1995.
5. For an illuminating discussion of the constructivist and other models of ethnicity, see Crawford M. Young, "The Dialectics of Cultural Pluralism: Concept and Reality", in Crawford M. Young, ed., The Rising Tide of Cultural Pluralism. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993, p. 21. On the role of intellectuals in fashioning the constructivist face of ethnicity in Rwanda and elsewhere, see Michael Chege, "Africa's Murderous Professors", The National Interest, Winter 1996-97.
6. Thomas Carothers, "Which Democracy Should We Export", Harper's Magazine, September 1996, p. 19.
7. Alex De Waal, "The Genocidal State", Times Literary Supplement, July 1994, n. 4761, p.3. For an illuminating background discussion of the Rwanda genocide, see David Rieff, "An Age of Genocide: The Far-Reaching Lessons of Rwanda", The New Republic, January 26, 1996.
8. On the genesis of refugee flows, see Myron Weiner, "Bad Neighbors, Bad Neighborhoods: An Enquiry into the Causes of Refugee Flows", International Security, vol. 21, No. 1 Summer 1996, pp. 5-42.
9. William Zartman, "Introduction: Posing the Problem of State Collapse", in William Zartman, ed., Collapsed States. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995.
10. Huntington, op. cit., p. 272.
11. Ibid. , loc. cit.
12. G. Loescher, "Refugee Movements and International Security", Adelphi Paper No. 268, International Institute of Strategic Studies, London 1992, quoted in Liisa Malkki, "Refugees and Exile: From 'Refugee Studies' to the Rational Order of Things", Annual Review of Anthropology, Vol. 24, 1995, pp. 504.

13. For the historical background, see René Lemarchand, Rwanda and Burundi. New York and London: Pall Mall Press and Frederick Praeger, 1970.
14. See Filip Reyntjens and S. Marysse. eds., Conflits au Kivu: Antecedents et Enjeux. University of Antwerp: Center for the Study of the Great Lakes Region of Africa, Dec. 1996.
15. The size of the Banyamulenge population in South Kivu remains an enigma; the figures cited vary from 35,000 to 200,000 (see Reyntjens and Marysse, op. cit.). An educated guess would suggest at least 60,000, possibly more; the figure of 200,000, cited by International Alert and other NGOs, seems grossly exaggerated. Part of the confusion may stem from the failure to take into account the changing definition of Banyamulenge: after the attacks on the refugee camps, the term came to designate all Tutsi, regardless of whether they came from North or South Kivu, or their length of residence in Zaire. See the outstanding analysis in James Fairhead, "Demographic Issues in the Great Lakes Region", Save the Children Conference on Practical Approaches to the Crises of the Great Lakes, Sunridge Park, London, 24-26 March 1997. "Statistics from 1991 in Rwanda," Fairhead writes, "suggested a catastrophic scenario within the next 25 years." Present populations average 600 people per usable ha, with average rural population density set to increase to c. 1000-1500 inhabitants per sq. km in 2015, with average farms of less than 1 ha on which 8-12 people must live." Population projections for Burundi and eastern Zaire, he adds, suggest equally problematic scenarios. See Johann Pottier, "Social Dynamics of Land and Land Reform in Rwanda: Past, Present and Future", SOAS, University of London. Typescript, April 1997.
16. The 1981 Nationality Act limited Zairian citizenship only to those persons able to show they had an ancestor belonging "to one of the tribes established in Zaire since 1865," thus repealing the 1972 law granting citizenship rights to all Banyarwanda established in Zaire before January 1950. Not only did the 1982 Act disqualify those tens of thousands of Banyarwanda and Barundi who came into Zaire at the request of the Belgian authorities, along with Tutsi elements who fled the Rwanda revolution; even more exasperating was the absurdity of a piece of legislation that made it virtually impossible for anyone to comply with provisions given that (a) the boundaries of Zaire in 1885 had yet to be fixed, and (b) proof of a pre-1885 ancestry is impossible to establish in juridical terms. For further details on the nationality issue, see Jean-Claude Willame, Banyarwanda et Banyamulenge; Violences Ethniques et Gestion de L'Identitaire au Kivu Paris: L'Hartmattan, 1997)
17. Donald Rothchild and Alexander J. Groth, "Pathological Dimensions of Domestic and International Ethnicity", Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 110, No. 1, 1995, p. 74.
18. Crawford M. Young and Thomas Turner, The Rise and Decline of the Zairian State. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988.
19. Crawford M. Young, "Reflections on State Decline and Societal Change in Zaire" Typescript, January 1997, p. 2.
20. See, for example, Jean-Germain Gros, "Towards a taxonomy of failed states in the New World Order: decaying Somalia, Liberia, Rwanda and Burundi", Third World Quarterly, Vol. 17, No. 3 1996, pp. 455-471, where the author valiantly wrestles with five categories

of failed polities: "anarchic states", "phantom or mirage states", "anaemic states", "captured states", and "states that failed in vitro (they are called aborted states)."

21. Zartman, op. cit., p. 9. The other side of this methodological coin is an overly functionalist approach to the subject of state collapse. "Why do states collapse," asks Zartman. "Because they can no longer perform the functions required for them to pass as states" (p. 5). What would the author reply to a doctor who would explain the death of his patient by gravely announcing that he/she could no longer perform the functions required to stay alive?
22. For an instructive, although inconclusive, effort to solve the mystery, see Filip Reyntjens, Rwanda: Trois jours qui ont fait basculer l'histoire Brussels: Institut Africain/CEDAF, and L'Harmattan: Paris, 1995.
23. Paul Veyne, Les Grecs ont-ils cru à leurs mythes? Essai sur l'imagination constituante Paris: Le Seuil, 1983. This myth has been largely endorsed by the UN Commission in charge of investigating the circumstances of Ndadaye's assassination.
24. For an excellent first-hand account, see Davis Orr, "Kivu Province Becomes a War Zone", Focus on Africa, Vol. 4, No. 4 October-December 1993, pp. 5-8.
25. Michael Glenny, The Fall of Yugoslavia London: Penguin Books, 1996, p. 263.
26. According to a reliable source, out of a total of approximately 5,200 students registered at the National University in Butare, 5,000 are Tutsi and 200 Hutu.
27. Anon., "Tupemata morale: Report of a Field Trip to South-Kivu", May 1-8,1997, p. 3.
28. Ibid., p. 2.

# Kabila Returns, In a Cloud of Uncertainty

THOMAS TURNER

## INTRODUCTION

Since the 1960's, Laurent Kabila had led a group of insurgents against the dictatorial Mobutu Sese Seko government in Kinshasa, operating along Zaire's eastern border [1]. Kabila's group was one of the many rebel movements in the East that had arisen with the aim of furthering the political program of Congo's first prime minister, Patrice Lumumba, the popular and charismatic leader who was assassinated in 1961. The major Lumumbist insurgencies had been subdued by Mobutu using foreign mercenaries between 1965 and 1967. The small surviving groups such as that of Kabila posed no threat to the Mobutu regime.

The 1994 Rwandan genocide changed all that. Approximately one million Rwanda Hutu refugees fled to eastern Zaire, which was already near the boiling point due to conflicts over land use and political representation. In an effort to break out of its diplomatic isolation, the Mobutu government provided backing to the Hutu, including army and militia elements, thereby earning the enmity of the Tutsi-dominated government in Rwanda. Tutsi of South Kivu, the so-called Banyamulenge, staged an uprising in the summer of 1996, with the support of the Rwanda government. By the second half of that year, the alliance of Banyamulenge, Tutsi of North Kivu, and Lumumbists and others, headed by Kabila, had taken over substantial parts of eastern Zaire, with the corrupt and demoralized Mobutu army disappearing in the face of their advance. After a short seven month campaign, Kabila and the new armed coalition entered Kinshasa as Mobutu fled into exile.

Kabila's victory is significant on the local, national and international levels. Locally, in South and North Kivu, Tutsi victims of ethnic cleansing turned the tables on their rivals. Nationally, long-time opponent Kabila overthrew Mobutu and restored the country's name, Congo. Internationally, Mobutu can be seen as one of a number of French-supported dictators ousted or in difficulty, while Kabila can be seen as of a series of former guerrilla leaders now supported by Washington, along with the current heads of Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda and Rwanda [2].

The ethnic factor is found on all these levels. Locally, it is entwined with land rights. Nationally, the ethnic identities of leaders constitute resources and handicaps. However, one must beware of simplistic notions, e.g., Tutsi as a "cohesive, insular tribe." The Tutsi of Rwanda, Burundi and eastern Congo have distinct interests.

Kabila is dependent upon an ethnic minority and upon his foreign backers, in particular the Ugandan and Rwandan governments. His survival will depend upon his ability to dominate the Tutsi within his government, who have ties to their foreign backers, especially in Rwanda. To establish his autonomy vis-à-vis his foreign backers he will need more support




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from Congolese other than the Tutsi. It seems unlikely he will be able to gain such support without reaching a compromise with other anti-Mobutu forces including the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (Union pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Social, UDPS) and Unified Lumumbist Party (Parti Lumumbiste Unifié, PALU). Tutsi elements of the Kabila government likely would resist dilution of the coalition, unless the UDPS led by Etienne Tshisekedi and PALU expressed support for the demands of the Tutsi of North and South Kivu. Tshisekedi's complaint that Kabila is held hostage by "foreigners" feeds the resistance of the people of Kinshasa to the Tutsi and makes a compromise between Tshisekedi and Kabila less likely.

## TURNING TABLES?

That Mobutu Sese Seko, who brought down Patrice Lumumba, should be brought down in turn by Laurent-Désiré Kabila, self-proclaimed Lumumbist, would seem an ironic full circle turn of the wheel. In reality, however, history never repeats itself. Unresolved grievances and long-lasting metaphors can give the appearance of repetition to a unique event which reflects a new situation. Such was the case during the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the fighting in Bosnia; so too in the Congo. There are many echoes of the decolonization of 1959-60 and the Lumumbist "rebellions" of 1964-65. Kabila claims the mantle of the martyred Patrice Lumumba but that claim, like any political claim, should be examined critically. In this article, a variety of claims by Kabila and his supporters, and a variety of characterizations of the Kabila movement, will be examined.

Is the victory of Kabila and the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre, AFDL) to be understood in a national context, as a victory over Mobutu and his latest prime minister, General Likulia Bolongo? Or is it (as Kabila and some aides have suggested) a victory over the entire political class of the Mobutu era, including also Etienne Tshisekedi, the UDPS and the "Sacred Union" of opposition to Mobutu?

Alternatively, is the Kabila victory to be interpreted in geo-political terms, as a victory of one power or coalition over another? Specifically, was the victory of Kabila a defeat for France and a victory for the United States, seen as backers of Mobutu and of Kabila respectively? In regional terms, was this a victory of a coalition of predominantly English-speaking states to the East of Congo/Zaire led by Uganda, over French client-states to the West, including Gabon, Congo-Brazzaville and the Central African Republic?

Whether one adopts the intercontinental or the regional level of analysis, is the conflict to be analyzed in terms of cultural projects, of which "Francophonie" is the outstanding example? Is there, as the French have alleged, an American counter-project? If so, what is that project and does support for Kabila make sense as a reflection of that project? Or does it make more sense to "chercher le capitaliste", to look for the national or multinational corporations which may have sought to obtain or enlarge a foothold in mineral-rich Central Africa, as was the case in the 1960s [3]?

Journalists and others in Kinshasa tended to interpret the Kabila movement as dominated by ethnic Tutsi. Yoweri Museveni of Uganda and Paul Kagame of Rwanda were seen as

collaborating in a plan for Tutsi hegemony, and those Congolese who joined Kabila as "foreigners" carrying out that plan. Such a view is too simple but is there any basis for it in fact?

There were echoes of the 1960s in Kabila's invocation of Lumumba, and a number of newspapers and magazines exhumed Che Guevara's assessment of Kabila based on several months of collaboration in 1965-66, but the question remains, how seriously is one to take Kabila's claim to the mantle of Lumumba?

In his march across the Congo and in consolidation of his power in Kinshasa, Kabila made it clear that he regarded the internal opposition to Mobutu as part of the problem. The internal opposition, starting with Tshisekedi, claimed (at least) an equal standing with the Kabila insurgency. The easy victory of Kabila would not have been possible, they argued, had not the Mobutu regime been undermined by years of work by the internal opposition. To evaluate this argument, one shall have to place the internal and external opposition in the context of the Mobutu regime, its social base and its external alliances.

Clearly, there is a surfeit of explanations of the Kabila victory, many of them oversimplifications if not caricatures. The explanations range from the individual level of analysis (e.g., Kabila's background and personality) to the global (e.g., the Franco-American rivalry in the post-colonial era). In this article I shall examine a number of preliminary assessments as reported in the press. Then I shall suggest several elements of a more satisfactory explanation, linking various levels of analysis. Ethnicity and democratization will be examined in their local, national and international forms.

## A DEFEAT FOR FRANCE?

The fall of Mobutu was widely interpreted as a loss for France, his most consistent international backer, and his replacement by Kabila as a victory for the United States [4]. The reality was more complex and the ability of the patrons to control their supposed clients was doubtful. However, the Congo crisis of 1996-97 was shaped by the collapse of the "troika" (France-Belgium-United States) which had been promoting peaceful political change in Congo/Zaire, and by resurgent rivalry between Paris and Washington.

Nzongola Ntalaja wrote in the mid-1980s that "the United States eventually replaced Belgium as the major arbiter of Zaire's destiny, but continues to deal with Zairian affairs within a multilateral strategy of imperialism in which Belgium and France are its key partners." For Crawford Young, Mobutu's survival was due in large measure to his success in multiplying external patrons. These views are complementary, in that Mobutu's Zaire was both dependent and uncontrollable [5].

France and the United States have a long history of rivalry in the Congo. They pursued opposed policies in 1960-63, with France supporting secessionist Katanga while the U.S. sought to establish a strong pro-Western central government in Leopoldville/Kinshasa. Belgium backed the Katanga secession led by Moïse Tshombe, then cooperated with the U.S. in suppressing the Lumumbist insurrections of 1964. The 1965 coup d'état was widely interpreted as a victory of the American-backed Mobutu over the Belgian-backed Tshombe [6].

Belgian interests suffered under Mobutu, due mainly to the efforts of Mobutu and the politico-economic elite to pursue their own interests in the name of nationalism, by expanding

the sphere of the state at the expense of the church and the colonial corporations. However, the former colonial power remained the "significant other" of Mobutu. Until the very end, the dictator continued to care deeply about assessments of him in the Belgian press [7].

In the meantime, relations with the Americans prospered. There was a momentary chill in 1973-74, when Mobutu spectacularly broke relations with Israel, announcing his decision before the General Assembly of the United Nations, and setting off a wave of breaks with Israel by African states. The "Zairianization" of foreign property, including oil company facilities, deepened American discontent with their former protégé [8]. However, the Angolan civil war of 1975 convinced the American government that it needed Mobutu as an ally. Jimmy Carter, who had declared human rights to be his foreign policy priority, appeared to pose a threat to Mobutu but invasions of Katanga by the Angola-based Front for the National Liberation of the Congo (Front pour la Libération Nationale du Congo, FLNC) led to a partial reversal of Carter's skepticism. Under Ronald Reagan, Mobutu again became a trusted ally [9].

Successive French governments worked to supplant Belgium in the Congo. Starting in 1973, France became an important military supplier. President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing received a triumphal welcome to Kinshasa in 1975, an apparent sign that Mobutu was distancing himself from Belgium and the U.S. The radio and television installations of the Voice of Zaire, the largest in Africa, were built by French companies with government aid [10]. Zaire, supposedly the second largest French speaking country in the world, became a leading participant in the Francophone movement.

When the FLNC invaded Katanga for the second time, in 1978, Belgium and France sent paratroopers to rescue the Europeans at Kolwezi in Shaba (i.e. Katanga). Planning to negotiate with the FLNC, the Belgians proceeded cautiously, landing their forces at Kamina. Their hand was forced when the French landed directly at Kolwezi and counterattacked [11]. Again in 1989, France upstaged Belgium when President François Mitterand told the Francophone Summit that his government was writing off debt totaling US$ 2.6 billion owed by twenty-five of the world's poorest states, including Zaire. The subsequent announcement that Belgium was writing off or rescheduling much of its own debt appeared anticlimactic [12].

The end of Cold War competition in Africa, together with the shortcomings of his regime, led the Americans, Belgians and French to jointly pressure Mobutu to oversee the transition to democratic government and to depart voluntarily. In 1992, the United States, France and Belgium all extended official support to the Tshisekedi government. Had the "troika" remained united behind Tshisekedi, he might be the leader of the Congo today. Instead, they all became disillusioned with the leader of the "radical opposition" but failed to maintain a common position.

The troika split over the questions of Rwanda and Angola. Belgium and the U.S. distanced themselves from the Hutu in the aftermath of the genocide of Tutsi but France implemented "Operation Turquoise," which not only sheltered Hutu from the forces of the Tutsi-dominated Front Patriotique Rwandais (Rwandan Patriotic Front, FPR) but also allowed Hutu soldiers and militia members to escape to Zaire with their weapons. France allowed Mobutu out of quarantine because of his cooperation on the Rwandan question [13].

In the meantime, the U.S. had cooled on Mobutu. First, his effort to promote an agreement to end the Angolan civil war failed [14]. Second and more serious, from the American point of view, Mobutu allied himself to Islamist Sudan.

During the AFDL campaign, November 1996-May 1997, the differences of orientation of France and the United States were crucial. The most important American contribution was the intervention that did not happen, when France led the effort to send an international military force to protect Hutu refugees in eastern Congo/Zaire. The French obviously planned to use humanitarian intervention as a means of protecting Mobutu while the United States was willing to sacrifice the Hutu refugees in order to protect Kabila. In the last weeks of the Mobutu regime, the U.S. apparently persuaded Morocco not to intervene on Mobutu's behalf, while France promoted a transfer of power to Msgr. Laurent Monsengwo (archbishop of Kisangani, former chair of the National Conference), a military operation on behalf of Mobutu, and allegedly an assassination attempt against Kabila [15].

France's interpretation of the Kabila campaign as "Anglo-Saxon" was adopted by Congolese. English classes reportedly increased in areas controlled by the AFDL, and two French businessmen were killed in the days after the fall of Kinshasa.

France's actions and attempted actions throughout 1996-97 were designed to protect not only the Mobutu regime but a network of client regimes in Congo-Brazzaville, Gabon, Cameroon and other states of the region, organized under the Francophone banner. The question remains, to what extent did the United States have an alternative political or cultural project? French political scientist Jean-François Bayart writes that the only discernible long term thinking on the part of the Americans is their opposition to the Sudanese regime [16]. Others see Kabila as the latest recruit to a group of former guerrilla leaders committed to good governance rather than democracy and exemplified by Museveni [17]. In order to evaluate this claim we shall have to examine the African scene in the wake of the Kabila victory.

## AFRICAN INTERVENTION?

Former Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere declared flatly that the international forces which had helped put Kabila in power were African and it does seem that events of 1996-97 reflect Central African rivalries. Congo/Zaire borders on nine states, many of which harbor exiles ("rebels") from neighboring states. Uganda supported Sudanese fighting the Khartoum regime, while Sudan was supporting exiles attacking Uganda from Zairian soil. Uganda supported Rwandan rebels who overthrew the Habyarimana government in Kigali, a government supported by France and Zaire. Katangans launched two invasions of their home province from Angola in 1977 and 1978 [18].

