

CHIEFS AND THE STATE IN INDEPENDENT ZAMBIA

Exploring the Zambian National Press

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Wim van Binsbergen

Introduction

In West African countries such as Nigeria, Ghana and Sierra Leone, chiefs have successfully entered the modern age, characterized by the independent state and its bureaucratic institutions, peripheral capitalism and a world-wide electronic mass culture. There, chiefs are more or less conspicuous both in daily life, in post-Independence literary products and even in scholarly analysis.

In the first analysis, the Zambian situation appears to be very different. After the spate of anthropological research on chiefs in the colonial era,¹ post-Independence historical research has added precision and depth to the scholarly insight concerning colonial chiefs and the precolonial rulers whose royal or aristocratic titles the former had inherited, as well as those (few) cases where colonial chieftaincies had been downright invented for the sake of convenience and of systemic consistence all over the territory of the then Northern Rhodesia. But precious little has been written on the role and performance of Zambian chiefs *after* Independence. A few recent regional studies offer useful glances at chiefly affairs in

1. The colonial anthropological contribution to the study of Zambian chieftainship centered on the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute and the Manchester School, and included such classic studies of chieftainship as Barnes 1954; Cunnison 1959; Gluckman 1943, 1967; Richards 1935; Watson 1958. Cf. Werbner 1984 for a recent appraisal.

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selected rural districts,² but by and large they fail to make the link with the national level they concentrate on the limited number of chiefs of the region under study. Hardly any attention is paid to chiefs in the many writings political scientists, political economists and students of public administration have devoted to post-Independence Zambia.³ From the available literature one would get the impression that a totally consistent and monolithic, bureaucratic modern state has completely wiped out such fossil traces of traditional rulers as could only be of interest to antiquarian anthropologists and Zambian traditionalists anyway.

In the course of the present argument I shall expose this perception of chiefs in contemporary Zambia as nothing but an academic prejudice, and one that is certainly not shared by the senior officials of the modern Zambian state (cf. Gregor 1967).

Anyone who has intensively and over an extended period of time participated in post-Independence Zambian society, cannot help to be aware of the great importance still attached to chiefs. Nor is this importance limited to rural districts outside the 'line of rail'.⁴ Zambia is among the few African countries which have reserved a specific and honorable place for chiefs at the national level, where the House of Chiefs (as a complementary institution to Parliament, not entirely unlike the House of Lords in the Westminster tradition) is established and regulated in great detail in the Independence Constitution and its various subsequent amendment acts.⁵ The

2. Kapteyn and Emery 1972:11-13; Bond 1975; Caplan 1970; Van Binsbergen 1985a, 1986; Van Binsbergen and Geschiere 1985b:261-70; Van Donge 1985; Papstein 1978, 1985; Administration for Rural Development 1977:23-24; O'Brien 1983; Garvey 1977; Kasevula et al. 1976; Singer 1985; Kangamba 1978a, 1978b.

3. E.g. Fincham and Markakis 1980; Ollawa 1979; Pettman 1974; Tordoff 1980; Gertzel 1984; Turok 1979. Tordoff 1974 is a favorable exception in that it contains various shorter references to the role of chiefs, especially in Molteno's contribution.

4. The central part of Zambia (from Livingstone in the South via the capital Lusaka, to the Copperbelt in the north), which is the most developed in terms of urbanization and industry.

5. Cf. Republic of Zambia 1965; Rubin and Tarantino 1980. In recent years, chieftainship as a qualification for membership of the House of Chiefs is explicitly based on the Chiefs Act; cf. the updated version of the Zambian constitution as presented in Rubin et al. 1985. Official lists of recognized chiefs and their councillors have been regularly

proceedings of the House of Chiefs are regularly published and offer very useful (if of course onesided and bowdlerized) materials on the interaction between chiefs and the postcolonial state (van Binsbergen n.d.). The relatively stable nature of this interaction is indicated by the fact that the House of Chiefs for thirteen years (1968-1981) was chaired by Chief Undi, Paramount Chief of the Chewa and as such the neo-traditional⁶ focus of one of the few major ethnic clusters in Zambia - that of the Easterners who identify with the Chewa/Nyanja language as their mother-tongue or lingua franca.