Uganda apparently supported Kabila as a means of eliminating Ugandan opposition groups on Congo/Zaire soil, and perhaps also to punish Mobutu. Similarly, Rwanda wished to eliminate the Hutu refugee forces in Congo/Zaire, and perhaps to punish Mobutu. The Angolan government was motivated by a wish to punish Mobutu and to strike a blow against its opponents, the Cabinda separatists as well as Jonas Savimbi's National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). Angola-based Katangans apparently joined the fighting on Kabila's side, while UNITA fighters aided Mobutu, as did Rwandan Hutu [19]. Former "front line

states" (on the front line in the battle against white domination of southern Africa) may have wanted to get rid of Mobutu because of his betrayal of their cause.

Rwanda was given a free hand in eliminating its Hutu opponents as compensation for its aid to Kabila. It will be interesting to see how Kabila's government pays back the Angolan government for its help.

## A TUTSI REBELLION?

The Mobutu regime had alleged from the beginning that the insurrection was in fact an invasion and that Kabila was a "marionette." At the end of October 1996, "anti-Tutsi hatred" swept Kinshasa [20]. Tutsi strongman Paul Kagame of Rwanda claimed in July that Rwanda had put Kabila in power [21]. Was the AFDL insurgency a "Tutsi rebellion"?

American journalists Duke and Rupert attribute Kabila's ability to consolidate his control over the Congo to "a powerful constituency within his alliance: the ethnic Tutsi military and political leaders who led the fight to oust Mobutu Sese Seko." Kabila and "Western-trained technocrats" in his government represented the public face of the AFDL but real power lay elsewhere. Citing "numerous Congolese and Western analysts," Duke and Rupert claimed: Tutsi political and military leaders-many with close links to neighboring Rwanda and Uganda-are often more powerful than the top civilian officials [22].

The power of these Tutsi supposedly was "like a net" around Kabila. Local administrators in areas under AFDL control since the early stages of Kabila's rebellion "defer to" or "are intimidated by" the Tutsi-dominated military, according to Duke and Rupert. The rebellion began with Banyamuleage Tutsi uprising in South Kivu, and members of the "Tutsi core" of the movement "believe their sacrifices give them the greatest standing within the alliance movement."

Key Tutsi figures included Déogratias Bugera and Bizima Karaha. "Tutsi influence in the military and in the alliance's political structure appears to converge in the person of Mr. Bugera," according to Duke and Rupert. A Tutsi architect from Goma, North Kivu, Bugera was an important figure in the alliance's relationship with Rwanda and reportedly played a key role in recruiting for the AFDL army. Bugera was named regional commissioner (governor) of North Kivu. Bizima, a Tutsi from South Kivu with a medical degree from South Africa, is Kabila's Foreign Minister and a spokesman for the new regime.

Duke and Rupert attribute the death of André Ngandu Kisasse, an AFDL leader, to divisions within the AFDL military. They discount the official AFDL explanation that he was killed in an ambush by Mobutu's army and allege (on the basis of an informant in the alliance) that Kisasse was killed because of his persistent questioning of Tutsi domination of the military [23].

Duke and Rupert, and most other writers, fall short in explaining the nature of the Tutsi identity. Duke and Rupert claim that the Tutsi, who make up no more than 1 percent of the Congolese population, are a "cohesive, insular tribe." In contrast, French political scientist Gérard Prunier writes, "contrary to a commonly held belief, Hutu and Tutsi are not tribes. They are two social divisions of the Barundi and Banyarwanda tribes who may have had a different racial origin in the distant past but who have lived together, spoken the same language, and

intermarried for hundreds of years. Their social conflicts existed before colonization but had never reached the level of open and massive violence that developed in the 1960s and after" [24]. This is more satisfactory than the Duke-Rupert characterization but leaves one wondering, what is a tribe?

Rather than attributing cohesiveness to the Tutsi (Duke and Rupert's characterization of Tutsi as "a cohesive, insular tribe" is reminiscent of anti-Semitism) one more usefully might ask what elements of common interest led to the emergence of an apparent Tutsi coalition. The forging of a coalition of Tutsi of South Kivu (so-called "Banyamulenge"), North Kivu, Rwanda and to a lesser extent Burundi is due in large measure to Mobutu's promotion of ethnic rivalries and to anti-Rwandan measures adopted at the National Conference. Rwanda-speakers began arriving in what became North Kivu over two centuries ago. During the colonial period, the Belgians recruited Rwandans, mainly Hutu, to work in the Congo, which was seen as under-populated. A third wave of Rwandans consisted of Tutsi fleeing the Hutu revolution of 1959-63. And of course the fourth wave consisted of Hutu fleeing the FPR army which overthrew the Hutu-dominated government in 1994. In some areas-around Masisi for example-Rwanda-speakers formed the majority of the population. Local ethnic groups such as the Hunde feared that elections would deprive them of control over local administration. Mobutu used the Rwanda as allies against the local people. When the National Conference began in 1991, delegates from North and South Kivu aired their grievances against "strangers" living in their regions. As Prunier puts it, the National Conference "decided to apply selectively an already unjust and contradictory set of citizenship laws," disenfranchising the Rwanda speakers. By 1993, North Kivu was the scene of a three-way war, between Tutsi, Hutu, and locals. The arrival of armed Hutu from Rwanda in 1994 led to ethnic cleansing and the flight of Tutsi refugees from North Kivu into Rwanda [25].

The Banyamulenge, Rwanda-speakers living in South Kivu for nearly two centuries, realized that what was happening to the Tutsi of North Kivu probably would happen to them as well. When with Mobutu's support, other ethnic groups of South Kivu formed a coalition against them, Banyamulenge sought the aid of Kagame and the FPR government in Rwanda. The result was the formation of the AFDL, originally a coalition of four anti-Mobutu groups, including one representing the Tutsi of North Kivu and another representing the Banyamulenge [26]. The spokesman for the group was Kabila, who (as we have seen) for decades headed a guerrilla movement based in Bembe country i.e., the hills above Fizi, along the border between South Kivu and Katanga. Backing the AFDL gave Rwanda a means of smashing the armed Hutu forces in and around the refugee camps of North and South Kivu, and ultimately of overthrowing its enemy Mobutu.

## DICTATORSHIP AND DEMOCRATIZATION

The collapse of the Mobutu dictatorship led to a collision between two forms of opposition to Mobutu, the internal opposition exemplified by Tshisekedi, committed to non-violent direct action, and the armed opposition, based abroad, exemplified by Kabila. Major parties of the internal opposition have faced violent repression while figures associated with the ousted regime have been welcomed into the Kabila entourage.

Beyond personal rivalries as to who will lead the new Congo, there are differences of political culture reflecting widely varying experiences over the years. Both the internal parties and the external ones represent the revival of political categories of the 1960s. Mobutu's banning of party politics from 1965 to 1990 meant that political vocabulary did not adjust to changing realities but remained stuck in the categories of 1960: religious vs. secular parties, centralist vs. federalist, moderate vs. radical. When the Mobutu regime restored multi-party competition in 1990, many of the parties resembled those of 1960. There were two main differences, however. First, while overtly ethnic parties had been common in 1960, ethnic labels now were banned. Second, 25 years of Mobutu's dictatorship had discredited the centralist tendency, so that even parties claiming to reflect the Lumumbist heritage conceded the need for decentralization [27].

In the course of the seven-year "transition" which began in 1990, Congolese acquired a new vocabulary, reflecting influences from elsewhere in Francophone Africa. Along with the concept of the "National Conference," they borrowed the term "civil society," to refer to non-party groups which participated in the conference and in political life in general [28].

However, Kabila and his Parti de la Révolution Populaire did not take part in the so-called "transition" and in particular stayed out of the National Conference. When the AFDL took over Kinshasa, they spoke in an unreconstructed Marxist-Leninist vocabulary of the 1960s, telling residents of their intention of "having the peasants elect the people's representatives, so as to institute a true democracy at the grass roots level" after "re-education." Peasants are to be organized in "production brigades," perhaps under the leadership of former Mobutist soldiers [29]. This is the Lumumbism not of Patrice Lumumba himself but of the insurrections carried out in his name in 1964-67 and in particular of Kabila's maquis, which survived into the 1980s.

Kabila recognizes the population's desire for democracy. Proclaiming the "Democratic Republic of the Congo," he promised to form within 72 hours a "provisional government of public salvation." Foreign minister Bizima said the AFDL wanted "free and fair elections, of which everyone can be proud." However, Karaha noted that it would take time to create the conditions in which elections could be held. If he was referring to the need to restore the communications network and to carry out a census, it is difficult to disagree. If he was referring to the supposed need for "re-education," then there is likely to be trouble, since many Congolese consider that they are politically aware and ready for democracy. When the AFDL took over various cities, conducted educational programs, then conducted elections, UDPS leaders often were chosen [30].

One of Kabila's main problems is that he heads one of the least representative governments to rule the independent Congo. He created a provisional government or executive committee of the AFDL in March 1997, including seven commissioners or ministers, one deputy commissioner, and two provincial commissioners (for North and South Kivu). This included men who had been with Kabila from the beginning of the rising, including Tutsi of North and South Kivu, but also the Tetela Raphaël Nghenda and the Luba-Katanga, Gaeten Kakudji. Also included were Mwenze Kongolo and Mawampanga Mwana Nanga, leaders of the All North America Conference on Zaire before returning to join Kabila. In Kinshasa, Kabila formed a "government of public safety," based on the executive committee, adding two members of the UDPS and two of the Patriotic Front. One of the UDPS members was Justine Mpoyo Kasavubu,

daughter of the first Congolese president, Joseph Kasavubu. Later, Julienne Lumumba, daughter of Patrice Lumumba, until then a journalist in Paris, was named a minister [31].

Kabila's government remained politically and geographically unrepresentative. It was based on the Swahili-speaking eastern provinces of North and South Kivu and Katanga, despite the inclusion of two members of the Kongo ethnic group, Mawampanga and Kasavubu. Street demonstrations of the past few years had confirmed the popularity of the UDPS and the Parti Lumumbiste Unifié (Unified Lumumbist Party, PALU) of Antoine Gizenga yet these two parties were excluded; Tshisekedi made it clear that Kasavubu and agriculture minister Paul Bandoma did not represent the UDPS. These two parties staged large demonstrations against Kabila and several demonstrators were killed by Kabila's troops [32].

The struggle between Mobutu and the self-proclaimed "radical opposition" including the UDPS and PALU, after 1990, had confirmed a minimal definition of the state. Key institutions included the presidency, the security services, the central bank, and the networks of diplomatic representatives overseas and territorial administrators within the Congo. Mobutu retained control over these institutions and thus remained head of state, despite losing control of the legislature and the prime ministership on several occasions and being forced to concede substantial autonomy to regional political and economic institutions.

Kabila now finds himself in a similar position in that he controls key institutions but lacks broad support. He is dependent upon an ethnic minority and upon his foreign backers, in particular the Ugandan and Rwandan governments. His survival will depend upon his ability to dominate the Tutsi within his government, who have ties to those foreign backers. To establish his autonomy vis-à-vis his foreign backers he will need more support from Congolese other than the Tutsi. It seems unlikely he will be able to gain such support without reaching a compromise with other anti-Mobutu forces including the UDPS and PALU. Such a compromise would entail recognition of the validity of the internal opposition to Mobutu. As regards PALU, it would entail recognition of a shared legitimacy as heirs to Lumumba. Tutsi elements of the Kabila government likely would resist such dilution of the coalition, unless the UDPS and PALU expressed support for the demands of the Tutsi of North and South Kivu.

## ETHNICITY: BROTHERS AND OTHERS

Recent events in the Congo suggest the need for a reconceptualization of ethnicity and nationalism and the links between the two. As a starting point, let us take the observation of Crawford Young that identities are multiple, shifting in response to context and situation. As Young puts it, ethnicity is rooted in a collective recognition of affinity, to which social and emotional meanings are attached. Its imputation of intimacy finds reflection in the frequency with which kinship metaphors are used to express it; a co-ethnic is a brother, not a mere friend [33].

I would add to Young's formulation that kinship metaphors express inequality. Not only is a father or an uncle senior to the son or nephew, but in Congo one rarely hears the term "brother" without a modifier: "big brother" or "little brother." Even when it is not explicit, as when Tshisekedi calls Kabila his "brother," the seniority of Tshisekedi is implied.

"We" assumes meaning in relationship to "they" but "we" and "they" are not simple equivalents. As Young observes, "we" normally attaches positive connotations to the cultural properties believed to define its identity; the sundry "they" groups found in its cognitive map frequently have negative characteristics and evoke condescending feelings or fear. "We" is likely to simplify its map by reducing "they" to an easily comprehensible number of others, grouping those who appear to have similar languages, cultural practices, or regions of origin.

I would add that "they" are not merely others, they are "strangers," people from elsewhere. When Kasavubu delivered a speech on "the rights of the first occupant" in 1945, he was expressing a deeply held Congolese value [34]. This value would find expression in many conflicts of the decolonization era and of the past year.

Instrumentally, ethnicity is asserted when it is useful to a group in securing advantage or resisting deprivation. Its activation may also reflect the interest of an ethnic elite in buttressing its claim to political leadership. Ethnicity is activated when circumstances dictate its political use, in a context in which actors perceive competition, conflict, or threat as ethnically textured. Elections tend to activate ethnicity, Young observes; so too does civil war, as events of 1996-97 make clear.

The potency of ethnic mobilization depends on its primordial dimension, according to Young. Ethnic consciousness rests upon shared symbolic meanings, emotionally laden and deeply rooted, which can trigger fears, anxieties, and animosities. The capacity of these affective symbols to supply "we" and they" demarcations lies in their ability to project themselves as primordial attachments, however novel or ill-defined a given identity may be (e.g., Banyamulenge).

Ethnicity in Congo operates on a number of levels, the broadest of which is the country's four vehicular language zones. In a song composed for the 1970 elections, Franco (the late famous musician) sang, "Mokongo no, Mongala no, Moluba no, Moswahili no; we are all brothers" The terms Mokongo and Moluba include not only people who accept the Kongo and Luba labels as primary ethnic identity but others from the regions where Kongo and Luba are the vehicular languages. This solidarity is strong, even though in other contexts such people might be bitter rivals. The capture of Kinshasa in 1997 provoked a reaction of Ngala-speaking locals (many of them ethnic Kongo) against Swahili-speaking "strangers."

The region or province constitutes another level of politically relevant solidarity. Katanga is the clearest example. Although the area is multi-ethnic, there is a strong sentiment of attachment to that originally artificial administrative unit. As a Katangan, Kabila was more readily accepted in that particularistic province than a Congolese from another province would have been. However, he fell into a trap as he attempted to broaden his movement beyond its initial Kivu-Tutsi base. He may have thought he was strengthening the Congolese component by bringing in Katangans, including a number of his Luba-Katanga co-ethnics, but these are seen by many not as Congolese in general but as Katangans in particular [35].

Journalists may suggest that "Kabila put ethnicity back on the agenda" but in my view he entered a political scene already dominated by ethnicity. Mobutu's declaration of 1990, opening an era of multi-party politics, created new opportunities and new threats. Ethnic parties were banned but ethnicity was pervasive. The new parties sought to use prominent members of various ethnic groups to secure support in the home areas of those persons.

Ethnicity is crucial also on the level of individual leaders. In the drama of the so-called "transition" of 1990-96, three ethnic identities were particularly important: those of Kengo, Mobutu and Tshisekedi. Transitional premier Léon Kengo wa Dondo is a bundle of ethnic symbols -partly white, partly Jewish, partly Rwandan, a "white Ngbandi"-each with a well-defined meaning in Zairian political culture. The Constitution prevented Kengo from challenging for the presidency since he is not of Zairian parentage, but he was brought up in Zaire and educated with other members of the political class. Western governments claimed to believe in Kengo's fiscal competence and integrity; he was named prime minister by Mobutu partly because of the Western belief, but especially because he lacked a political base within the country.

Mobutu's relevant identities are first, Mongala (Ngala-speaker), second, man from Equateur region, and third, Ngbandi. The President gave most of his speeches in Ngala. From the beginning of his regime, he surrounded himself with people from Equateur.

At the time of independence, few people outside of northern Equateur would have heard of the Ngbandi ethnic group. After thirty years of Mobutu rule, the Ngbandi were well-known as Mobutu's "tribe." Mobutu began with military and police leadership somewhat skewed toward his Equateur region and neighboring Orientale, but purges and selective promotion led to further skewing. By the late 1980s the heads of "special" services were all Ngbandi. The Special Presidential Division reportedly was recruited almost entirely from the Ngbandi, a fact which facilitated its against other armed forces e.g., mutinous paratroopers in 1992.

The Ngbandi have a reputation as a "backward" group, or a warrior people, which is a more positive way of saying the same thing [36]. Mobutu opponents often claimed that the Ngbandi are strangers i.e., recent immigrants from the Central African Republic. One legacy of the Mobutu era may prove to be an unsettled area along the border with the Central African Republic, particularly if the Ngbandi come to feel that they are being punished collectively for the sins of Mobutu.

The Luba-Kasai ethnic label has been a mixed blessing for Tshisekedi since the Luba-Kasai are both respected and resented. The Luba are known as "the whites of the Congo" or "the Jews of the Congo." When Congolese say that one of their number is like a white man, they imply selfishness. Both Luba and others tend to attribute the same positive and negative stereotypes to the Luba: intelligent, hard-working, haughty, tribalistic. The Luba are considered to have greatly profited from the opportunities represented by colonialism. Resettling outside their homeland, the Luba progressively became the leading "cultural brokers" first in the Kasai, then in Katanga, then throughout the Congo, with the exception of the Lower Congo area. "And, as they did so, they became internally derived 'strangers' in the country" [37].

Tshisekedi is seen as conforming to the stereotypes: intelligent and hard-working but also haughty and tribalistic. Resentment of the Luba facilitated Mobutu's efforts to divide the opposition, although bribes presumably helped as well. The president also exploited the internal division between up-river and down-river Luba e.g., using the Luba-Kasai Joseph Ngalula against Tshisekedi [38].

Starting in 1996, the ethnic identities of Kabila and of his Tutsi allies came into play. Kabila is a Luba from northern Katanga; Luba-Katanga speak a rather different language from the Luba-Kasai and are regarded as belonging to a related group rather than the same group. His

"Katangan" and "Lumumbist" identities are more salient on the national level than the specific Luba-Katanga identity.

Ethnic mobilization is fed by feelings of unfair advantage. Resentment of the Luba-Kasai, of Tutsi in the Congo, of mulattos and of "strangers" in general, is based on the perception that they owe their privileged position to the colonialists. Resentment of Tutsi, as of Ngbandi, was fed by their perceived advantages under Mobutu. Congolese nationalism is another level of ethnicity and has a xenophobic streak. As Chajmowiez suggests, the National Conference reinforced anti-Tutsi sentiment by adopting the principle of "geo-politics," according to which each area had to be represented by its own sons (or daughters), and so-called "civil society" i.e., those participating in politics as representatives of churches, human rights organizations, etc., did nothing to defend the Tutsi of Kivu from ethnic cleansing [39].

In one sense, the problem between Tshisekedi and Kabila is simply that each feels entitled to be the leader of the Congo. However, there is a specifically Congolese tone to this problem, typified by Tshisekedi's complaint that Kabila had not met him but had sent a younger aide: "My brother Kabila [is held hostage by] people I don't even know, foreigners..." Such a declaration, feeding the resistance of the people of Kinshasa to the Tutsi, makes a compromise between Tshisekedi and Kabila less likely.

## CONCLUSION

Recent events in the Congo pose a challenge to the academic sub fields of Comparative Politics and International Relations, each of which tends to simplify reality in a characteristic fashion. If one takes the political or politico-economic system of Congo/Zaire as the unit of analysis, then the other states of the region as well as major states outside the region are situated in the "environment" of the system. From the perspective of the international system, the configuration of states is crucial and the internal characteristics of a given state are background information. In the Congo case however, the internal characteristics of the regime and the configuration of states both were important but the particular set of linkages between international and internal politics, particularly along the eastern border, proved crucial.

Kabila's victory is significant on the local, national and international levels. As mentioned, in South and North Kivu, Tutsi victims of ethnic cleansing turned the tables on their rivals by establishing links to other groups, in the Congo and in neighboring states, which had their own reasons for aiding the Tutsi of Kivu. Kabila overthrew Mobutu by means of a transnational coalition and his victory may represent a shift in power from the oil-producing states of the Atlantic to the mining states of southern Africa. Mobutu can be seen as one of a number of French-supported dictators ousted or in difficulty, while Kabila can be seen as of a series of former guerrilla leaders now supported by Washington, along with the current heads of Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda and Rwanda.

Recent studies by Makifiri and De Boeck reveal the complexity of linkages between ethnicity and local interests including land ownership along the Congo's frontiers with Rwanda and Angola, respectively [40]. Such linkages between the very local and the international exist in other zones of conflict-Israel/Palestine and Bosnia are obvious examples-and are crucial to conflict resolution.

Finally, events in the Congo push the political scientist to take another look at the concept of "political culture" and in particular (a) ideas of nationalism and ethnic subnationalism and (b) ideas held by Congolese regarding the nature of the political community including the laws defining citizenship.

**Notes**

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4. "Un Waterloo en Afrique." Le Nouvel Afrique Asie, June 1997, 10-11; Buchet, Jean-Louis. "Une déconfiture prévisible." Jeune Afrique, May 28-June 3 1997, 56.
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16. "L'ère de l'après-Mobutu," Croissance, 403, April 1997, p. 15.
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# Sovereignty and Personal Rule in Zaire

WILLIAM RENO

Zaire's [1] real political system operates outside conventions of formal state sovereignty. As formal state bureaucracies collapsed under Zaire's president Mobutu Sese Seko (1965-97), the country's ruler increasingly exercised authority through control over markets, rather than bureaucracies. Control became less territorial and more centered on domination of an archipelago of resources that could be used to generate income and attract powerful allies. Abjuring "development," administration became incidental to the profitable exploitation of resources for personal gain. Bureaucracies, feared the ruler, acquire their own interests and powers [2]. Rather than providing security to citizens, the regime held on to power through opposite means. Even outsiders' recognition of Zaire's sovereignty has become contingent to what are violent, essentially private commercial arrangements as a means of exercising authority.

This reconfiguration represents a stark contrast to earlier characterizations of Zaire's political system, particularly what Callaghy called a "Zairian absolutism" of effective accumulation and exercise of patrimonial control in the 1970s and 1980s within the framework of a centralized (if ineffective) state administration [3] As reliable Cold War era outside sources of income faltered, Mobutu's first response to crisis was to intensify old strategies, consolidating power not through state structures, but via patronage to loyal strongmen. His apparent monopoly over the distribution of resources to a single patronage network discouraged him from innovating, even as the pace of change quickened in the late 1980s. Strongmen quickly discovered, however, that changing conditions brought them new opportunities to profit on their own. Enterprising politicians used old positions of privilege to take advantage of new opportunities and resources that came with defection from the president's network. Yet how did Mobutu weather for so long the collapse of not only Zaire's state institutions, but also his presidential network of strongmen and aspiring politicians that really ran Zaire before the 1990s? And after Laurent Kabila finally removed Mobutu from power in May, 1997, how has the nature of state collapse under Mobutu influenced Kabila's own construction of authority?

## THE POLITICS OF RESOURCES IN ZAIRE

Global recognition of the sovereignty of the Zairian state was central to Mobutu's political strategy, especially as this allowed him to attract diplomatic support and foreign aid. As noted by Jackson, global recognition of sovereignty bestowed such prerogatives on rulers of weak African states [4]. Beyond the Cold War era analyzed by Jackson, however, unquestioned formal sovereignty also served the useful purpose of simplifying deals with some foreign firms and creditors -- another key component of Mobutu's politics. Such a view is consistent with analyses




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which concluded that the exercise of political power in Zaire owes more to informal political networks based upon economic control, rather than formal notions of proper state behavior. As they stress, however, such political practices clashed with economic efficiency [5]. Yet from at least 1990, Mobutu discovered that the contradiction between the exercise and consoldation of political power, on the one hand, and economic inefficiency, on the other, rapidly decreased his capacity to reward loyalty among associates. Changes associated with the end of the Cold War aggravated this. He had to find a way to fragment the power of increasingly unruly strongmen and do so while tapping new sources of wealth. This strategy continues to be pursued by Laurent Kabila.

Mobutu's success as a patrimonial ruler saddled him with an extensive network of clients who exercised power in their own right. Mobutu later managed this vulnerability with new non-bureaucratic strategies of rule through manipulating market opportunities, even where actual sources of accumulation were not under his direct control. For example, in 1976 Mobutu gave the German firm Orbital Transport and Raketen, A.G. virtual sovereignty over a 150,000 square kilometer portion of Shaba in exchange for rents [6]. Kabila later used this same strategy to oppose, then unseat Mobutu. Mobutu left individual military units and commercial syndicates to forage on their own, signaling what appeared to be the dissolution of Zaire. Different factions jealously guarded useful territory and opportunity from rival entrepreneurs. But competition among these groups reduced chances of mutiny or coordinated attack on Mobutu. Individual strongmen appealed to Mobutu for protection against local rivals even as they consolidated virtually autonomous fiefdoms organized around commerce in diamonds, gold, coffee, timber, cobalt and arms [7]. This benefitted Mobutu insofar as it forestalled resistance and contained challenges amidst collapsing patron-client networks. Mobutu realized that his best chance for survival lay in using opposition among factions of his patronage network to neutralize the network's threat to him.

Mobutu used this method because it did not require a command hierarchy that could acquire interests of its own and it obstructed rivals' attempts to build their own organizations. The existence of multiple centers of accumulation in Zaire facilitated this radical decentralization of politics. An archipelago of copper, cobalt, gold and diamond deposits in parts of the country leaves broad stretches of *Afrique inutile* that physically separates some political groups. Because of the breakdown of rail and road networks, mineral rich provinces like Shaba and Kasai do much more business with southern neighbors than with Zaire's domestic market. Kivu in the east has closer contact with Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda than with most of Zaire. Collapsing infrastructure also encouraged Mobutu's associates to exploit local opportunities rather than joining others to mutiny against Mobutu. In this context ownership of air cargo firms highlighted contours of political competition or alliances better than did formal agreements or individuals' titles. Competition at these centers of accumulation for control over trade is what left a political space for Mobutu to manage crises. Sovereignty, then, is important to Zaire's state rulers as a license to make deals with essentially private allies.

The pretense of Kengo wa Dondo (the Prime Minister and putative "official" rival to Mobutu from 1994 to 1997 to implement reform and impose austerity showed how benefits of sovereignty were shared while factions struggled to control resources. As head of the "democratic opposition" *Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social* (UDPS) some outsiders

treated Kengo as a "responsible" alternative to Mobutu. Creditors saw in Kengo a sovereign interlocutor who acknowledged debts and agreed to implement reforms. His status as a reformer positioned Kengo to reap the benefits of manipulated liberalization to favor his faction's power and attract foreigners interested in Zaire's resources. Mobutu profited from Kengo's reputation as a reformer (global interlocutor) when this attracted renewed creditor and foreign firm interest in Zaire, giving Mobutu assets and relationships that he then used to support his personal power.

Political struggle focused on resources and trade, as opposed to formal declarations of political authority or state institutions, has created a special role for some mining companies in Zaire. These firms utilize their unusual capacity to do business in this contentious political environment. Their arrival reinforces the decentralization of Zairian factional politics, since many of these firms become insinuated into local strongmens' political strategies and share in the commercial benefits of Zairian state sovereignty. Here, too, firms find that they can manipulate liberalization to attract creditor support for their operations. Some even try to convince creditors to subsidize their joint ventures with local strongmen! For these outsiders, the cloak of Zaire's sovereignty helps conceal to others the extent to which their deals are integral to the country's personal politics.

The specific features of decline after the Cold War's end and Mobutu's response to this crisis highlights the innovative strategies that Mobutu and his rivals used to reshape politics within conventions and formal boundaries of Zaire that global society recognizes. As I will later detail, these actions then imposed constraints and introduced opportunities that influence Kabila's efforts to rule the country. But first, I examine how Mobutu's rejection of conventional state building options and specific features of his patrimonial politics reshaped Zaire's political economy.

## MOBUTU ELIMINATED CONVENTIONAL STATE-BUILDING OPTIONS

Zaire boasts many commercial and diplomatic opportunities that can be translated into political resources. Taking 1986 as a baseline, before mineral exports began to fall precipitously, copper, cobalt, zinc, and diamond exports of state-run firms generated $1.15 billion in the formal economy. Coffee, the country's main agricultural export, added $80 million [8]. This left uncounted profits from money laundering, illicit exports and the drug trade, which Mobutu translated into patronage when he exercised direct control over the exchange of these goods. Trading a staunch anti-communist stance for aid from superpower patrons netted him $448 million in 1986 [9]. Visible non-tax resources at Mobutu's disposal thus stood at almost $1.7 billion in 1986. Added to this was United States support for loans from multilateral creditors in return for aiding UNITA rebels in Angola and access to a Zairian air base at Kamina to resupply UNITA [10].

Mobutu was quite successful at incorporating creditors into his political alliance during the 1980s. Callaghy observed that Mobutu masterfully manipulated relations with creditors, alternating promises with brinksmanship to keep loans coming [11]. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) returned to Zaire in 1983 after a five year absence, and proceeded to disburse $1.3 billion to Mobutu's government over the next five years. A senior IMF official in Washington

resigned to protest what he claimed was improper US pressure on the IMF to treat Zaire leniently in Paris Club debt negotiations that granted Zaire a six year grace period on bilateral debt payments.

Creditor patience with Mobutu seemed almost limitless during the Cold War. From 1976 to 1990, IMF officials devised 14 stabilization programs for Zaire. Between 1975 and 1985, gentle treatment at Paris Club debt renegotiations led to rescheduling $3.5 billion of Zaire's 1985 external debt of about $7.5 billion. Mobutu also boasted personal ties to at least one World Bank official. In one instance, he hired as his personal assistant a World Bank official who had access to confidential information about granting aid to Zaire [12]! This shows the extent to which Mobutu exercised autonomy in these relations, rather than simply acting as a Cold War client to France or the United States [13].

These resources underwrote Mobutu's patron-client network, giving him control over the distribution of resources to loyal associates. The prevalence of large, politically motivated projects in the 1970s and 1980s underscores the importance of outside finance to sustaining Mobutu's patronage network. The Inga-Shaba project, costing $1.5 billion in 1983 alone, typified this reliance on external resources. The project included a hydroelectric dam to supply electricity to mining areas in Shaba. Although electricity could have been generated more cheaply closer to mine sites, the project provided construction contracts for foreign firms, a return for US and French support of Mobutu during revolts in Shaba, an area which supplied about half of Zaire's mineral exports in 1977 and 1978 [14]. Shaba's massive and inefficient Tenke-Fungurume copper mine, designed to tie-in to the Inga project, typified Mobutu's increasing reliance on exploiting natural resources with the help of outsiders to accumulate wealth.

Mobutu's November, 1973 nationalization of large local firms further foreclosed a political strategy based upon collecting revenue from entrepreneurs supported with pro-growth economic policies. Mobutu instead expropriated agricultural and commercial enterprises from mostly foreign owners, converting them to political resources for the president to distribute to loyal associates. Most beneficiaries had no managerial experience [15]. The economically destructive policy drove down the proportion of agricultural exports in Zaire's foreign trade from 28 percent of total earnings when Mobutu took power in 1965 to about 6 percent in 1990 [16]. While providing commercial agriculture properties for political clients, the policy gutted tax revenues from agricultural trade, which declined from 61 percent of state revenues in 1973 to 28 percent in 1978 [17].

This internal shrinkage of productive capacity, along with alternative (foreign) partners, reinforced Mobutu's reliance on arrangements with foreigners to run state-owned mines, the most promising remaining indigenous source of wealth. Reliance on outsiders ended Mobutu's need to underwrite expensive state bureaucracies, some of which had shown past tendencies to become vehicles of secessionist movements. Exercising private control over many of Zaire's resources with foreign help, Mobutu now safely abandoned expensive clinics, schools and public works that served citizens but contributed little to his stock of political resources. Rural areas no longer providing much in the way of state revenues could be abandoned as political burdens as Mobutu faced growing pressure to choose which clients would be patronized and which would be jettisoned.

Mobutu's allocation of 2.1 percent of state spending to health and education in 1990, versus 17.5 percent in 1972, reflects a rational choice from the perspective of a weak state ruler [18]. The destruction of agricultural production for export also followed Mobutu's disinterest in cultivating support among small agricultural producers and entrepreneurs in exchange for revenue and legitimacy. Those who produced for export in the 1980s thus faced extremely low official prices for their goods. For example, the Zairian state marketing board that bought and sold coffee, *Office Zairois de Café*, paid farmers seven cents per kilogram of coffee in 1985 while smugglers paid 42 cents [19]. Most of these marketing boards disappeared by the early 1990s, as farmers smuggled produce or grew only subsistence crops.

Meanwhile, the long-term shift of government expenditures to the president's office reflects Mobutu's personal control over state resources (Chart [1]. Yet World Bank statistics report lower percentages of state spending under direct presidential control. For example, the World Bank reported that 64.7 percent of Zaire's budget was reserved for Mobutu's discretionary spending, versus a Zairian official report of about 95 percent in 1992 [20]. A former Zairian official suggests that this discrepancy reflected creditor efforts to portray Mobutu's corruption in the best possible light to convince observers that perhaps Mobutu would support reform after all and that debts were collectable [21].

CHART 1: Privatization of Government Expenditures [22]

| | **President** | **Agriculture** | **Social Services** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1972 | 28% | 29.3% | 17.5% |
| 1974 | 26% | 32.1% | 12.4% |
| 1976 | 29% | 30.9% | 13.2% |
| 1978 | 29% | 41% | 11% |
| 1980 | 33% | 42% | 11% |
| 1982 | 35% | 32% | 10% |
| 1984 | 39% | 30% | 9% |
| 1986 | 39% | 29% | 7% |
| 1988 | 49% | 18% | 4% |
| 1990 | 80% | 11% | 2% |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1992 | 95% | 4% | nil |

Nonetheless, Mobutu's "privatization" of the state budget in 1990 coincided with growing impatience among creditors with Mobutu's unkept promises of economic reform. In 1991, the IMF announced that Zaire lagged on payments of $81.7 million to the organization and would receive no new loans. Three years later the IMF expelled Zaire. This added to a rapid increase of outside pressure on Mobutu, along with rising popular demands for reform. Ironically, Mobutu's reaction was to still more radically privatize the state itself. At first he did not abandon wholesale his strongmen associates. Instead, he allocated almost no state expenditures to social services or infrastructure after 1992, using the funds to replace resources lost elsewhere.

This state retreat from citizens reflected the extent to which Mobutu relied on his extensive personal networks rather than effective institutions for regime survival. The extremely negative effects of Mobutu's rule on most Zairians likely foreclosed a reversal, since official accountability to popular needs would generate organized calls for him to leave office. Most Zairians lived in an economy that had shrunken 40 percent between 1988 and 1995 and suffered inflation that rose to 23,000 percent in 1995 [23].

Twenty-five years after independence, only 15 percent of the roads inherited from Belgian colonial rule remained passable [24]. Guidebooks for foreign travelers reserved lurid language for Kinshasa, warning that rampant day-time banditry and rogue police exceeded the fabled dangers of Lagos. Visitors provided tales of arduous travel up the Zaire River, evoking Joseph Conrad's description of the impenetrable forests and a lassitude from which state structures are absent [25].

As private control over state resources destroyed the productive capacity of state agencies, Mobutu's ability to extract resources from the informal sector assumed ever greater importance. Abjuring "development" in any conventional sense, Mobutu now used state power exclusively as a resource to help associates profit from clandestine trade, avoid taxation and explore new rackets that manipulated state regulatory authority such as passport sales, money laundering, and drug trafficking. These activities generated considerable wealth. Estimates of exports of gold and diamonds from Zaire in 1992, for example, suggest a trade worth a half billion dollars annually [26].

Mobutu's intensified strategy of building political authority through market control increasingly impinged upon local authorities who used access to illicit trades to help themselves and their neighbors weather the collapse of state institutions [27]. MacGaffey and Vwakyanakazi show how community trade networks that developed in the 1970s and 1980s contravened predations of Mobutu's political network. Many of these entrepreneurs still had to deal with local strongmen who used state office and ties to Mobutu for extortion. But MacGaffey and others found that some operated independently of political interference as a "civil society" capable of addressing politicians [28], which would pose a threat to Mobutu's authority.

Financial and political stakes for the control of this trade were high. Taking 1990 as a base, Mobutu controlled over three billion dollars. His control over the output of state-run mining firms contributed one billion dollars to his political resources. These and other state revenues devoted to the president's office totaled $1.5 billion annually, rising in the late 1980s to

compensate for the decline in multilateral creditor lending. Overseas development assistance in 1990 brought in $822 million, despite Mobutu's deteriorating relations with creditors and donor governments [29]. These sources of income together generated only $1.121 billion in 1993 (Chart [2]. Adding to this, Mobutu no doubt benefitted from Zaire's half billion dollar diamond trade

Chart 2: Recorded Trade Originating from Zaire ($mn) [30]

| | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Oil | $167 | $148 | $165 | $40 | $130 | $156 | $160 |
| Tin | $16.4 | $14.2 | $8.2 | $5.3 | $3.9 | $5.0 | $5.5 |
| Diamonds | $400 | $320 | $220 | $200 | $289 | $296 | $376 |
| Coffee | $692 | $548 | $483 | $487 | $330 | $432 | $450 |
| Copper | $813 | $892 | $525 | $302 | $136 | $120 | $150 |
| Cobalt | $404 | $418 | $218 | $125 | $54 | $120 | $160 |
| Zinc | $82 | $79 | $59 | $28 | nil | nil | $12 |
| ODA* | $634 | $823 | $494 | $262 | $178 | $235 | |
| TOTAL | $3208 | $3242 | $2172 | $1449 | $1121 | $1344 | |

* Overseas Development Assistance

and possibly from portions of a half billion dollar diamond and arms trade between Zaire and Angolan UNITA rebels from the 1980s [31]. Thus, even if Mobutu controlled all of Zaire's trade and production, formal and clandestine, he faced declining overall accumulation of wealth. Meanwhile, foreign firms limited their investment in mining equipment, which cut production in the formal sector even further.

Mobutu's dilemma was that he could intrude even more into clandestine economies, but doing so generated ire on the part of strongmen and local authorities who tapped these economies for their own benefit. Even then he could not replace all lost political resources. Having weathered the collapse of a bureaucratic state that many thought would be his downfall, Mobutu now faced a true crisis: the serious recession of his patronage system and the loss of external state support that Jackson (1990) attributed to Mobutu's status as a sovereign ruler.

## LIBERAL ILLUSIONS

By 1990, Mobutu faced serious challenges to his ability to rule through patronage. Foreign state officials not only ended their support for Mobutu, many openly backed his rivals. Belgium, France and the U.S. now pressured Mobutu to begin political and economic reforms. A key Belgian socialist party leader, Ronald van den Bogaerd, openly supported Etienne Tshisekedi, a long-time Mobutu rival, as an alternative to the president [32]. Even formerly supportive French officials condemned Mobutu's regime, cutting aid in 1991 to about $100 million, one-third the level of aid two years earlier. French President Mitterand promised that "French aid will be conditional towards authoritarian regimes and more enthusiastic for those beginning a democratic transition" [33].