At the same time, the House of Chiefs constitutes only one aspect of the interaction of chiefs and the postcolonial state, and probably no longer the most important aspect. This is suggested by developments in the present decade. As a Paramount Chief, Chief Undi ranked among the handful of Zambian Chiefs whose immensely prestigious title still carries, even at the national level, strong connotations of pre-colonial regal splendor and powerful statehood - on a par with the Paramount Chief of the Lozi (the Litunga), the Bemba (Chitimukulu) and the Eastern Lunda (Kazembe). Significantly, among these royal chiefs Undi has been the only one ever to have been a member of the House of Chiefs. In 1981 Chief Undi was succeeded, as chairman of the House of Chiefs, by Chief Nalubamba.⁷ Chief Nalubamba belongs to an ethnic group (the Ila) which nu-

published by both the colonial and the post-colonial state; cf. Northern Rhodesia 1943; Republic of Zambia 1966, 1973.

6. The imposition upon complex and varied precolonial political systems, of a conception of chieftainship (with the associated notions of the coincidence of cultural and political units, of formal bureaucratic hierarchy encompassing all incumbents under an apical 'Paramount Chief', and of bounded areas of jurisdiction and administration) as defined and evolved by the colonial state - specifically in terms of 'Native Authorities' - renders it meaningless to speak of 'chiefs' with reference to precolonial Zambia. The very concept of 'chief' is a colonial creation, the successful attempt to engineer a neo-tradition. That attempt and its products were legitimated by reference to precolonial political leadership, which however, after the imposition of colonial rule, was redefined beyond recognition (cf. Apthorpe 1959, 1960). It is in this sense that the term 'neo-traditional' is used throughout my argument. A fuller theoretical and historical discussion is beyond the scope of this article.

7. *Zambia Daily Mail*, 17 November 1981; *Zambia Nieuwsbrief* 11 (1982), p.3.

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merically does not rank among Zambia's major ethnic groups, whose language is not among the seven officially recognized Zambian languages, and whose chieftainship carries only a minor, regional prestige, incomparable to that of Chief Undi. In a country like Zambia, where post-colonial national politics has had strong ethnic overtones, this change of leadership (largely controlled by the government) clearly implied a shift of focus in the interaction between chiefs and the state. The characteristics of the new chairman (whose neo-traditional prestige among the members of the House of Chiefs is relatively low, and whose position seems to be based largely on technical competence in mediating between the House of Chiefs and the government) indicated that the neo-traditional, chiefly element in Zambian national politics had either lost in importance or was no longer primarily channelled through the House of Chiefs. The latter soon turned out to be the case. A rise rather than a decline of postcolonial chiefly power was involved. For at the 1983 annual Mulungushi Conference (22-29 August) of Zambia's ruling United National Independence Party (UNIP), the Litunga and Chitimukulu, Zambia's most prestigious chiefs, were for the first time in Zambian history co-opted into a much more powerful national political body than the House of Chiefs: UNIP's Central Committee - a most significant attempt "to bring the chiefs in the main political stream, to turn them into nationalists rather than traditionalists".⁸

These recent developments clearly show that chiefs are very much part of the constitutional and political structure of the Zambian post-colonial state. They are involved in a dynamic, ongoing process that is centripetal rather than centrifugal.

A detailed, book-length study of chiefs and the central state in post-Independence Zambia would be most timely. The present argument is only a first installment toward such an ambitious project.⁹ Primarily, it seeks to state - for the first time in Zambian

8. *Times of Zambia*, editorial, 29.8.83; Touwen-van der Kooij, in press.