Impatience among U.S. officials posed even greater problems for Mobutu. The U.S. Undersecretary of State for Africa, Herman Cohen, criticized Mobutu in testimony before the U.S. Congress in 1991. Zairian reformers seized on these statements, and those of Melissa Wells, the U.S. ambassador to Zaire, to indicate that U.S. officials expected a democratic transition in Zaire [34]. U.S. official ire at Mobutu, however, focused on Mobutu's inability to service his debts to the U.S. government, which, under provisions of the Brooke Amendment, required that the U.S. Congress cut off aid. Soon after, the World Bank broke with Mobutu. The immediate cause was Mobutu's appropriation of $400 million from Gécamines, the state-run copper mining conglomerate, and his refusal to allow an audit of the firm's books. The break with the U.S. and the end of South African and U.S. backing for his alliance with UNITA rebels in Angola deprived him of a key clandestine patronage resource, and reduced his capacity to manage his associates' clandestine diamond mining and arms transfer businesses with Angola [35].

Mobutu appeared to bend to domestic and outside pressure to reform in April, 1990 when he announced the legalization of independent opposition parties. The convening of a national conference in Congo across the river from Kinshasa appeared to provide a model for reform. Zaire's conference opened in Kinshasa in August 1991, under the leadership of Archbishop Laurent Monswengwo Pasinya, known for his neutrality and apparent lack of political ambition. Television and radio carried live debates that culminated in the formation of a Haut conseil de la Republique (HCR), which was expected to negotiate a hand over of power from Mobutu to Tshisekedi, the conference's choice for interim leader. Students protests in 1990, along with foreign condemnation of Mobutu's repression of them, generated even higher popular expectations of change.

Tshisekedi's rise as an opposition figure at first appeared as a formal legal challenge to Mobutu's authoritarian rule. More serious for Mobutu, Tshisekedi's visibility, a Luba-Kasai from diamond rich Eastern Kasai, revived old struggles to control resources. Tshisekedi achieved fame earlier as a dissident parliamentarian in 1980 when he and twelve others charged the army with the massacre of over 300 diamond miners in Eastern Kasai. Since then, Mobutu's military allies and businessman associate Bemba Saolona had used official positions and alliances to exploit diamonds in this region and control trade routes that lead from UNITA-held diamond fields [36]. Threatening this network's access to state prerogatives, Tshisekedi tried to use technocrats to run Zaire's Central Bank. Mobutu summarily dismissed Tshisekedi, prompting critics to respond with a *Union sacrée* (Sacred Union) of opposition parties.

Like sovereignty, formal political opposition needs to be understood in the broader context of disintegrating patron-client politics and extreme de-bureaucratization. Multiparty politics did not merely signal the surfacing of factions. Instead, factions marked the end of the more centralized patronage network, Schatzberg's "State as Bandit", in which rivals position for the scramble to parcel out resources [37]. De-bureaucratized patrimonialism instilled an individualistic, acquisitive "capitalist lifestyle" of a Zairian sort. For example, a booklet from Mobutu's era entitled *Devenez Riche Rapidement* (Get Rich Quickly) advised with apparent official sanction "liberating the mind of all doubts as to the legitimacy of material wealth.... A man is more of a man when he has more wealth [38]." This became politically explosive in the Zairian context, since "officially" sanctioned private accumulation among strongmen is easily converted to autonomy by a ruler and the freedom to make their own arrangements with outsiders.

Mobutu faced a serious contradiction. He could use security forces against his rivals to disorganize them, but effective military units could remove him in his weakened state. Yet to do nothing would encourage his opponents. He chose the former. Student protests and the HCR conference were met with army looting and attacks on opponents in 1990 and 1991. Mobutu could do little more than incite rather than command troops, since most soldiers were unpaid.

Violence had costs for Mobutu too. Looting and the destruction of the remaining infrastructure prompted foreigners to leave the country. Copper and cobalt production began radical declines. Unable to attract loans and without maintenance crews, machinery stopped. Banking services collapsed, making formal economic activity almost impossible. Recession of Mobutu's patronage resources was in full swing. Equally significant were shifts in who controlled exports, a matter examined in detail below.

By 1992, Mobutu had become highly vulnerable. Comparing this to Mobutu's patrimonial domination in the 1970s and 1980s, Crawford Young called this the "shattered illusion of the Integral State." Recognizing the unsustainability of Mobutu's course, he wrote that "surely a reinvented Zaire, whatever name it will bear, will be grounded in a relationship between state and civil society profoundly different from that imported by the integral state [39]." But state-building through significant ties to broad societal groups appeared very unlikely in anything but Zaire's long-term future. Mobutu still had recourse to alternative strategies which would weigh heavily in Kabila's reconfiguration of Zaire's sovereignty and political economy.

## MOBUTU'S CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Mobutu resorted to short-term measures to reverse the decline of his control over resources, and thus political authority. In 1992 he purchased banknotes from a German company to pay troops, by-passing the Tshisekedi controlled legislative council for fiscal matters. This led to hyperinflation, with the national currency, the zaire, declining to 110 million to the dollar in 1993. In Kinshasa, Tshisekedi's HCR issued a currency of its own, competing to control the benefits of economic activity. Use of a particular version of the country's currency became an indicator as to which rival authority one obeyed. It also signaled a desperate attempt on the part of Mobutu to hold on to instruments of patrimonial control, even while he was not in a position to accumulate wealth.

Mobutu's long-run problem lay in reasserting political authority amidst declining resources. His patronage network would fragment in any event as he lost his capacity to match his old rate of payouts. Much of the (unpaid) army disappeared by the early 1990s, for example, declining from a peak of 70,000 in the mid 1980s to close to 20,000 [40]. His first step was to give new roles to specialized security forces. Through decentralizing the military, Mobutu bent to the reality of radically declining patronage resources. In a vast country with many centers of accumulation he could more easily tolerate their private mining or trade rackets. Each unit jealously watched the other while struggling to control wealth of its own. Organizations that once served the ruler's, if not the state's, interests became more exclusively self-interested commercial syndicates.

The *Guarde Civile*, for example, counted 10,000 men under the command of General Kpama Baramoto. A close associate of Mobutu, the general expanded his role in clandestine trade after 1992, especially in Kivu where he ran gold and diamond mining operations [41]. This faction exploited ties with outsiders on its own, a feature central to the breakdown of state-centered patronage systems. By 1996, Baramoto was involved in a joint venture with U.S. owned Barrick Gold Corporation to mine in Bunia, Baramoto's base. Barrack also provided funds to refurbish a local airport, filling in for Baramoto's unwillingness to spend money on local infrastructure [42]. A local airport no doubt helped Baramoto, who needed transportation to keep close track of his diamond mining operations in Kasai and his stakes in air cargo companies. Bunia's airport also helped cement Mobutu's ties with outside allies when Sudan's regime, for example, used the airport to ship weapons to Ugandan insurgents [43].

Rather than threatening Mobutu's control, this situation gave him the capacity to interfere with the diamond trade in Tshisekedi's home base in Kasai and helped attract clandestine trade from UNITA-held areas in Angola into Baramoto's hands. Joint military-UNITA mining operations allegedly spread to Angola itself. In Kasai, Baramoto's soldiers protected LIZA, a diamond mining venture owned by Mobutu's son Manda. This syndicate operated several mining ventures where soldiers guarded alluvial miners who clandestinely gathered diamonds within *Miniére de Bakangwa* (MIBA) mine sites [44]. Since Mobutu's Kasai-based opposition now controlled MIBA, these operations deprived this political faction of resources.

Other units went into business. Mobutu's *Division Spéciale Présidentielle* (DSP) under Gen. Nzimbi Ngbale Kongo shipped cobalt from Shaba province to Zambia, in coordination with Kyungu wa Kumwanza, Mobutu's governor for the province [45]. Mobutu indirectly benefited from ties between Kyungu and another old crony from Shaba, Nguza Karl-I-Bond. Mobutu could not block this faction's separatist tendencies under their *Union des federalistes et republicains independants* (UFERI). Although unable to control their actions directly, he could use them to deny his rivals in Kinshasa and elsewhere of access to Shaba's resources. Kyungu reportedly enlisted South African militias, including Inkatha units to help protect and run mining operations on his own [46]. Kyungu and his allies also targeted immigrants who shared Tshisekedi's Luba-Kasai origins, seizing their property, distributing it to local supporters and sending perhaps a million into flight back to Kasai [47]. This undermined a united opposition or an alliance of separatists against Mobutu. Similar attacks by "local" people against immigrants of Rwandan origin occurred in north Kivu, with support from Mobutu and his associates [48].

This divide-and-rule strategy gave considerable leeway to military organizations to act as private armies. While unable to reward allies directly, Mobutu encouraged units to commit acts of violence against opponents to create a climate of distrust and instigate local conflict. Even the Kinshasa government got in on the loot in 1996, supporting a decree stripping Zairian citizenship from people of Rwandan-Tutsi ancestry and directing them to give up their property [49]. Like private armies in former Yugoslavia, loosely organized militaries used exemplary terror; for example, mutilated captives were sent back to their communities, to create fear of troops and promote flight.

This minimalist strategy fragmented political authority, "inviting" exit from the polity of those no longer useful to a ruler after stripping them of what assets they possessed [50]. Cheap and easy to employ, it created a stability based on balancing contending forces without the need for a bureaucratic military organization. It also shows how disorder in Zaire was not anarchy, but rather the result of deliberate strategy designed to preoccupy, destroy and disorganize rivals, rather than seize territory or control institutions, which Mobutu's regime would have been incapable of holding and administering in any case.

Mobutu remained in power and thus prevented Tshisekedi from establishing an independent authority to move against him, despite Tshisekedi's more populist character and his location in the capital. Meanwhile, Mobutu used what resources remained to him to buy off critics, pay off supporters and defectors from the *Union sacrée*, and entice some notable men to serve as ministers.

By June, 1994, the HCR compromised with Mobutu's old parliament, merging under Kengo wa Dondo, a former Mobutu ally. A technocrat, Kengo attracted backing from creditors and some foreign officials. This consolidation of Mobutu's position came just in time for Mobutu to exploit opportunities to further buttress his powers arising out of the Rwanda crisis in 1994 and the sudden expansion of new foreign mining firms into Africa. This new alliance made Mobutu's presence much more palatable to his former associates who now opposed him, since Kengo appeared much less hostile to Mobutu than had Tshisekedi and thus less likely to hold their former ties with Mobutu (and their ill-gotten wealth) against them.

Dividing internal opposition did not restore the old sources of wealth that Mobutu enjoyed in the 1970s and 1980s. For this, he would need outsiders to help exploit Zaire's natural resources, or provide pay-outs. By 1994, outside help was scarce. The French government backed away from the now isolated Tshisekedi early in 1994. The 1992 election of Clinton in the U.S. brought no new initiatives to punish Mobutu, but left him bereft of support in the White House. Meanwhile, Belgian officials still refused to deal directly with Mobutu [51]. This external political rejection served to cut off most aid and loans to Mobutu. Perhaps the divide-and-rule strategy would have become less relevant in Zaire as Mobutu's control over resources diminished further, but sudden developments in the region gave him more leeway to gain access to new, cross-border sources of wealth and alliances that preserved bonds between Mobutu associates and rivals alike.

## CASHING IN ON DIPLOMACY

Mobutu's isolation eased as the Revolutionary Patriotic Front (RPF), an army of Rwandan exiles, advanced deep into Rwanda from Ugandan territory in October, 1993. French military forces flew 150 men stationed in the Central African Republic to Kigali, Rwanda's capital, to defend the incumbent regime. Belgian forces contributed 400 paratroopers to the intervention. Emphasizing coinciding interests with his old patrons, Mobutu sent several hundred troops from his DSP which had acted loyally on his behalf during Zairian army mutinies in 1991 and 1992. In contrast to the European troops, the DSP troops actually battled the RPF [52]. Unconcerned about domestic popular opinion opposing intervention, Mobutu offered political and military services to French politicians who would otherwise face political criticism at home for such direct action.

Mobutu provided French officials with a rear base for their troops who arrived to protect foreigners when Rwandan president Habyarimana's regime crumbled against the RPF onslaught. This helped reintegrate Mobutu back into Central African and global diplomatic circles. His support for French goals also pleased French officials concerned about the RPF's links to outsiders hostile to French clients in Africa. Some RPF leaders had fought with Ugandan president Museveni's guerrilla forces a decade earlier, helping him to come to power. From the perspective of some in the French government, Museveni appeared as an "anglo-saxon force of instability." France's Minister for Cooperation, Jacques Pelletier, seemed especially attached to the view that "Uganda is only a pawn of anglo-saxon imperialism and the RPF is simply a marionette of Kampala" [53].

French officials broke with Belgian rejection and American coolness toward Mobutu and met him at his home in Gbadolité in April, 1994 at the height of the Rwanda crisis. This meeting opened new diplomatic channels for Mobutu. Herman Cohen, former U.S. undersecretary for African Affairs under President Bush attended the meeting. As head of the private Global Coalition for Africa, Cohen received World Bank financing to help mediate political conflicts on the continent. Michel Aurillac, a former Minister of Cooperation and later an Africa advisor to President Chirac, attended, as did Jacques Foccart, a former advisor to DeGaulle and *eminence grise* of France's Africa policy [54].

Mobutu's foreign contacts expanded to include South Africa's secret service chief. He also attracted the interest of private U.S. political advisors. Barbara Hayward, a former Reagan and Bush advisor, and Cohen's business partner, James Woods, former Secretary of State for Defense for Africa, met with Mobutu in December, 1994 after Mobutu engaged Woods' and Cohen's public relations firm to represent him in the United States [55].

Mobutu gained considerable local political benefits from his reconciliation with French foreign policy officials. Eastern Zaire, especially the Kivu area, is culturally and economically tied to East Africa. Given the presence of a large population of Rwandan ancestry in the east with ethnic ties to the RPF, the RPF victory in Rwanda posed a threat of greater informal regional ties, weakening the hold of Mobutu and his associates over Kivu. This prompted Mobutu to instigate violence between refugees, the local population and potential separatist politicians in Kivu, as he had done earlier [56]. Mobutu also shared French suspicion of Uganda's president Museveni who backed (English speaking) Rwandan forces. Mobutu's reconciliation

with foreign backers encouraged some of his domestic opponents to compromise, agreeing to a "conclave" to merge the rival legislatures, replacing Tshisekedi with Kengo. The choice of Kengo as Prime Minister also gave Mobutu more control over affairs in Kinshasa. With a Polish father and part-Rwandan mother, Kengo lacked ethnic connections that gave Tshisekedi an autonomous powerbase. Kengo's isolation increased further with violence in Kivu, since his mother comes from the disfavored "outsider" Rwandan-Tutsi group.

Mobutu's reconciliation with France paved the way for France's military *Opération Turquoise* intervention into Rwanda in late June, 1994, as the RPF captured the Rwandan capital. French politicians labeled this intervention, managed from Goma in Kivu province, a mission to stop remnants of the old government, still entrenched in western Rwanda, from continuing to massacre Tutsis. This operation helped establish Mobutu in the diplomatic world as a principle player in Central Africa and garnered him an invitation to the Franco-African summit in Biarritz in November, 1994 (from which the new Rwandan regime was excluded), thus ending Mobutu's diplomatic isolation from France.

Mobutu even hosted his own "summit meeting" on the Rwanda issue in Gbadolité in late 1994. France gave Mobutu leeway now to play a domestic game without institutions or even new material patronage. He instead allowed allied anti-Tutsi ethnic extremists exiled from Rwanda to organize on Zairian territory. His willingness to allow humanitarian organizations to supply refugee camps also gave extremist groups access to resources that they used to feed their fighters and distribute to their supporters in camps. This prolonged the refugee crisis to Mobutu's benefit since extremists joined "original inhabitants" to attack "outsider" groups [57].

In August, 1995, Kengo's government moved to expel Rwandan refugees, some of whom armed themselves to fight the Rwandan regime and to intimidate local refugees and Zairians. At first, this appeared to threaten Mobutu's political balancing act. Reports allege that the wife and brother-in-law of the president of the defeated Rwandan regime, both now supporters of the extremists, accompanied Mobutu to China in November, 1994 to buy arms [58]. These ties, solidified during the earlier DSP intervention into Rwanda, reflected DSP links to Rwandan militias in exile in Zaire.

Even though expelling refugees would have helped defuse Mobutu's game of aggravating ethnic tensions, outsiders decided that changes in Mobutu's behavior, not Kengo's, would encourage Rwandan refugees from Zaire to return home. Kengo's and the HCR's hostility toward Rwandan refugees brought condemnation from aid agencies that feared another unorganized exodus. This translated into new promises of aid, which could then be used as political resources to destabilize political groups in Kivu.

At the same time, those anxious to protect the Rwandan RPF government had to deal with Mobutu to block destabilizing expulsions of refugees from Zaire. Mobutu used opposition to expulsions as a diplomatic weapon against the Rwandan government, to serve French patrons, and reinforce his own position as sovereign of Zaire in global eyes.

By 1996, Mobutu had completed his diplomatic rehabilitation, at least in French eyes. In April he met French president Jacques Chirac on French soil, a meeting arranged through the *Cellule Africaine*, a bureau in Chirac's office that manages relations with francophone African leaders [59]. The head of the *Cellule*, Michel Dupuch, was a protege of Foccart, one of Mobutu's strongest personal supporters in the French foreign policy establishment. The meeting dealt

with Zairian arms sales to rebels in Burundi, the head of which had personal ties to Mobutu's Gbadolité entourage [60]. Mobutu used these ties and foreign concern about Hutu exiles from Burundi in the same way that he used Hutu refugees from Rwanda to manipulate internal and external actors for his personal benefit. The normalization of Mobutu's global status (despite arming Hutu militias) attracted bilateral aid. German officials later visited Gbadolité, offering an ECU 84 million aid package [61].

## NEW PROFITS IN RELIGION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

While Mobutu used his ties to foreign governments to exploit concerns about possibile state collapse in Zaire and instability in Central Africa, he also used his status as globally recognized ruler of Zaire to attract foreigners who had little interest in maintaining global norms or advancing official policy. These foreigners included religious and business entrepreneurs, both of whom played important roles in helping Mobutu refashion his transition from a disintegrating patronage network as a basis of authority. Clients of a sort, they benefited from Mobutu's status as ruler of a sovereign state to pursue their activities that had much to do with personal profit. More significantly, ties with foreign religious organizations attracted to profitable opportunities in Zaire gave Mobutu new means to regulate domestic rivals in the spiritual, as well as the commercial world. Mobutu used these and other firms to help him secure acceptance among members of the increasingly fractious "Troika" (Belgium, France, and the USA).

Mobutu vainly sought further rehabilitation with a U.S. visa to attend the United Nation's fiftieth anniversary celebration in New York in late 1995. Along with Cohen & Woods, he engaged the lobbying firm of conservative activist Paul Erickson to procure a visa [62]. As former political director of Pat Buchanan's 1992 presidential campaign, Erickson had visibility in Washington. Jack Abramoff joined Erickson in this venture. Abramoff provided contacts of his own from his previous position as executive director of the conservative lobby group Citizens for America and national president of College Republicans [63]. Abramoff's contacts may have been broader yet. A South African truth commission report in 1996 alleged that (unknown to Abramoff) some of his political activities in the 1980s were financed by South African intelligence networks to promote right-wing American political activists' claims that the African National Congress was a communist front organization [64].

Mobutu allies also included Henri Damas Ombga, a Cameroonian businessman accused of illegal drug and arms dealing [65]. Other contacts included a delegation of French businessmen who visited Gbadolité in 1996, and advanced Mobutu's cause among commercial networks recruited to the campaign to undermine diplomatic pressure on his regime [66].

Mobutu's relationship with 1988 U.S. presidential candidate and evangelist Pat Robertson revealed a more innovative private diplomacy that reached beyond conventional public relations firm or lobbyist efforts. Mobutu recruited Robertson to his quest to secure a U.S. visa. More importantly, Robertson brought to Zaire his African Development Company (ADC), active in diamond, timber, gold, and power generation businesses. This commercial venture operated alongside Robertson's Operation Blessing, billed as a humanitarian relief effort for

Rwandan refugees in eastern Zaire. Operation Blessing included more obviously commercial ventures as well, running a 50,000 acre farm near Kinshasa.

Robertson justified the profit-seeking nature of his religious venture as part of his efforts to generate cash for relief work [67]. He adopted the fashionable rhetoric of "sustainable development" to attract contributions and depict his business operation as a non-governmental organization (NGO) providing social services.

Mobutu also commercialized charity with the appointment of Tonga Boki, his old head of the old state-run labor union, to run an "NGO union" to coordinate "private" activity and solicit overseas support [68]. Foreign religious charities also were used to undermine home-grown religious-based political opposition groups in Zaire, some of which received inspiration from the leadership of Catholic Archbishop Monsengwo, who gained popular respect for his intransigent anti-Mobutu stance. To counter Monsengwo's popularity, Mobutu used 1990 measures liberalizing media to attract U.S. television ministries. Pat Robertson's fiery preaching appeared alongside that of fellow U.S. evangelist Jimmy Swaggart, suggesting that the downtrodden should accept their lot in this life and expect relief in the next.

The evangelizing-commercial spirit spread to Mobutu's entourage. Honore "The Terminator" Ngbanda, once Mobutu's intelligence service head, now "Brother Ngbanda," ran a Christian cafe and appeared on television giving Bible sermons [69]. Mobutu's visitors included Reverend Moon, Jehovah's Witnesses, and various American Baptist and Pentecostal groups [70]. Moon's interest extended to mass conversions in the military and in FLEC, a separatist movement in Angola's Cabinda enclave under Mobutu's patronage. Moon's organization also appears to have run a logging company [71].

## FOREIGN FIRMS FILL IN FOR THE MISSING STATE

While Mobutu's regime fell into serious arrears on debts, he managed to maintain contacts with creditors so long as they looked favorably upon Kengo's austerity efforts. The HCR accepted plans to reduce state employment from 600,000 to 50,000 and trim the size of the army [72]. Kengo thus took political responsibility for unpopular and harsh austerity measures, while Mobutu benefited from tentative contacts with creditors anxious to receive payments. Meanwhile, Mobutu manipulated creditor prescriptions necessary to reach a comprehensive agreement with the IMF for the profit of his political network.

IMF officials made clear that future loans depended upon establishing a free market in Zairian currency. Accordingly, several ethnic Lebanese diamond dealers associated with Mobutu's entourage proposed that their Qualitoles Company set up exchange bureaus in cooperation with the Central Bank of Zaire. Qualitoles was to sell dollars below informal market rates, with the central bank paying the difference between Qualitoles' rate and the unofficial market rate. The plan was promoted as a way to lower unofficial exchange rates as private traders competed with Qualitoles to sell dollars.

Instead, Qualitoles sold "cheap" dollars to Promodiam, a mining company made up of ethnic Lebanese Zairian diamond dealers and an Israeli military trainer for Mobutu's DSP with close ties to DSP head, Gen. Nzimbi. Promodiam's directors used this cash to expand their activities in Zaire's artesianal diamond mining industry [73]. Together with *Guarde Civile* head

Baramoto's LIZA, these two controlled 35 percent of recorded 1996 diamond sales [74]. Promodiam also used its "cheap" dollars to buy imports to supply to local traders. This arrangement turned "reform" into a state subsidy of Promodiam's and Sozabanque's private trading and diamond mining businesses and helped finance greater Mobutu clique control over Zaire's illicit diamond business that accounts for 70-80 percent of the country's diamond industry [75].

Pointing to broader business dealings, United States Drug Enforcement Agency officials detected U.S. banknotes in Zaire suspected to have come from the Colombian drug trade [76]. Such illicit wealth could be recycled through Qualitoles and the central bank, later leaving the country as diamonds for sale abroad. For Mobutu, money laundering could promote control over the illicit diamond trade to support loyal traders, generate income to buy arms, and attract illicit diamond trading from neighboring states.

Zairian and French reports point to the success that Mobutu associates found in redirecting the diamond trade from Angola's UNITA rebel group during the 1990s into Zaire [77]. This helped finance Mobutu's arming of extremists among Rwandan refugees, influence rival and loyal commercial networks, and consolidate ties to associated foreign commercial networks. Interlocking air cargo routes and the companies that fly them traced these transactions, and are thus a more accurate indicator of the business of politics in Zaire than are formal reform programs or pronouncements from Kinshasa or Gbadolité [78]. These and other natural resource trade networks would become a focus of struggle when rebels challenged Mobutu in 1996-97.

Greater payoffs with foreign investment and normalized relations with creditors required a new, innovative strategy. Creditors demanded radical privatization, along with promotion of foreign investment to boost production and revenues to pay debts. This coincided with Mobutu's need for alliances with larger, better financed foreign firms with greater capacity to negotiate with outsiders on behalf of his failing state bureaucracy, and eventually, seize resources directly as organizations like the state-run mining conglomerate, Gécamines, collapsed. Creditors smoothed this tansition when they argued that privatization would remove mineral resources from Mobutu's political control and harness the country's main source of foreign exchange for economic reform. Instead, Mobutu used commercial ties to new foreign investors to monopolize resources and exploit the presence of firms to marginalize rivals.

Mobutu's chance to both satisfy creditors and advance his political control over rivals came with the Swiss Procurement Company's, (SWIPCO) proposal to privatize Gécamines (copper and cobalt), Miba (diamonds), Kilomoto (gold), and telecommunications to a consortium of South African, French, Canadian and American firms in mid-1995 in one fell-swoop. The unprecedented offer to privatize all of Zaire's large-scale mining ventures promised that foreign investors would revitalize production (with Mobutu and his associates as business partners). The SWIPCO proposal also revealed the extent to which Kengo associates appeared in deals alongside Mobutu's allies. SWIPCO's director, for example, earlier provided Kengo with a private jet. SWIPCO also had ties to SICPA, a company that appeared in the Qualitoles deal with Mobutu's associates and had printed currency that Mobutu privately commissioned when Tshisekedi threatened to eliminate presidential control over central bank operations [79].

SWIPCO proposed to pay Zaire's $475 million arrears to the African Development Bank to release $600 million in new credits to upgrade enterprises targeted for privatization. The deal

was designed to recruit African Development Bank (ADB) support (Zaire held half of all arrears to ADB in 1995). SWIPCO would take over state assets, which they would refurbish with capital provided by state guaranteed loans, with SWIPCO and Zairian officials to receive a commission for procuring the new loans [80].

IMF officials disapproved of the deal, however, since it treated the ADB as a privileged creditor. IMF practice is to see its own loans paid off before approving new credits or reform policies needed to attract other creditors and investors. In spite of this, the IMF sent a consultation mission to Kinshasa in December, 1995, which reported "very encouraging" findings and a token $3 million debt payment from the Kengo government [81].

After SWIPCO, privatizing state-run enterprises occurred in a piecemeal fashion. A U.S. mining firm, for example, bid to take over OKIMO (state-run diamond mining firm) operations. It promised to rebuild a local airport in Kasai, currying favor with officials there. At the same time, the foreign firm negotiated with Mobutu associates to make a longer-term deal. Meanwhile, a Polish firm used Kengo associates to negotiate with Kasai officials to refurbish an OKIMO power station, in exchange for payment in coffee [82].

The state-run Gécamines copper mines attracted the greatest foreign attention. Once generating $900 million and 10 percent of the globe's copper production, Gécamines operations had fallen into decrepitude. Kipushi mines, located in Shaba, became a useful tool for Mobutu to influence local political struggles. The Kipushi project, intending to make Zaire into a major zinc producer, involved American Mineral Fields (AMF). Mobutu associate Pay Pay wa Kasige brokered the deal between South African and American investors who acquired Kipushi project rights as part of a larger consortium [83].

AMF also participates in a joint venture with South Africans to mine diamonds in Angola's Cuango River area [84]. If AMF's Sierra Leone and Angola operations set the pattern for Mobutu's business in Zaire, this firm's association with the security firm International Defense and Security (IDAS) seemed able to provide its own security. That is, the profitable mineral venture provided corporate alliances and financing for its own private protection. In this deal, AMF was able to edge out the more established Anglo American corporation. Local beneficiaries of the proposed venture included separatist-minded strongmen who now behaved more loyally toward their president who negotiated deals with foreigners. This permitted Mobutu to come to an accommodation with politicians like Nyungu in Shaba, who found that association with a ruler of a sovereign state still translated into personal gain.

Shaba's Tenke-Fungurume mine also attracted foreign investors. A Canadian firm met with Kengo to discuss their interest in the site. It faced a formidable alliance of Australian and South African firms that proposed to invest up to $1.5 billion to bring production of copper to over 100,000 tons per year [85]. The Canadian firm signed an agreement, proposing a 55 percent joint venture with Gécamines, thereby positioning itself to take control of a part of Gécamines that Mobutu no longer had the capacity to personally control.

## CHANGING USES OF SOVEREIGNTY

These deals left Mobutu more freedom to divide and rule his enemies and rivals in a manner similar to strategies seen among private Bosnian Serb armies. In Zaire, battles between forces organized by Mobutu (and Kengo) allies in Kivu mobilized people to attack Zairians of Rwandan Tutsi origin. This eased Mobutu's task of recruiting local supporters and Hutu refugees who fled Rwanda in 1994. Mobutu even proposed to allow these pro-Mobutu "insider" outsiders to vote in elections scheduled for May, 1997 [86]. Like Mobutu, Bosnian Serb strongman Radovan Karadzic harnessed aspirations of local strongmen as central authority collapsed. Weapons and tacit support went to looting operations that targeted victims on the basis of ethnicity. Instigators of conflict operated with little formal organization and could plausibly deny responsibility. Inhabitants evacuated communities, leaving behind assets, becoming easy targets for extortion as they fled [87]. Yet, with international support, rulers of recognized states retained the benefits of sovereignty, even as some used tacit alliances with strongmen and their private armies to keep rivals at bay and protect outsiders. Yugoslavia and Zaire also provide examples of local struggles over resources that reinforce ethnic divisions and break down multiethnic alliances, undercutting moderates who challenge rulers as people seek protection in revived or newly discovered communal ties. Those who threaten the ruler directly are more easily isolated, co-opted or eliminated [88].

As in Yugoslavia, this method of control in Zaire was compatible with the rise of enterprising ethnic strongmen who pioneered a *de facto* stealthy secession as a consequence of their new-found autonomy. Like Bosnia's ethnic politicians, informal, low-key separation made no demand for global recognition of the extinction or birth of a sovereign entity. Zaire's sovereignty remained as a political asset for Mobutu in this fashion, despite the nearly total collapse of bureaucratic capacity and then of patrimonial control.

Global recognition of Zaire's sovereignty still left incentives for Zairian rivals to acknowledge a state within its old colonial boundaries. Arguably, some local authorities in Zaire (and in Bosnia) possess capabilities to create separate states by virtue of *de facto* control. Yet the current attraction of existing sovereignty as a political resource gives strongmen in both places strong incentives not to challenge the sovereignty of recognized states, even if the reality on the ground is quite different.

Uncontested sovereignty adds to their local capacity by leaving in place a framework that gives those associated with it the capability to enter into a full range of international agreements. Non-state actors, including foreign firms, hide partnerships with strongmen behind the shield of recognized state sovereignty. State sovereignty also simplifies questions concerning legitimacy of contracts, insurance, and adherence to laws in the firm's home country. In Zaire, this meant access to deals that firms negotiated with Mobutu's regime. Unchallenged formal state sovereignty also leaves in place an interlocutor who acknowledges debts and provides a point of contact between foreign state officials and strongmen without raising politically disturbing questions of recognition.

One saw this dynamic in the stealthy secession of Zaire's provincial authorities. Ethnic Rwandan rebels in Kivu, along Zaire's border with Rwanda, voiced no irredentist or secessionist desire outside of occasional utterances of field commanders who reflected on their

*de facto* control on the field of battle. Shaba's and Kasai's authorities refrained from declarations of independence, despite extensive cross border alliances and hostility to authorities in Kinshasa.

Sovereignty sustained through coincidence of these mutual interests now remains as one of the few resources left to a very weak Kinshasa regime under Kabila's control. Both parties have no incentive to disrupt tacit agreements with strongmen in the provinces. This extensive decentralization of authority effectively reduced the Mobutu clique, and now, Kabila, to warlords, since they too must scramble to control rivals through primarily commercial, almost entirely non-bureaucratic means, bolstered with whatever resources and alliances their status as rulers of a sovereign state give them. This balance based on the foundation of state sovereignty also permits fluidity in local alliances. Regional strongmen did business with Mobutu associates, for example, as they fought other members of that clique on a different front. Officials of foreign states were relieved to still encounter a recognizable state in which one day rulers might have the will and capacity to fulfill international obligations. With Mobutu's replacement by Kabila, they remain anxious that the regime in Kinshasa serve as an interlocutor.

Paradoxically, Zaire's *de facto* dissolution shows that state formation is still very much a matter of law, not of *de facto* capacity. Sovereignty in even a very weak state proves to be not only very important, but also unexpectedly divisible internally. The key to this arrangement lies in the absolute status of Zaire in international law, short of total dissolution or some new configuration which would have to be arranged against the short-term interests of many outsiders who prefer the post-independence framework of Africa's sovereign states, weak though they may be.

Zaire's continuing sovereign status contributes to the simultaneous fulfillment of material and political interests of different groups. The structure and nature of Zaire's politics also belies expectations of anarchy or a major reordering of states as a consequence of bureaucratic and patrimonial collapse.

Herbst predicts that weak state rulers in Africa will refrain from inter-state war as a solution to perpetual weakness, portending prolonged stagnation [89]. He correctly points out that barriers remain to changing frontiers (which he decries), but this view glosses over the considerable cross-border connections and informal regionalization that exists within the current context of formal sovereignty. Furthermore, this takes place under the umbrella of, and with resources derived from, sovereign status that many thought would forestall major change. This reinforces the notion that sovereignty is contextual and that this condition promotes (as it masks) a wider range of differently constituted units in the global state system. It shows that in Zaire, changing uses of sovereignty, not Mobutu alone, preserved Zaire from dissolution [90].

## RESOURCES AND INSURGENCY

Despite Mobutu's status as head of a sovereign state, some foreign investors found his informal demands and incapacity to control associates to be a fundamental obstacle to doing business with him [91]. The frustration of some investors coincided with that of rulers in neighboring states who faced the cross-border effects of Mobutu's alliances with clandestine

networks. For example, Mobutu's partnership with extremist Hutu exiles from 1994 posed a security threat to the Rwandan regime. Mobutu associates' diamond dealing with UNITA rebels helped finance UNITA's war against the Angolan government. Ugandan rebels received supplies from Sudan via the airport at Bunia that serviced gold mining there [92].

This created a conjunction of interests such that when Kabila emerged as head of his *Alliance des Forces Democratique pour la Libération* (AFDL), he had little trouble finding foreign anti-Mobutu allies. Kabila's strategies, however, show remarkable continuity with Mobutu's, with an even greater emphasis on external partners in lieu of a domestic patronage network grafted onto a state administration. Kabila recieved help from Angolan and Rwandan troops and Ugandan weapons [93]. Salim Saleh, the Ugandan anti-insurgent leader and brother of the president, for example, expanded his business reach to include a gold mine in Kisangani after the AFDL capture of the area [94]. These arrangements also showed the reluctance of neighboring rulers or internal insurgents to dissolve Zaire, instead resorting to regional networks to achieve their aims.

Once he appeared successful, Kabila became an attractive alternative commercial partner to Mobutu. The increasingly competitive nature of the mining business in Africa, with many new firms adapted to doing business in tough places, generated a broader range of potential partners for the rebel war leader. Kabila recognized the centrality of resource exploitation to his war effort, and welcomed foreign firms, provided they paid a "war tax" of 15 percent of projected investment [95]. Kabila appointed his brother (Florent Kambale Kabila) as "Mining Minister" to collect fees. He appointed another brother, Gaetanka Kakudji, as governor of the mineral-rich Shaba province. Kabila developed some commercial expertise of his own as a rebel leader since the 1960s. Well before his successful campaign in 1996-97, he presided over the Compagnie Mixte d'Import-Export (COMIEX), a venture with private merchants and Kabila's pre-AFDL *Parti de la Revolution Populaire*. This firm tapped into cross-border trade in coffee and gold to Uganda and other neighbors to the east before the rebel war began [96].

Larger cash injections to Kabila's war effort came from outsiders. The AMF signed a new billion dollar deal with Kabila in April, 1997, providing a cash payment and a jet to transport the rebel leader's associates [97]. This was a calculated risk on AMF's part. The renegotiated deal excluded the more established former partner Anglo-American, which could not take the risk of dealing with rebels for fear of unsettling rulers of other weak states where it has investments. AMF garnered additional benefits in the form of rights to buy diamonds in Kisangani, a $100,000 daily trade after rebels captured the city [98]. The state-run MIBA reportedly provided Kabila with an additional $3.5 million in April, 1997, after rebels carried off the head of the firm to the eastern part of the country after capturing him in Mbuji Maye [99].

These and other deals were critical for encouraging additional investors to do business with Kabila and establish his credibility in outsiders' eyes, turning him into a person who could engage in commerce and assume the sovereign state's fiscal responsibilities. The apparent stability that followed from acknowledgement of external obligations of the state and willingness to participate in global markets encouraged creditors and officials in other states to view Kabila as an alternative to anarchy. These relations continue the focus on the outward aspects of the state, not the changes of politics within it. Specifically, anti-Mobutu social action

within is ignored and aspects of warlord politics are accepted, so long as they accord with external interests.

Other places in Zaire, however, present an alternative to this strategy of finding weak state stability in a reworking of the politics of Mobutu's successor. Eastern Kasai, and especially the city of Mbuji-Maye, is a center of autonomous development efforts and separatist tendencies. The city has its own university, established in 1990 with funds from local operations of MIBA, the state-run mining company. The city government works with the Catholic Church to run the university, which set up a geology faculty with help from the Belgian firm Sibeka, owner of 20 percent of MIBA. Among the city's feats is a plan to expand the capacity of the near-by Lubilanji hydro station to generate electricity that government authorities fail to provide. Local officials and businesses took steps to institutionalize autonomous development, creating CODEKOR, or the Conference for the Development of Eastern Kasai [100].