9. Largely on the basis of field-work on chiefs in Western Province, 1972-74, 1977, 1978, and archival research in the Zambian National Archives and Kaoma district files, 1974 and 1978, I have drafted a number of partial studies in this connection, including a lengthy analysis of the Zambian House of Chiefs: Van Binsbergen, n.d. Meanwhile, I am indebted to my colleague Emile van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal for creating a stimulating context towards the analysis of my data on contemporary Zambian chieftainship; and to him and John Griffiths for their editorial remarks, and their patience while this

studies - the empirical case for a new, less prejudiced look at chiefs in post-Independence Zambia. My purpose at this stage is exploratory far more than analytical or theoretical. I intend to argue the need for further data collection and analysis, not to offer the extensive and superior data and profound analysis we are ultimately aiming at. Before such an effort can be made, a more fertile basis of related studies and publications has to be created, by a number of scholars from various disciplines.

Where does one find, for the post-colonial period, national-level data on a issue that scholarship has left untouched? Published official data (such as the House of Chiefs Minutes and the parliamentary Hansard) deal with only one type of highly formalized setting, and therefore their considerable sociological significance could only be assessed against the background of richer data of a more general and informal nature. Findings from personal field-work at the local and regional level, on the other hand, are necessarily limited if not unique, and it would require enormous resources of time and funds to expand them into a comparative study by collecting similar data in a sufficient number of Zambian locations. Rather unexpectedly (from an anthropological point of view), Zambian newspapers turn out to contain the type of nation-wide, many-sided, relatively unprocessed data suitable for a first empirical exploration.

Of course, journalistic data are not to be taken at face-value. Zambian journalists, in their approach to chiefs today, have occasionally displayed the sort of biases described above for academic writers on Zambian society. Chiefs as a topic are conducive to folkloristic or even touristic stereotypes, and this in itself constitutes a most significant aspect of the process of transformation (cognitive and symbolic redefinition, economic commoditization and bureaucratic subjugation) in the course of which a postcolonial popular culture is being forged, as a means of communication between peasants and the state. Chieftainship is a major item in this popular culture; the concept of 'tribe' (cf. van Binsbergen 1985a) is another. However, it is possible to pierce through these stereotypes as reflected in newspaper reports and thus to glean empirical information from Zambian newspapers. At the same time, at a more profound level, even the journalistic stereotypes themselves supply significant information: they are public, widespread and influential statements of collective representations (involving chiefs, tradition, power, political

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and moral order, etc.) in postcolonial Zambian society. My present aim is to bring out these collective representations as well as hint at the patterns of social and political relations by which they are generated and reproduced.

An Example: the 1987 Kuomboka Ceremony

An example is in order here. The most obvious Zambian case of folklorization is the annual Kuomboka ceremony to mark the Litunga's moving to dry land as the water in the Zambezi river rises. The ceremony is discussed, and photographs of it are shown, in much of the literature on the Lozi,¹⁰ as well as many general works on Zambian culture, history and tourism. A recent newspaper report¹¹ highlights the 1987 ceremony in terms that on one level are folkloristic and only relevant for the study of symbolic and ideological (as distinct from e.g. political, judicial, social and economic) processes:

(...) Over the years the ceremony (...) has heightened cultural awareness, pulled in the tourist traffic and its colour has intensified with the time. This year, however, the ceremony is bound to be a unique one. It coincides with the 10th anniversary of the present Litunga, Ilute Yeta's installation. [sic] (...)

Chairman of the Kuomboka Coordinating Association, Mr. Samuel Mulozi (...) said: "(...) We are proud of the stature the ceremony has reached not as a province but as Zambians. Every country is proud of its cultural heritage and Zambia is no exception."

(...) [V]ests emblazoned with the relevant message (...) will be worn by more than 120 paddlers of the huge Nalikwanda [royal barge, WvB] (...)

(...) [T]he association printed cards for identification of prominent visitors to the ceremony as well as tourists so that they would find it easy to locate vantage points for viewing the colorful ceremony. (...)