Closer examination of Mbuji-Maye's economy reveals considerable ties to commercial networks that knitted together Mobutu and Kengo political associates, as well as a local struggle to keep these networks at arms length. MIBA head Mukamba Kadiata Nzemba billed himself as a "friend" of Mobutu's even though MIBA helped underwrite the local university. Local MIBA operations included joint ventures with foreign firms that operated in areas under more solid Mobutu control, but also exclusive ventures with foreign firms to increase local autonomy to exploit resources. Swanepoel, a South African engineering firm, demonstrated the political-private commercial nature of Kasai separatism, with its infrastructure projects benefiting Kasai. In return, Swanepoel appointed a member from its firm to the board of CODEKOR. Infrastructure development in this more purely autonomous manner threatened the Mobutu faction's hold on illicit diamond mining, since local miners and Angolan dealers had easier access to Mbuji-Maye. Kasai autonomy also changed regional strategic calculations. Kasai authorities were more interested in peace in Angola to protect independent access to Angola's ports and railways, versus Mobutu's interest in strengthening UNITA's diamond trade.

But ominously, Kabila's selective moves against firms appeared to target and rein in this regional autonomy. Otherwise quite open to deals with foreign firms, Kabila moved in May 1997 to disrupt the South African railroad deal, as he did the locally run diamond mining business (mentioned above). These actions do not interfere with Kabila's overall "free market" (actually, controlled, but private and profitable market) approach as a whole. This does not bode well for Zairians expecting local autonomy. Instead, it continues the politics of control through manipulating access to accumulation with help from private foreign firms in lieu of a state bureaucracy.

In the process, Kabila squeezes Kasai strongmen who try to stand as popularly accountable actors, insofar as they competed to control commerce, but seemingly for broader popular benefit. Since local strongmen identify popular legitimacy and provision of social services as valued goals, they are forced to build their authority in more conventional ways, striving to create efficient internal revenue and development bureaucracies. Why this is so bears closer examination of internal Kasai politics that is beyond the scope of this article.

Prospects for the survival of this experiment do not look promising, as outsiders help Kabila establish control over the territory of Zaire (Congo). The problem for Kasai is not the larger country of which they are a part. It is instead that the reassertation of control and its

manner of application is not decided by those who live under it. Kabila deserves some blame for political choices that limit the possibilities of people in his country. But outsiders -- foreign firms, creditors, officials in other states -- share responsibility when they act with unorthodox internal methods to preserve the outer form of a sovereign state.

**Notes**

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# Conventional Wisdom and Rwanda's Genocide: An Opinion

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Certain thoughts about the Rwandan genocide of 1994 are commonly accepted. For the most part, these ideas have been used to explain the causes of the genocide and, by implication, propose solutions to Rwanda's continuing problems. The status of these ideas within the media and policy circles, however, is problematic. Despite the tentative nature of the propositions when they were first asserted only two or three years ago, they have come to represent what may be called the "conventional wisdom" about Rwanda. Rarely are the assumptions behind such ideas challenged.

The generation of such "conventional wisdom" is not unusual; every social situation requires explanation that becomes part of common accepted knowledge. The ultimate measure of such common knowledge is its utility in predicting the likely actions of participants in the situations described. In the Rwandan situation, however, this common knowledge has not always been a good guide for such predictions. Only rarely have particular policy prescriptions led to the desired outcomes. In particular, Western-generated humanitarian policy, focused on democratic political institutions, respect for human rights, principles of voluntary refugee repatriation, and open markets, has been repeatedly frustrated.

In large part, I think that such systematic misreading of the Rwandan refugee situation is due to the very nature of how information is gathered in emergency situations. Necessarily, the emergency workers on Rwanda's borders in 1994 quickly developed common knowledge about the crisis, the actors involved, and the solutions to the situation. This knowledge helped to rationalize their own interventions and guide their efforts. Experientially based perceptions obtained in the days of the four month-long genocide thus provided the foundation for distinct views about Rwanda's problems[1].

Such experientially based knowledge is not inherently inaccurate or bad. The problem is that such knowledge, when unanalyzed, presents a fragmented, superficial, or incomplete picture of the emergency situation itself. This is particularly true when the individuals writing situation reports ("sitreps" in the sub-cultural argot) about the overall political situation are not part of the societies being analyzed. For the emergency specialist, this is almost always the case. Unfortunately, what happens in emergencies like the Rwanda genocide is that such views are uncritically passed on by a headquarters where, because of the urgency of the situation, sitreps are translated unanalyzed into emotional donor appeals and ReliefWeb documents. In turn, fleeting impressionistic views or opinions become the conventional wisdom shaping definitions of problems, accumulation of knowledge, and interpretation of "facts", and ultimately policy prescriptions[2].

Complete faith in conventional wisdom is risky, however. To understand any social situation it is necessary to move beyond the limitations of experientially based conventional




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wisdom[3]. Of course, doing this in an emergency is a source of discomfort, as it involves abandoning the few certainties already legitimated both in a remote headquarters and the field, and acknowledging the risky contingent nature of emergency management. Nonetheless, both analysis of and prescriptions for social problems stand to benefit from exploring and unearthing the potential oversimplifications located within conventional wisdom.

Below are seven items of "conventional wisdom" from the Rwanda refugee crisis which, in my view, misrepresent a complex reality and have served as poor guides for policy interventions. In particular, these assumptions are inconsistent with broader understandings of social behavior. The issues will be familiar to anyone who has followed the development of the Rwandan crisis as it was discussed on policy levels, on ReliefWeb, and in the popular press. And while the examples have to do with the Rwandan relief operation, my own bit of conventional wisdom is to point out that the problems illustrated here are probably inherent in the very nature of emergency relief programs, and are not unique to the Rwanda program. Certainly policy errors based on such conventional wisdom were a major focus in William Shawcross' book, *Quality of Mercy*, about the Cambodian crisis of 1979-83. My suspicion is that field personnel and policy makers associated with the ex-Yugoslavian, Somali, Liberian, and other emergency operations will recognize the pattern of quick conclusions based on fleeting experience, with no subsequent sociological analysis.

## THE RWANDA CRISIS AND CONVENTIONAL WISDOM: Seven Assumptions

**1) Assumption**: The key to the resolution of Rwanda's political problems is to be found in war crimes trials since justice is a necessary and reasonable prerequisite for reconciliation. Related to this is the assertion that war crimes trials are necessary in order to break the cycle of Hutu-Tutsi violence. This is apparent because the absence of any punitive response to the 1960's genocide in Rwanda was a precursor to the 1994 genocide[4].

These views are assumed by many Westerners and also asserted by the current Rwandan government. However, the relationship between war crimes tribunals and reconciliation processes is debatable. The only other international tribunals attempted were after World War Two, and these had little to do with reconciliation between Germans and Jews, or Japanese and Chinese. Nor are there hard and fast indications that the Nuremberg trials are what made reconciliation in post-war western Europe possible. As with the International War Crimes Tribunal in Arusha, Tanzania, these trials set an important example for militaries which may be tempted to participate in future war crimes. These trials were also probably an important ritual for re-asserting the international moral order, as Alain Destexhe points out[5]. Finally, marking individuals as indicted war criminals also seems useful in the cases of Bosnia and Rwanda, as it makes it more difficult for labeled persons to make claims of political legitimacy. These issues, while important, have little to do with reconciliation or "righting" the situation so the survivors can re-establish congenial relations with other Rwandans who may or may not have participated in the genocide.

As relevant as the post-World War Two trials may be, there are also instances where rebuilding following mass murder and genocide-like crimes have occurred without trials. The Ugandan Ambassador to the United Nations in 1996 pointed out to the African Studies

Association that Uganda, Zimbabwe[6], and post-Mau Mau Kenya are examples of countries where war crimes were committed and went unpunished, but nevertheless the "cycle of retribution" stopped. The Ambassador also made the point that South Africa is dealing with extremely sensitive reconciliation issues without appeals for mass arrests, tribunals, or support for a justice system which cannot possibly try all of the accused in a fair or just manner. Indeed, the legitimation of mass arrests in Rwanda on the basis of the genocide can easily be seen as an attempt by an authoritarian minority government to maintain control through terror or arbitrary arrest. Certainly, it is seen by the Hutu masses as having this effect[7]

Violence is not cyclical, except perhaps in the short-run, and often only in the context of politically-inspired legitimation processes. A quick look at the 20th century verifies this; Germany, France, and the United Kingdom are now allies, despite two world wars. No cycle of violence emerged following the dismantling of Soviet gulags. More recently, peace is emerging in places like Lebanon, El Salvador, Vietnam, and Cambodia. Indeed, there are examples of alliances and fights between ethnic groups, nations, and tribes which have formed and re-formed in different situations. There is nothing inherently "cyclical" about these processes, however. Neither is there a cycle of violence in Rwanda.

**2) Assumption**: The genocide was the consequence of poorly funded development programs: had money been invested in the region in the past, the crisis could have been avoided. Likewise, had money invested in the camps around Rwanda instead been spent in Rwanda, Rwanda itself would be in better shape.

Economic development is only part of the problem in Rwanda, and it is not the part directly causing genocide or war[9]. The poorest country in the region has been Tanzania, and that country has certainly avoided genocide, as well as political instability. Uganda has been better off economically than Rwanda and Tanzania; yet it also had a 15 year period of violence and political instability.

Thankfully, modern genocide is still not a common enough event to draw any generalizable assumptions about causation; the only other definitive cases are Nazi Germany and Ottoman Turkey in Armenia[10]. Neither of these countries suffered from the same type of poverty as there was in Rwanda. Reaching such a conclusion would even be difficult if cases of government-sanctioned mass murder (as opposed to genocide) were included in the mix, e.g. Pol Pot's Cambodia, Stalin's gulags, East Timor, and the 19th century American West. While the body counts may have been more or less than Rwanda, the proximate political, social, and economic situations were different. A similar consequence (mass murder or genocide) does not necessarily imply the same cause[11].

**3) Assumption**: The Interhamwe (or armed elements) and refugees must be separated so that the refugees can voluntarily return to Rwanda[12].

This dogma has been used for the last three years by the UNHCR to explain the failure of voluntary repatriation programs. Human Rights Watch says that the failure to separate ex-Rwandan military from the refugee population was due to simple "indifference" by the International community. More recently, Defense Minister Paul Kagame of Rwanda claimed that the inability of the UNHCR to separate refugees from Interhamwe was justification for

Rwandan military intervention in Congo/Zaire. From my perspective, these views show a lack of understanding for what refugees are and how social movements work.

No one person is either Interhamwe or not. In sociological terms, "Interhamwe" is not a discrete category. Rather there is an alienated Hutu population sympathetic to the young men, whatever they may call themselves, who mobilize and protect them in crisis situations. This population is sympathetic to these young men even though many are aware that some have committed genocide, and at times used brutal methods to control the Hutu population itself.

But not all former Interhamwe remain members of militias or paramilitary movements. Likewise, some members of current paramilitary movements were not members of Interhamwe militia in the early 1990's. Indeed, according to some accounts, some Interhamwe members probably joined the RPF (Rwandan Patriotic Front) army which liberated Rwanda in 1994[13]. The important point is that militia groups are more likely to mobilize and achieve legitimacy in times of crisis, i.e. during flight, forced repatriations, military attacks, and asylum crises. This is why sociologists speak of how social movements "mobilize" people and identities. This stands in contrast to legalistic approaches which assign different people to discrete categories like "Interhamwe" and "refugee". In the case of Rwanda, impressions made during the brutal, unusual days of the April-July 1994 seem to dominate Western understanding of Hutu social movements. But such categorizations are not a very good basis for imputing motives or making predictions of how Hutu nationalist groups will behave in refugee camps in the former Zaire, Tanzania, Malawi, Angola, Kenya, or Gabon. They are also not a very good tool for understanding how Hutu militia groups interact with their families within these refugee camps. Indeed, using Interhamwe to understand the failure of voluntary repatriation reminds me of the Americans blaming Communist subversion in South Vietnam on "Charlie." It was a real phenomenon, but the caricature was so awkward that it was not a useful analytical tool.

Such status ambiguity also is why it is rarely possible to separate "legitimate refugees" from military in virtually every refugee situation. Refugee situations are by definition focused by both politics and crisis: running for one's life is by definition a crisis, and the very definition of "refugee" implies political alienation from one's home country. It is little wonder that the many gray areas surrounding claims to legitimate refugee status occupy a good portion of the UNHCR's legal and diplomatic staff around the world. Thus, from a sociological viewpoint, sympathy with paramilitary movements in refugee situations, while undesirable, are normal.

**4) Assumption**: There must be hundreds of thousands of murderers who assisted with the genocide, and it follows that this many must be punished if justice is to be done[14].

Again, who is and is not a murderer is a legal interpretation. Genocide is an organized crime by a government against an ethnic group. But governments are not tried or put in prison; individuals are. One can speculate about how many individual "murderers" there are -- most guesses are based on the death toll and the means of execution (gangs of machete wielders). Estimates based on such logistics range from some tens of thousands to three million "murderers." These guesses while often logically sound, do not represent specific guilty persons in the legal sense[15].

Thus, while the 100-120,000 people (mostly Hutu men) in jail represent a reasonable count given the scope of the genocide, without trial to legitimate their individual guilt as being greater

or different from those who were not arrested, the prisoners do not represent any sort of individual responsibility, but rather a collective one. Given the lack of clarity about who the collective is (is it all Hutu, people who fled to Zaire, civil servants of the former government, etc.) these 100-120,000 represent simply the power of arrest by the government, not a tool for identifying and punishing the guilty.

The problem of the basic legitimacy of the current RPF-led government compounds the issue further. The international community is in general agreement that the authoritarian RPF is better than anarchy and that the genocidal MRND has no role in Rwanda's future. This, however, is different from deeper issues of national legitimacy and nation-building. Tragically, the current government seems caught in a vicious cycle. It is perceived by the Hutu masses as an occupying force maintaining power through the use of arrest and intimidation. The jails, filled with people who are the sons, brothers, cousins, nephews, or fathers of most Rwandan Hutu, are a persistent reminder of this power. But, from the government's perspective, without the arrests and consequent intimidation, the Hutu masses may revolt against the minority government. Indeed the inability of the government to control the killing of genocide survivors seems to indicate that this result is occurring.

From the perspective of many Hutu, the arrests are only the most current and internationally obvious tool of Rwanda's authoritarian state. Many refugees point out that large numbers of Hutu died in the war, and continue to die without recourse to any system of justice. The lack of a visible response to the massacre by the military at Kibeho (4,000+ Hutu dead in April 1994), and the steady flow of execution victims in the Kagera River in 1994-5 are just two of the foci which cause Hutu to doubt the sincerity of the government[16]. Alain Destexhe has made the legal point that killing by the RPF is fundamentally different than genocide (he describes these killings by the legalistic term "exactions"). However, this legalistic distinction in international law is irrelevant to the 100-120,000 people in Rwanda's jails awaiting trial by weak Rwandan national courts which are part of the same political apparatus fighting Hutu militia groups in the country-side. I suspect that this legal distinction is also not clear to the Rwandan farmers, be they Hutu or Tutsi. As such, it does little to assist, and may exacerbate, the basic legitimacy problems of the RPF government.

**5) Assumption**: Repatriation of refugees to countries of origin is the only viable political solution.

Few refugee crises have been solved solely by repatriation. Most are solved by a combination of voluntary repatriation, local resettlement, and third country resettlement. Officially, only the Tanzanians have even discussed this fact (briefly in late 1994) with respect to the Great Lakes crisis. Meanwhile, the international actors continue to chase the elusive "voluntary repatriation only" policy which resulted in the chaotic and violent disintegration of the Zairian/Congolese camps, and the forced repatriation of almost 400,000 refugee from Tanzania to Rwanda.

Other refugee crises in the region (including the Rwandan crisis of the 1960's, Burundian of 1970s, and to a lesser extent the Mozambican crises of the 1980s) were resolved through combined programs of voluntary resettlement, along with local and third country resettlement. The Indo-chinese refugee situations of the 1980s were solved through a combination of second

and third country resettlement, voluntary repatriation, and in the end some forced repatriation. Premature repatriation to Afghanistan resulted in the emptying and refilling of camps in Pakistan. Post World War Two refugee policies in Europe also reflected a combination of second country resettlement, third country resettlement, voluntary repatriation, and forced repatriation.

Given these precedents, it is a good assumption that when the dust of Central Africa's wars has settled, Rwandans and Burundians will have been scattered across eastern and central Africa with the assistance of the international community. It is only a question of how much it will cost, and how many will die in the process.

**6) Assumption**: Intervention by an international military force could have disarmed the violent elements in the refugee populations[17].

Disarmament would have involved enforcing a perimeter around the refugee concentrations, isolating all males, and then doing a systematic hut to hut search. Weapons would undoubtedly have been found. Given that the primary weapon, the machete, is also an agricultural tool, most weapons would necessarily be returned. Assuming that this was feasible, it would have done nothing towards enhancing the legitimacy of the RPF government in Kigali among the refugee populations. In fact it would have done just the opposite by intensifying refugee resentment toward the government and international community.

**7) Assumption**. There are no more Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda, only Rwandans.

This is the official policy of the current Rwandan government. It is of course an appealing policy to pursue. However, stating that this is so does not necessarily make it so. Institutionalized discrimination based on any number of status markers (race, ethnic group, language skills, accent, economic status, etc.) are persistent all over the world, despite laws to the contrary. Indeed, virtually every country in the world does have a minority which study after study shows is discriminated against.

While the identities of Hutu and Tutsi are remarkably malleable[18], there is an obvious warning for those who take their claims of ethnic homogeneity at face value[19]. In Burundi, a policy of "we are all Burundians" was maintained between the mass murder of Hutu there in 1972-3 until the present. In the process, unlike Rwanda, ethnic distinctions were eliminated from national identity cards; indeed for a number of years in the 1980s it was illegal to speak of Hutu and Tutsi in Burundi. These policies did not of course stop political parties from asserting a Hutu-Tutsi distinction in the 1990s.

## CAN ANALYTICAL DEPTH BE BROUGHT TO POLICY ANALYSIS IN COMPLEX EMERGENCIES?

I think that part of the problem with the "conventional wisdom" described above is rooted in the nature of emergency management. Three factors of emergency management make the type of over-generalizations described here more likely in emergencies than in other endeavors.

First is the speed with which emergencies happen. By definition, emergencies are uncommon events, and as a result considered to be unique, particularly by staff in remote field

sites isolated from locals, refugees, and their own societies. As a result, new "frames" tend to be developed for each emergency without reference to the broader social situation of the refugees, or even that of past refugee emergencies. Thus, the April-July 1994 genocide continues to be the basis for how Hutu social movements are evaluated. In this process, experience-based views developed early in a crisis were given widespread dissemination by a wider world hungry for sensational news. These views, which are often developed on fragmentary information for fund-raising purposes or the press, can become dogma.

The second problem is the emotional appeal which donors necessarily make to meet the high set-up costs in emergencies. In an emergency, crisis management in the initial phase leads to mistakes which in turn lead to a crisis in a second phase. Oftentimes these errors are magnified when the press focuses on quick and easy solutions. These solutions are seemingly obvious during the intense early days, but more problematic when the complexities of the situation begin to be revealed. In such situations, because little analysis has been done, the general conclusion is that more of the same should be tried. For example, the faith in military peacekeepers as a means of separating refugees and Interhamwe probably emerged in this fashion. The first mistake was violating international conventions by permitting refugee camps on borders. This policy emerged because it is well-known that politicized refugee groups often use border proximity to mount cross-border raids. In Goma, this "mistake" was made for good reason: the size and health status of the refugees required it in mid-1994. Nevertheless, despite the initial justification, rebel forces mounted cross-border raids into the camps from Zaire, destabilizing relations between Rwanda and Zaire. The obvious "big picture" solution to this problem would have been to move the camps away from the border once the health situation stabilized, and press for this solution in diplomatic channels. However, by that time, the idea that the problem was Interhamwe, not camp location had become dogma, and the call for "separation" of refugees and Interhamwe had become more insistent[20]. The Western press beat this drum particularly loudly.