The vests (...) will not replace the usual attire of royal barge paddlers, but will be worn inside merely to add decor to

10. E.g. Yeta 1956; Gluckman 1951; Turner 1952.

11. Mubiana, D., [Main title illegible:] "'Malyalya' festivities to spill over", *Times of Zambia*, 3.4.87, p. 6. Here as elsewhere below, the paragraph structure of the newspaper items quoted has been edited and the abbreviations 'Mr' and 'Dr' changed to 'Mr.' and 'Dr.'.

the 10th anniversary. The paddlers will still wear their animal skin paddling skirts, will be barefooted and for headgear, the usual "mishukwe" (headscarf) on which rests the tufts of a lion's name [sic, *mane*, WvB] will go as usual. (...)

The Kuomboka this year is expected to have more traditional dances, some from the royal establishment [i.e. traditional court, WvB], than is usual because of the installation festivities. (...)

At the same time, however, this newspaper article contains plenty of factual information that has a direct bearing on the place of chiefs in Zambia today, showing that much more is involved in contemporary chieftainship than the expression of an impotent peripheral culture, far removed from the political and economic center of the country. The Litunga's membership of the Central Committee is pointed out, as well as his belonging to the Seventh Day Adventist church, a denomination that has had considerable appeal among the Zambian elite. The subtle balance between neo-traditional office and one's obligations as a Christian is hinted at:

His Kuombokas have usually been on a Friday, a Saturday being a Sabbath for him. This year a special dispensation had to be made for the Litunga to have the joy of remembering his installation day ten years ago.

The sponsorship role of Zambian parastatals is indicated. Transport companies go out of their way in order to contribute to the ceremony's success, bridging the more than 500 kilometers between the 'line of rail' and Mongu in Western Province. The chairman of the Kuomboka Coordinating Association turns out to be Zambia National Provident Fund (ZNPF) deputy director. And the innovative, emblazoned vests (with their strong connotations of commoditization) are said to be donated by the Zambia State Insurance Corporation (ZSIC).

It further appears that the Zambian state makes use of the ceremony as a sort of national showpiece, where even its most senior office-bearers may appear alongside its most promising international allies:

Last year, American ambassador to Zambia Mr. Paul Hare and Speaker of the National Assembly Dr. Robinson Nabulyato were guests of honour at the Kuomboka. This year, many more dignitaries, whose names were not released in advance, were invited.

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The reader furthermore gets more than a glimpse of the urban-based ethnic associations active behind the scenes in this rural ceremony:

The Kitwe branch of the association has donated some safari suits for the royal drummers as well as other paraphernalia. The Kuomboka Cordination [sic] Association which has other branches in Ndola and Livingstone will no doubt have its efforts for this year's special Kuomboka augmented by the Kuomboka-Kufuluhela Committee based in Mongu which works in liaison with the royal Kuta [Lozi traditional court, WvB]. (...) Some elders based on the line of rail and who are members of the coordinating committee will be at hand to witness the ceremony.

The urban associations are mobilized for goals which go beyond folklore and festivals and directly concern the economic upkeep (the material reproduction, in other words) of the neo-traditional courts:

The (...) association (...) has a pivotal role, according to Mr. Mulozi, in assisting towards the maintenance of the royal establishment not only at Lealui but other palaces at Nalolo, Libonda and others in the Western Province.

In this context, a well-worn formula of the Zambian state's philosophy of development is given a new if rhetorical formulation; for while the Litungaship has enjoyed a considerable state subsidy for nearly a century now,

"We strongly believe in the creation of the concept of selfreliance at traditional level instead of looking to the Government," said Mr. Mulozi. The idea of enabling the royal establishment to depend more on local communities would go a long way in imbuing the people with a sense of cultural values and heritage. This in turn promoted dignity and pride in cultural values.

Thus even an ordinary newspaper report indicates remarkably close links between the state and a major chief, through a neo-traditional ceremony in the Zambian rural periphery - links in terms of economic support, development ideology, dual office (of the ceremony's protagonist the Litunga, but also of the urbanites who combine modern careers with the furthering of a neo-traditional ceremony in a remote part of the country).

Finally, what strikes one in the report is a sense of *indirectness*. The intertwinement of state and chieftainship, within the postcolonial economy and popular culture, is all there, but the state does not itself undertake the organization of the ceremony, nor for example does the state President participate in person. The illusion of two separate worlds, of boundaries between the modern and the neo-traditional, is carefully maintained - almost as if the *raison d'être* of chieftainship in postcolonial Zambia is to evoke a *political and cultural focus that appears to be outside of and independent from the state, yet is an effective part of the state's hegemonic apparatus*.¹²

The above example may convince the reader of the potential of newspaper materials for our present research undertaking. Meanwhile, the shift in emphasis from the House of Chiefs to the Central Committee indicates variations and developments within an overall structure of political relations and popular culture that - from the vantage point of one who has studied Zambian society for the better part of two decades - does not appear to have radically changed since Independence (1964). My aim in the present paper is to chart that underlying structure; the details of its processual dynamics over the decades remain for further study.

It is methodologically attractive to base our exploration on a well-defined set of data, whose wider context we can already interpret with the power of hindsight. I have therefore analysed, with the above questions in mind, virtually all references to chiefs in Zambian national newspapers in the period 1 February 1972 - 1 February 1973. The two Zambian daily newspapers (the government-owned *Zambia Daily Mail*, earlier called the *Daily Mail*, of Lusaka, and the privately-owned *Times of Zambia* of the Copperbelt, with its *Sunday Times of Zambia* supplement) were processed for the period indicated.¹³

12. Cf. Bayart 1979; Van Binsbergen et al. 1986: 382f and references cited there.

13. From both newspapers together, 131 items (articles with or without pictures; or isolated pictures with a caption) were gleaned that mention chiefs or implicitly refer to chiefs. This amounts to only one entry per 4 or 5 days for either newspaper. I may have missed a few entries due to the somewhat irregular supply of newspapers in the outskirts of Lusaka, where I then lived. I am grateful to my research assistant at the time, Mr. Denes Shiyowe, for processing this and much other newspaper material into a manageable physical

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The tentative analysis presented in this paper does prompt further research, and in its empirical generalizations and hypotheses already indicates some of the directions into which such research would have to be developed in future. But it is not, of course, a full statement covering the entire post-colonial period, nor does it do justice, yet, to all aspects and regional variations of the topic under study.

Background

The period 1 February 1972 - 1 February 1973 was a crucial one in post-Independence Zambia, one in which UNIP finalized the preparation for, and in the end (December 1972) realized, the Second Republic, a one-party state under exclusive UNIP control. To achieve this purpose, the opposition party ANC¹⁴ had to be persuaded to give up its identity and amalgamate with UNIP. In the first half of 1972 the National Commission on the Establishment of a One-Party Participatory Democracy in Zambia, appointed by President Kaunda and chaired by the Vice-President Mr. Mainza Chona, had organized hearings in all provinces of the country, and had generated a general debate on the future constitutional and political structure of Zambia. The Chona Commission's report was published in October, 1972 (Republic of Zambia 1972). In the general drive for national unity, tribalism and regionalism were exposed as the specters behind short-lived and vigorously squashed expressions of political dissidence such as the UPP (United Progressive Party). In the western part of the country, a more lasting threat to national unity and stability had been posed, ever since the beginning of nationalism, by the aspirations of the Lozi aristocracy, centering on the Litunga: heir to a royal title associated with the precolonial kingdom Bulozhi (or Barotseland) that had played a major part in the administrative and missionary penetration of Zambia in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Having enjoyed very special privileges (including Protectorate status) throughout the colonial period and, at Independence, through the Barotseland Agreement (cf. Barotseland 1964), it was only in 1969 - three years before the period covered by our present exploration - that Barotseland became simply Western

format; and to the editors of *Zambia Nieuwsbrief* (Amsterdam, The Netherlands), for providing additional materials.