The third issue is the very complexity of response required to deal with caseloads involving two million people and six countries, as was the case in the Great Lakes crisis. The combination seems to mean that a premium is placed on large volumes of quick information which is rarely analyzed before attention is refocused by the next series of incidents. The quick information is useful; as my citations show, I am an avid reader of ReliefWeb. However, it is too easy to use this over-abundance of information, much of which is focused on hearsay from the many interested parties, and thus avoid identifying the longer-term trends of which any particular day's events may or may not be a part[21]

Misconceptions and poor social analysis have characterized many of the interpretations of the Great Lakes crisis. More precisely, "conventional wisdom" seems to be a hazard of the manner in which complex emergencies are handled. In the case of Rwanda, this was due to a commendable hope that a quick solution could be found to what is one of the most horrifying events in modern history. Were it that easy, answers would have been found long ago. Continuing to insist on the viability of such conventional thought is a poor substitute for well-informed commitment to long-term social and political analysis.

**Notes**

1. In a normal bureaucratic setting, such conventional wisdom is often subject to checks by auditors, analysts, fixed contractual relationships, procurement procedures, and other forms of administrative oversight. In the inherently quick changing nature of the Rwanda emergency, there were few such administrative checks. This is both because there were perceived to be few precedents for the situation, and also because emergencies themselves are fast-changing. As a result, claims that analogy and comparison were not relevant became easily validated. In turn, conventional wisdom rooted in fleeting impressions fixed by an unusual time and place became the basis for decision-making far longer than it would normally. Particularly for expatriates working in the emergency, the "boiler room" society of high staff turnover, public relations officers, press attention, high adrenaline, and reliance on verbal transmission of culture (e.g. verbal handover reports) meant that experientially based conventional wisdom was fixed without reference to the broader social context. This is why it is so easy to speak of an "agency culture" for the UNHCR, CARE, Red Cross, and other emergency-focused agencies. See also Hugo Slim (1995) The Continuing Metamorphosis of the Humanitarian Practitioner; Some New Colors for an Endangered Species. Disasters. June 1995.
2. See William Shawcross 1984. The Quality of Mercy: Cambodia, Holocaust, and Modern Conscience. New York: Simon and Schuster, p. 13.
3. Ruane, Janet M. and Karen A. Cerullo 1997. Second Thoughts: Seeing Conventional Wisdom through the Sociological Eye. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press.
4. See IRIN Special Feature 1/97, 19 February, 1997, http://131.111.106.147/POLICY/Pb050.htm. This is also a theme in the Medecins sans Frontieres publication Populations in Danger, 1995. Also, The International Response to Conflict and Genocide: Lessons from the Rwanda Experience, v. 2, Executive Summary, March 1996, http://131.111.106.147/Policy/Pb025.htm. US News 28/7/97 p. 17 indicates that this is a strongly held view of US Secretary of State Madeline Albright.
5. Destexhe, Alain 1995. Rwanda and Genocide. New York: New York University Press. p. 64.
6. Ian Smith who led the often brutal fight for white minority rule in Zimbabwe continues to farm in Zimbabwe. He continues to write unrepentant books about the subject. See The Economist review of The Great Betrayal by Ian Smith, April 19, 1997.
7. Amnesty International has implied that this is what is happening in Rwanda (Amnesty International, April 8, 1997, Grave Doubts about Fairness of the First Trials ReliefWeb http://www.reliefweb.int. Gerard Prunier "Rwanda: The Social, Political, and Economic Situation in June 1997, (Writenet UK), http://www.unhcr.ch/refworld/country/writenet/wrirwa07.htm. Also Medecins sans Frontieres, op cit., Human Rights Watch Africa, Newsletter, March 1997.
8. Foreign Direct Investment, Trade, and Aid: An Alternative to Migration, United Nations Conference International Organization on Trade and Development for Migration, Journal of Humanitarian Studies http://131.111.106.147/Policy/Pb044.htm

9. More careful assessments of the Rwanda crisis all share this emphasis on complexity of causes. Unfortunately, there has not been a compensating emphasis on the complexity of possible solutions.
10. See Alain Destexhe op cit.
11. See Mark Cooney 1997, From Warre to Tyranny, Lethal Conflict and the State, American Sociological Review v.62, n.2, p.333 for a comment on the exceptionalism of the Rwandan genocide relative to other examples of state-sponsored mass murder.
12. Sadako Ogata, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. See for example. Statement to 1997 UNHCR Executive Committee Meeting, October 14, 1997. http://wwwnotes.reliefweb.int:81
13. See Reyntjens, Filip 1995. Subjects of Concern: Rwanda, October 1994, Issue 13(2):39 and Gerard Prunier "Rwanda: Update to end of November 1994, Writenet (UK), http://www.unhcr.ch/refworld/country/writenet/wrirwa02.htm
14. See Philip Gourevitch, "The Return," New Yorker January 20, 1997. Also Zarembo, Judgment Day in Rwanda, 92, 312 genocide suspects await trial, Harper's Magazine, April 1997, pp. 68-80.
15. Alain Destexhe op cit. is careful in making this distinction.
16. The Lutheran World Federation/Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service reported removing 917 bodies from the Kagera River in Tanzania between June 1994 and May 1995. The majority of the victims were removed in the early months, and were most likely killed in the genocide. However, 346 bodies were removed between November 1994 and April 1995. In the last month of the project (1995), 7 bodies were removed. Many of the victims removed during this period had their hands tied behind their back, and were killed by a gunshot wound to the head. See Feature Report and Final Report, Kagera River Body Removal Project, Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service (Dar Es Salaam and Geneva), June 1995, by Tony Waters. A memorial at the mass grave in Tanzania was dedicated by LWF/TCRS in May 1996.
17. Medecins sans Frontieres op cit.
18. See Brain, James 1973. Tutsi and Ha, a Study in Integration, Journal of Asian and African Studies 8(39), Waters, Tony (1995) The Social Construction of Tutsi in Modern East Africa, Journal of Modern African Studies 33(2):343-48, Catherine Newbury, The Cohesion of Oppression, New York: Columbia University Press, Rene Lemarchand (1994) Burundi: Ethnocide as Discourse Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. For an extended discussion of why ethnic identity is persistent in some situations, and not others, see Tony Waters (1995) Toward a Theory of Ethnic Enclave Formation: the Case of Ethnic Germans in North American and Russia. International Migration Review. 29(2):515-544.
19. See Philip Gourevitch, "Letter from Rwanda" The New Yorker, January 20, 1997, p. 49.
20. Successive water crises in Benaco camp, Ngara Tanzanian 1994-6 were also of this nature. There was a rushed water drilling program in the first two months of the camp. This led to mistakes, and second crisis which led to essentially the same mistake, i.e. water drilling without careful assessment of geological conditions. This led to further crises, which meant that a river-based pumping station was funded before approvals

were received from local authorities. This led to moving to another site which then needed a new road. In the end, the trucking station was not used when the planned for water truck fleet was not funded for vehicles or diesel, even though $1,000,000 had by then been spent on various quick solutions. The refugees themselves apparently developed their own means to deal with the water shortages, and gastro-enteric disease rates remained low as a consequence. I am sure that NGO and UN Staff who work in other sectors of the emergency in Ngara will recognize this pattern.

21. Miskell and Norton Journal of Humanitarian Affairs (http://www jha.sps.cam.ac.uk/a/a014.htm reposted on 4 July, 1997) have commented on the nature of this problem with respect to emergency contingency planning.

# BOOK REVIEWS

**The Challenge of Southern African Regional Security: A Review of Peace and Security in Southern Africa. Ibbo Mandaza, editor. Harare: SAPES, 1996. 183pp.**

Sub-Saharan African politics is framed by the triple challenges of democracy, development, and defense. In a context of postcolonial conflict, underdevelopment, failed states, and regional insecurity, Africans are attempting to erect viable, stable, enduring, and legitimate governmental structures that can ensure their citizens a reasonable quality of life. As a first course, this requires a focus on the political, economic, and cultural dimensions of Africa's security concerns in a systematic fashion paying attention to the peculiarities and continuities wrought from the dynamic security environment in the region. Ibbo Mandaza's (editor) *Peace and Security in Southern Africa* is a collection of five essays by Africa specialists that addresses the challenges of internal and external security for Southern African states. This effort derives from a larger research program of the South African Regional Institute for Policy Studies (SARIPS). The authors attempt to provide an expansive definition of peace and security, a discussion of the challenges to state building and democratization, an explication of the enduring impact of colonialism and dependence on regional security relationships, and an analysis of the prospects for regional cooperation and economic integration.

Mandaza's introduction lays out the scope of the project and is followed by Thomas Ohlson's lead essay on conflict resolution in Africa, which treads--often deftly--over familiar territory for those acquainted with arguments favoring the expansion of the security concept for analyses of post cold war states--especially those of the former "Third World" (e.g. Ayoob 1995, Buzan 1991, Job 1992, Klare & Thomas 1994). Ohlson recognizes -- as do the other authors in the volume -- that development, democracy, and security are linked, and he insists that there are no quick fixes for the region's security problems. He is emphatic that conflict resolution strategies should emerge "from the people" and that these should reflect the local circumstances that obtain in the region (p. 32). For Ohlson, democratization, the emergence of a regional security complex, and a conducive international environment are necessary precursors to regional stability.

The central argument for Ohlson is that Africa cannot copy the European experience as a pathway to development, democracy, and regional security. Hardly a novel suggestion (Henderson 1995), it has recently been echoed by African leaders such as Museveni who maintains that "We are building Afrocentric, not Eurocentric countries" (McGeary 1997, 40). Ohlson maintains that regional insecurity is likely to emerge from the diffusion of internal conflicts, tensions borne of interdependency, and asymmetries in economic and military power (p. 24). Assigning a dominant role to South Africa in regional development, he argues that the




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prospects for such developments are proscribed by the need for socioeconomic reconstruction (p.27), a restructuring of South Africa's security apparatus (p. 27), and the adoption of compromise strategies among the major actors in South African politics.

While cogent and straightforward, this essay--like most of the essays in this volume--covers little new ground. A glaring omission in Ohlson's work that is symptomatic of most of the essays in this volume is the absence of both a theoretical framework for the emergence of cooperation among Southern African states in the region and a programmatic rationale for the development of interstate cooperation. What Ohlson and others put forward amounts to a functionalist inspired "wish-list" of African needs that are to be met as a result of some unspecified process that emerges "from the people."

These shortcomings are also evident in Tiyanjana Maluwa's article entitled "The Refugee Problem in the Quest for *Peace and Security* in Southern Africa." After acknowledging the impact of the proliferation of refugees on the security of Southern African states, Maluwa calls for a regional "Marshall Plan" to alleviate the refugee problem in the region (p. 139). It is not clear whether Maluwa favors a donor-driven strategy (p. 141)--which is highly unlikely anyway--or a regional effort focusing on the OAU and the SADC (pp. 143-4) or both. Nonetheless, beyond its desirability, it is not clear how this Marshall Plan is to be developed and instituted. Moreover, in "Emancipating Security and Development for Equity and Social Justice," Winnie Wanzala's argument that "[c]onfidence-building measures should ultimately aim to delegitimize the use of force" is laudable, but the mechanisms for such developments are unspecified. Beyond promulgating neologisms such as "multilogues" between various "NGOs, children's groups, student and youth groups, unions and women's groups" (p. 98), Wanzala offers a litany of ostensible policy prescriptions that are as ambiguous as they are untenable. For example, among the guidelines for developing a comprehensive security strategy there is the following item:

"The imperative to address forms of violence engendered by prevailing development and security approaches and alternatives, by identifying and encouraging awareness about the sources of direct, structural and cultural violence, and by encouraging questioning of socially designated boundaries and the dualisms they inhabit [original emphasis]" (p. 98).

These vague meanderings can hardly serve as effective templates for security policy.

Among the authors in the volume, Wanzala comes closest to offering policy prescriptions for Southern African regional stability that extend beyond primarily normatively driven "wish-lists" (e.g. p. 43). It is not that normative arguments are unimportant; clearly, any student of this region is immediately confronted with the atrocious human rights abuses that have plagued the citizens of the former Frontline States. Nonetheless, in the postcolonial era, citizens of Southern Africa require a program of action that attends to the priorities and tradeoffs that are necessary in any plan for development, democracy, and defense. There are unavoidable asymmetries that will accompany the reconstruction and reorientation of states such as are occurring in the region. The promulgation of utopic wish lists simply will make a difficult situation even more difficult as expectations rise and frustration mounts in the face of real scarcities in the internal and external environment of these states. In such contexts, even physical security is threatened.

It follows that security analysts should pose paradigms that reflect the strengths and limitations of Africa's newly democratizing institutions of governance without marginalizing

the aspirations of the peoples in the region but at the same time taking into account the very real scarcities that are unavoidable in nation-state building. While the authors are obviously concerned with the issues of Southern African security, they collectively fail to engage the core issues that would allow for theoretical consistency in their arguments and provide them with a point of departure for meaningful policy prescriptions. For example, Ohlson, asserts that, inter alia, asymmetries in economic and military power militate against Southern African regional development (p. 25-6). In Masa Sejanomane's analysis of the Lesotho Crisis of 1994, he, like Ohlson, decries the asymmetries of power and wealth in the region. Similarly, Sejanomane is critical of the intervention of the leaders of Botswana, South Africa, and Zimbabwe in Lesotho's succession crisis and suggests that even though their efforts appeared to decrease tensions in the tiny state, there is little to be garnered from the Lesotho case to inform analyses of African security (pp. 82-3). He is correct that Africans have yet to institutionalize a formal, effective (and widely legitimized) process of conflict resolution in the region but his dismissal of the "personalistic" attempts of the regional leaders to (even temporarily) resolve the conflict does not even allow for the impact of "demonstration effects" of such intervention on other potential "hot spots." This myopia is even more pronounced when we realize that it was the initiative of this troika of leaders that led to the establishment of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defense and Security launched in Gaborone in July of 1996 which is the linchpin of an incipient and indigenous Southern African regional security apparatus.

Fundamentally, the authors in this volume fail to appreciate that the asymmetries in the region are not simply to be decried in light of normative arguments but have to be utilized to provide a degree of stability in the region. Campbell's contribution suffers from these limitations as well (p. 153). Although, he correctly challenges the problems of the privatization of violence in the hands of former security elements associated with the notorious South African Defense Forces (SADF), especially the mercenaries of Executive Outcomes (p. 154), his wholesale condemnation of the defense industry of South Africa dislodges his analysis from the realities of regional development. To be sure, Southern Africa has the potential to develop as a zone of peace, stability, and development; however, such is not likely to occur unless there is a degree of executive and personal security borne of institutional legitimacy, economic stability, and intercultural cooperation. The fear of coups in newly democratizing countries and retrenchment from deposed autocrats should be checked by regional collective security arrangements. The development of such collective security institutions will ensue, largely, as a function of the efforts of the regional military and economic power. This role obviously devolves to South Africa. Once apartheid-era white supremacists are expunged from the military leadership, a democratic South Africa will have to assume the mantle of "regional stabilizer." Clearly, regional security efforts are more likely to be successful when they are dominated by a preponderant power that can establish multilateral security regimes that provide collective goods, reduce transaction costs among members, engender trust among states, and check rogue state leaders. This argument is consistent with hegemonic stability models (Keohane 1984, Gilpin 1987) that posit that the presence of asymmetries in the distribution of material and economic capabilities among states in a region is often more conducive to regional stability (e.g. Weede 1976) wrought from the preponderant power's (or

hegemon's) establishment and maintenance of international regimes to coordinate interstate activity in some issue area(s). With the preponderance of South Africa clearly established, it would appear that Southern Africa is a candidate case for the emergence of hegemonic stability. Although it is not clear whether the SADC is presently equipped to serve as the vehicle for Southern African collective security coordination (see Hussein & Cilliers 1997), it appears to be progressing toward that end (Cawthra 1997).

Not only does hegemonic stability reduce elite insecurity but it can also lead to the amelioration of health and welfare concerns in the region. For example, in a hegemonic stability system, the provision of a security umbrella obviates the pursuit of arms spending among states and thereby reduces the likelihood of arms races and the conflicts they might spawn. Further, the presence of an international security regime might prevent states from wasting newly acquired capital on military expenditures. Botswana's recent purchases of Leopard tanks are instructive in this regard. Beyond the security concerns that such purchases cause in the region--especially in Namibia which is involved in a border dispute with Botswana over an island on the Chobe river--these expenditures would be more efficiently targeted to human capital formation, housing, and health care. In this way, a regional hegemonic stability arrangement might also lead to the creation of some of the more normatively inspired aspirations espoused by the authors in *Peace and Security*. However, Campbell's condemnation of the historic role of South Africa's security apparatus (which I largely concur with) seems to blind him to the potential developmental role of a transformed South African military establishment in a post-apartheid South African democracy. Moreover, South Africa's defense assets presently serve as an important source of income for the state and the region though under a security regime the resources of the South African arms sector can support African multilateral forces in peacekeeping roles. Such arrangements might afford poorer democratizing states the opportunity to begin to stand down their engorged military establishments and devote greater effort (and resources) to socioeconomic development.

One comes to appreciate these possibilities once one moves beyond the critique of the historic atrocities of the apartheid SADF and begins to address the opportunities provided by the transformations underway in South Africa. This is not meant to minimize the apartheid government's brutality but only to recognize the mechanisms in place that should be utilized to promote growth, democracy, and security in the region. These are sometimes brutal realities that scholars, policymakers, and practitioners must confront without glossing over the difficulties associated with development, democracy, and defense. Such points seem to be lost on the contributors to *Peace and Security*.

The failure of the scholars in this volume to engage the theoretical work--and much of the empirical evidence--on the development of regional security regimes leads them to parrot one another in decrying the asymmetries in Southern Africa instead of recognizing the possibilities that arise from these arrangements, specifically, the conflict dampening impact of such arrangements in light of hegemonic stability arguments. In fact, in a departure from the other essays, Maluwa argues for the imposition "upon the body politic of the region such structures as are necessary to ensure the existence of viable autonomous, self-sustaining political and economic entities which can satisfy the varied needs of the citizenry and eradicate the factors which compel nationals to flee their countries of origin"(p. 143). This "top down" approach is

akin to hegemonic stability perspectives, but the author does not appear to recognize the theoretical implications of his own arguments. The reader is left with a conceptual hodgepodge of amorphous strategies and ambiguous and untenable policy prescriptions when Southern African security challenges require much more.

All told, *Peace and Security* attends to some pressing issues in the region but does little to point the way forward toward regional stability. To be sure, the authors' suggestions that solutions should emerge "from the people" and that these solutions should be aimed at resolving issues of security, broadly defined, has some currency. Nonetheless, bereft of a theoretical rationale to explicate the situation as it stands, their proscriptions are largely gratuitous. We are left with the need to construct a security framework for Southern Africa that attends to the changed post cold war international environment and the opportunities provided by the asymmetries in the region (which clearly are not going to "go away" in the near future). I contend that the asymmetries that the authors decry should become the building blocks for regional stability. In its zeal to suggest how Southern Africa "ought to be", *Peace and Security* fails to adequately attend to Southern Africa "as it is".

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**Mokoko, the Makgoba Affair: A Reflection on Transformation. Malegapuru William Makgoba. Johannesburg: Vivlia Publishers, 1997. XXIV+243pp.**

Arguably the premier academic institution in South Africa, the University of the Witwatersrand--popularly known as Wits--in Johannesburg, a bastion of white, Anglo-Saxon liberalism, prides itself in having practised "academic non-segregation" (i.e. admitting black students on merit) before the government's 1960 *Extension of University Education Act* forced it to comply with apartheid. Indeed, many African intellectual luminaries such as Chabani Manganyi, Vincent Maphai, Ezekiel Mphahlele, Njabulo Ndebele, Sipho Seepe, Robert Sobukwe and Herbert Vilakazi each studied or taught there at one time or another. Yet, between October 1995 and March 1996, what became known as "The Makgoba Affair" pitted the then newly-appointed Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) and world-renown medical scientist, M. William Makgoba (an African), against thirteen of his liberal colleagues (all but one of whom were white) led by historian Charles van Onselen in a vicious and deadly power struggle for control of the agenda for change at the University and, ultimately, for the hearts and minds of its students and staff. It is the fascinating story of this epic battle between thirteen "conservative Eurocentric" scholars and a lone "Africanist Afrocentric" scholar (p. xxi)--in effect, a modern "remake" of the Battle of Makgobaskloof between his illustrious ancestor Chief Makgoba and the cattle-farming Boers of June 1895--that is chronicled in painstaking detail by and from the perspective of Makgoba the latter in *Mokoko, The Makgoba Affair*.

There are in fact two scripts, or sub-texts, to the book's main story. One is an intellectual autobiography of Malegapuru William Makgoba, admittedly a perilous exercise for someone who is only a few months shy of his 45th birthday. The other is a highly personal account of the recent process of transformation occurring at Wits written by one of its main actors-turned-victim. While the latter is to some extent informed by the former, the two sub-texts can be read separately as two distinct scripts. This *confusion des genres* is one of the book's main flaws and accounts for this reader's uneasiness in attempting to disentangle objective reality from opinion, and fact from fiction.

By any standards, Makgoba's academic credentials are impeccable, and his scholarly achievements most impressive. A graduate of the University of Natal's Medical School (then reserved for Blacks), Makgoba went on to study biochemistry and to research for a D.Phil. in human immunogenetics at Oxford University on a prestigious Nuffield Dominion Fellowship. After a stint as lecturer in Medicine at the University of Birmingham (1983-1985), he was selected to the National Institutes of Health's visiting scientist program in Bethesda, Maryland

(1986-1988). From there, he moved to the Royal Postgraduate Medical School in London as senior lecturer in molecular endocrinology. Finally, in October 1994, Wits, who had "head-hunted" him for some years, made him an offer that he could not refuse: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Professor *Ornamentarius* ( meaning "ornamental"?). William Makgoba spends an inordinate amount of time (and book space) expounding on his outstanding academic achievements, and has a full chapter (Chapter 11, pp. 142-170) which is nothing but an exhaustive resume detailing the numerous research grants and fellowships, honours and distinctions gleaned during his short, but eventful carrier. He even finds it necessary to throw in dubious distinctions, such as those conferred (usually for a price) by the International Biographical Centre or the American Biographical Institute.

Makgoba is justifiably proud of his considerable achievements as an African scientist, but the overkill leads him to sound intellectually pompous and arrogant and utterly self-centered, if not downright egocentric, as the following statement clearly indicates: "I am today a sophisticated man (...) who has earned accolades from some of the world's best and leading institutions, mainly because of my unquestioned brilliance as a scholar and pioneering achievements as a medical scientist, with few equals in my field and even fewer superiors" (p. 46). After all, he is not the first or the most prominent African geneticist (professor Pascal Lissouba preceded him in this field, but went astray as president of the Congo), nor the only world-renown African scientist (the achievements of Cheikh Diarra, a Malian-born American scientist at NASA who supervised the Mars Exploration Program and conceived and directed the recent Pathfinder Mission, comes to mind). What sets Makgoba apart from his fellow African scientists is the South African environment from which he originates and in which he must now operate, an environment pregnant with the legacy of apartheid in which considerations of race and color still prevail over intellectual prowess and academic achievement. It is because his thirteen colleagues had questioned his credentials, that he is forced to overstate his accomplishments in order to set the record straight, once and for all. That he has done so successfully is beyond question.

What is questionable is his resort to some unorthodox--and, possibly, unethical--methods of struggle, such as his surreptitious access to his adversaries' personal files and resumes (as he himself admits on pp. 123-126), or his consultation of traditional healers for "protective medicines" designed to scare his enemies (recounted in minute detail on pp. 137-139), a most intriguing practice coming from a world-renown medical scientist. There is also a distinct paradox and inherent contradiction in the fact that on the one hand Makgoba craves for international recognition as "a first rate, world-acclaimed African scientist" (p. xix) trained in "some of the world's best and leading institutions" (p. 46), while on the other hand he advocates a distinctly Afro-centric vision of South African education which, in his view, "must take into account the primacy of Africa and what it embodies in its history, philosophy, identity and culture" (p. 206).

The second sub-text of Makgoba's story relates to the debate around the process of transformation occurring in South Africa's institutions of higher learning in the new political dispensation of the post-apartheid era. Organised within "Transformation Forums" representing all the stakeholders--students, lecturers, top administrators, as well as general administrative and technical support staff--this process is supposed to progressively change the structure,

composition and orientation of all tertiary institutions so that they adequately reflect the interests, priorities and needs of the African majority in the country. Starting from a Pan-Africanist position grounded in the Black Consciousness Movement, Makgoba claims, with justification, that the liberal lobby within Wits--epitomized by the "Gang of thirteen"--was hell-bent on slowing down and derailing this transformation process in order to maintain their power and privileged status within the system. Indeed, Makgoba clearly implies (as on pp. 172-173) that it is because he was perceived as a potential contender for the top job of Vice-Chancellor (soon to become vacant) that he had to be destroyed by the still-powerful conservative lobby within Wits. While the ultimate settlement of the dispute through legal mediation resulted in Makgoba staying on at Wits as *ad hominem* professor of molecular immunology, it effectively put him out of the race for the top job.

While the author's argument is morally, legally and politically sound, the rather inelegant and shoddy manner in which it is put forward is highly questionable. Throwing together a series of articles on the subject of transformation in South African higher education written between 1995 and 1997 (Chapter 12) with minimal editorial work leads to tedious repetitions and results in a severe lack of focus and clarity which considerably weakens the overall argument. Likewise, the author's crude and uninspired broadsides against Marxist ideology confirm the overall impression that if he is indeed a reputable medical scientist, he is a rather mediocre social scientist. For whatever else may be said of Marx, he most certainly was not "(...) a distorter, misrepresenter of information and facts"(p. 101), "reputed to have cooked (sic) his facts to construct his theories" (p. 55). And no political historian in his right mind would dare venture the view that "The great Marxist disciples, Mao Tse-Tung and Stalin, have both provided the world with unquestionable evidence of the limitations and fallacies of Marxist theory." (p. 55). We are left to surmise what that "unquestionable evidence" might be...

Based on solid moral and legal grounds, Makgoba's rather vague and ill-defined Afro-centric approach also happens to be politically correct in the sense that it adequately and genuinely reflects the views of the formerly excluded and marginalised but newly-empowered majority African population in post-apartheid South Africa. Who, for instance would take issue with his view that

"The African university must not pursue knowledge for its own sake, but for the sake of, and the amelioration of, the conditions of life and work of the ordinary man and woman. It must be fully committed to active participation in the social transformation, economic modernisation, and the training and upgrading of the total human resources of the nation" (p. 176)?

Herein lies the book's greatest strength and its intrinsic value as a significant piece of evidence to be added to the already voluminous dossier currently being compiled by various educationists on the subject of transformation in higher education in South Africa.

As a sad footnote to this story, one should mention the fact that after a grueling selection process, Wits appointed a renown U.S.-based South African political scientist, Sam Nolutshungu as Vice-Chancellor-designate on October 27, 1996. In January 1997, already suffering from the dreadful multiple myeloma that would take his life on August 14th, 1997 Nolutshungu politely declined the offer. Barely a week after Noluthungu's death, Wits officially announced that Colin Bundy, Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of the Western Cape

and radical scholar of some repute, had been selected as the University's next Vice-Chancellor. Is this a case of history repeating itself? As the French saying goes *plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose*!

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**Religious Pluralism and the Nigerian State. Simeon O. Ilesanmi. Athens, OH: Monographs in International Studies (Africa Series, No. 66), 1997. 299pp.**

The overlay of global missionary religions such as Christianity and Islam on the traditional religious map of Africa has evolved in the face of two major contradictions. One is geo-political. Here global and traditional religions, which had a regional presence, now find themselves contained by the boundaries of modern nation-states. The second is legal. Religions, global and indigenous, with their own institutional and legal histories, must now negotiate their presence and activity within the framework of national law, which with its pre-colonial conceptions, is grounded in a secular vision that sees religions as occupying a distinct sphere, separate yet regulated by the state.

Nigeria, as Simeon Ilesanmi points out in this study of the role of religious pluralism and modern politics, offers a multi-layered context for analyzing these contradictions and their historical consequences for the relationship between religion and state in Africa's most populous country.

In choosing to address the issue, he takes the view that religious perspectives and concerns cannot be divorced from public life, that to dichotomize religion and politics would be to create an untenable polarity. His own approach and conclusions are intended to lead to an applied ethic, which aims at reconciliation of diverse points by creating a public philosophical discourse as part of Nigeria's effort to create unity. This discourse, combining theological insights against an interdisciplinary perspective, offers a kind of world-view that links political and religious life for the goal of "civil amity."

The first two chapters set out the theoretical perspectives and review existing scholarly and theological perspectives on religious pluralism, politics and the state. The author's main reference points, as laid out in the beginning of Chapter Two (p. 55) are the works of well-known scholars and theologians such as Murray, Penny, Lovin and Reinhold Niebuhr. All their work, however, is primarily in a Christian and Western context. Their general theoretical and practical insights are probably very useful, but some larger context, including more detailed references and background on theological and political issues in Latin America, the Muslim world, and Africa might have been much more useful as a framework for looking at Nigeria's particular situation. The "dialogic" process emphasized by the author needs to be a global one and not driven exclusively by theoretical assumptions located within one cultural matrix of scholarship and theological concerns.

In a section dealing with the so-called Sharia debate, Dr. Ilesanmi clarifies the contradictory attitudes that the debate has generated by masking deeper questions related to the role of religion in public life. It is useful to remind ourselves that the discussion among Muslims in Nigeria is influenced to a great extent by two factors: the internal diversity of Muslim opinion and the impact of similar debates going on in other parts of the Muslim world. The assimilation of the whole of Islam into the limited context of the Sharia debate suggests that among Nigerians, Muslims and others, a greater awareness of the broader context of Muslim life, public and private, needs to be developed. This complements prescriptive religious life and enlarges the world of Nigerian Muslims, whose own specific make-up can then be viewed in the wider context of a pluralistic religious landscape in the region as a whole, not to mention Nigeria itself. The same situation applies to Christianity as indeed to the indigenous religions and their overlap with Islam and Christianity in the lives of many Nigerians.

Pluralism still remains the great hope of most emerging African nation-states after the demise of Communism. This study provides a good starting point toward identifying the connection between religion and pluralism as a key factor in the reconstruction of public life and common political discourse in Nigeria.

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**Discourses on Democracy: Africa in Comparative Perspective. Julius E. Nyang'oro, editor. Dar es Saalam: Dar es Saalam University Press, 1996. XV+311pp. : Ill.**

Julius E. Nyang'oro's edited volume, Discourses on Democracy: Africa in Comparative Perspective, makes debates about African democracy available to African students and scholars. In his introduction, the editor correctly points out that discussions about democracy in Africa take place largely in the universities and academic journals of Europe and North America, fora outside of Africa that rarely invite participation by the mass of Africans that are the subject of these discussions. Published by Dar es Salaam University Press, thus presumably widely available in the English-speaking university community in Africa, this volume helps fill the gap between African and Western scholarship and is likely to have a seminal effect on discussions of democracy, especially among young African scholars. A compilation of classic works about African democracy from the late 1980s and early 1990s, the volume serves as an introduction to the subject of African democratization valuable both to the "African University Students," to whom the volume is dedicated, as well as to First World scholars who will appreciate the breadth of the discussions included in this single volume.

There is no doubt that Discourses on Democracy is valuable as an introductory text, but that said, it is also important to point out that, in bringing together a wide range of opinion and observation, Nyang'oro neither synthesizes or prioritizes the arguments he presents, nor does he make any contribution to the "cutting edge" of scholarship. Scholars who are abreast of the

most recent research on African politics will find nothing new here, although the volume's juxtaposition of theories and arguments may serve to reinvigorate old debates.

The most important contribution made by Discourses on Democracy is that it assembles in a single volume the whole range of the debate about democracy in Africa, from the liberal mainstream, to critiques of the currently dominant liberal paradigm. Authors such as Samir Amin, S. N. Sangmpam, Yusuf Bangura, and Ken Post point out the difficulties of instituting democracy at the same time as capitalist economic development is creating conditions of extreme inequality on both domestic and international economic fronts. These authors give pride of place to economic relationships in their analyses as they advance the notion of "popular" democracy in Africa. Other scholars, such as Richard Sandbrook, Michael Bratton, Naomi Chazan. and Daryl Glaser, by and large accept the vicissitudes of capitalism in Africa's democratic equation, while they concentrate their analyses on issues of individual rights, legal frameworks, and political process associated with "liberal" definitions of democracy. In his introduction, Nyang'oro draws on the work of Issa Shivji to describe these two poles of scholarship and effectively uses the tension between "popular" and "liberal" authors to enhance the debate.

The inclusion of the "African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation," as well as the work of Ken Post, who, in Nyang'oro's own words is "one of the few remaining diehards who see no prospects for democratic development on the continent under the guidance of capitalism," suggest that Nyang'oro is more intent on establishing the limits of debate in terms of "popular" democracy than he is on communicating the dominant liberal position. Indeed, if the volume lacks any important point of view, it is probably that of a die-hard liberal-capitalist. Daryl Glaser's emphasis on the importance of individual rights for democracy is as far as Nyang'oro permits the debate to go in the liberal direction. However, considering the reality of political and economic conditionalities enforced by international finance in Africa, it is likely that Nyang'oro's principal audience (the African intellectual) is already all too familiar with unrepentant liberal-capitalist ideology.

Nyang'oro also includes several articles that lie outside the popular vs. liberal theoretical framework. Richard Sklar's contribution, the oldest piece in the volume, provides a historical backdrop to discussions of African democracy in the 1990s and serves to remind readers that it was not long ago that scholars were calling for researchers to take up the topic of democracy in Africa. In 1987, when Sklar's piece was first published, his was a lonely voice, but only a few years later, his perspective appeared prescient, a testimony to the enduring appeal of democracy in Africa and the multiple research agendas available to students of democracy.

George Sorensen's contribution concerning the role of the state in economic development is certainly liberal in terms of theoretical assumptions, but his use of examples from the Far East serves to critique the application of liberal economic theory in Africa. Another article which does not fit neatly into the popular vs. liberal framework is the piece by anthropologist Maxwell Owusu. Perhaps reflecting his disciplinary roots, Owusu focuses his analysis at the grassroots of politics suggesting African democratization should be linked to the practices of direct democracy that are commonly found in village level governance throughout Africa.

Because it touches upon so many aspects of the democratic debate, Discourses in Democracy is a welcome addition to the African democratization literature. Let us hope that

this important summary of a critical topic will be made widely available to its intended audience.

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**Federal-State Relations in Nigeria's Second Republic. Joseph Okoroji. London: V.O.R. Publications, 1997. 72pp.**

A common theme expressed in publications that examine the political fortunes of post-independence Sub-Saharan Africa is frustration -- frustration that an area with such great potential continually deflates the best-laid plans of visionaries and practically-minded administrators, planners, and constitutional experts alike. Perhaps nowhere is this sentiment more often expressed than in commentaries on Nigeria, a country blessed with a large, relatively well-educated population, such abundant natural resources, and so many natural advantages that it would seem to place in the upper tier of world nations. Instead, Nigeria seems to always fall below the expectations of the world community. In the past thirty years, three separate constitutions have been crafted and launched amidst much fanfare and international acclaim. Each time, however, political forces have appeared to be out of control and civil disorder threatened, providing ready-made excuses for the military to intervene.

Joseph Okoroji's relatively slim volume (just 72 pages) contributes to the already vast literature on Nigeria with a rather narrowly pitched study of the trials and tribulations of federalism during the Second Republic (1979-1983). While he never makes a clear statement about his purpose, Okoroji seems to have two reasons for undertaking this study. Like a number of others who have examined this subject, Okoroji seeks to determine why this second constitutional framework failed to provide the glue required to hold Nigeria's notoriously divided population of over 200 ethnic groups together. To this end, the author describes several informative episodes that illustrate the non-cooperation which bedeviled the Second Republic almost from the very beginning. These include the federal-state confrontation over the construction of the Nnewi-Afikpo road, the struggle for control over the single national police force, suspicions surrounding the appointment of Presidential Liaison Officers, and arguments over reaching an equitable revenue allocation formula for the distribution of federal funds to the nineteen states. All of these add substance to several previous articles on Nigerian federalism that typically are long on rhetoric but short on detail.

Another purpose to this book is the author's intent to demonstrate that, in certain respects, the Second Republic constitution actually did provide some minor successes in mitigating conflict between rival ethnic groups and political units in the federation. It is in this latter endeavor that we see some real contributions; so few have acknowledged these strengths since the Second Republic fell with such a resounding crash in the last months of 1983. This point is illustrated with a look at the federal-level Council of State, the workings of state liaison offices

in state capitals, external borrowing, inter-state relations, and the way in which the "federal character" principle was implemented in Anambra state. Unfortunately, these examples are not described with enough detail to make them anything more than brief overviews. The author would have done us a greater service by focusing on one or two of these cases and devoting more analysis to them.

While I certainly wish to acknowledge the insights the author provides through the case studies, I would be very hesitant to recommend this slim volume to any save those who are already well initiated in the inner workings of Nigerian politics. The author does not seek to provide any detailed background in which to center his detailed study. As a result, the reader is confronted with a whole series of political personalities, parties, associations, and institutions that would only be familiar to the most seasoned observers. A chapter on the colonial experience with federalism and another on the First Republic would have been helpful in this regard, especially since the political, social, and economic dynamics of the Second Republic were certainly set in place long before 1979. Indeed, the politicians and leading political movements that shaped the Second Republic were almost identical to those of the First Republic.

Readers who are already familiar with the study of Nigerian politics will find the author's treatment of constitutional theory, institution-building, and the wider literature on Nigerian federalism to be frustratingly inadequate. Apart from B.O. Nwabueze's 1983 work on the Second Republic constitution, and two or three woefully out-dated pieces from the early 1960s, the author cites no other works on the subject. As such, he ignores a rather voluminous literature that has arisen based on the efforts of both Nigerian and foreign academics to cover the span of three separate constitutional eras. Another problem is that the author limits his theoretical treatment of federalism only to aspects of structural design. This leaves the theoretical underpinnings of the book open to much criticism. For example, there is no consideration given to the large literature on state-society relations and political culture that could give additional insight as to why the level of constitutional choice has been so ineffective in resolving deep societal divisions in Nigeria. Also ignored is the even more extensive literature on Nigerian political economy and incipient class formation.

In the final chapter, the author muses about a particular model of federalism that might be preferable for Nigeria, especially given its past history. A brief analysis is offered of the applicability of the federal constitutions of Germany and Canada, but ironically, no mention at all is made of the Third Republic constitution that was brought into existence by the Babangida military government in 1989. This is an egregious oversight for a book published as late as 1997! The Third Republic constitution offered some new modifications to the Second Republic model, especially in the realm of federalism, and the author should have devoted some attention to it.

All in all, I find little useful in this book to recommend beyond the details provided in the brief case studies.

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