14. The African National Congress, Zambia's first nationalist party, founded by Mr. Harry Nkumbula in the early 1950s. UNIP itself had developed out of ANC in the late 1950s.

Province and its administrative and constitutional status was forced into line with that of the rest of Zambia.¹⁵ Remarkably, in Zambia these sub-national allegiances were seldom denounced as remnants from the colonial and precolonial past. On the contrary, the political and societal transformation that was to culminate in the Second Republic entailed a positive reappraisal of the Zambian past. It was in the past that one claimed to find the moral values (*humanist* ones, as President Kaunda's self-styled national philosophy of Humanism has it) and political procedures whose allegedly traditional, perennial nature as part of the Zambian heritage were to lend additional legitimation to the One-Party Participatory Democracy about to be established. It was in the Zambian past that UNIP sought a model of internal debate leading to consensus, without the formalized opposition inherent in the North Atlantic model of political parties. Moreover, in response to the popular demands from the grass-roots level, there was an increasing concern with the fair sharing of the material fruits of Independence. A Leadership Code, announced in 1972, was to ensure that politicians and other leaders in the bureaucratic bodies of the state or close to the state, would not receive a lion's share; limits were imposed on the combination of political office with gainful employment, entrepreneurship, etc. In the economic domain, the virtual collapse of the copper market and the two world energy crises were yet to come; at the Copperbelt a closed-down copper mine was reopened. But already one was beginning to realize that Zambia's industrial monoculture, copper, had to be complemented by concerted agricultural development. A year earlier, in 1971, the enactment of the Village Registration and Development Act had provided an additional administrative structure for such development, in a way that stressed the formal responsibilities of chiefs and headmen. Meanwhile, in a cultural region where for centuries chiefs had sought to mediate between their people and nature,¹⁶ meteorological conditions were not in favor of agricultural efforts: the rains, normally arriving by October, were alarmingly late in 1972.

Chiefs and journalists

Under these circumstances perhaps a somewhat larger newspaper coverage of chiefs may have been attained than would have been the

15. Caplan 1970; Stokes 1966; Prins 1980; Ranger 1968; Mutumba Mainga 1973; Mulford 1967: ch. vi.

16. Cf. Schoffeleers 1979; Van Binsbergen 1981: ch. 3; Ranger 1985.

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case in another year. On the other hand, many of the items deal with the ongoing processes of accommodation between chiefs and state bureaucracies at the local and regional level, without much reference to the ongoing political process at the national level, and in ways that appear to have remained fairly constant over the years. The material available for 1972-73 seems quite adequate for a first exploration. But like all sources, newspapers as sources of information on Zambian chiefs must be subjected to criticism which relates these sources' contents and meaning to the process of their generation and the social position of those involved in that process.¹⁷

The 135 items (articles and/or pictures) in the Zambian newspapers, in the period indicated, contain a total of 174 separate references to chiefs. Twelve of these references are to past incumbents¹⁸ of Zambian chiefly titles, and cannot properly be included in an analysis of present-day relations between chiefs and journalists in an attempt to assess the flow of current information. The information in the remaining 162 references to contemporary chiefs¹⁹ often (59%) derives from urban sources. However, a substantial amount of news was gathered in rural towns (24%), and even in villages (17%), - the latter primarily at the chiefly headquarters themselves. The prominence of rural sources adds greatly to the validity and reliability of the newspaper data to be presented and analysed in the present argument.

17. For a sophisticated recent study of Zambian national newspapers, cf. Kasoma 1986. This book's argument, however, concentrates on the relations between the press and the national political center, and does not touch on the topics (chiefs, rural journalism) around which my discussion revolves here.

18. Of whom eleven are specified by name; in addition, one reference is to an unspecified collectivity of Bemba chiefs in the past.

19. Of these 162 references, 10 are to chief's councillors: two to the former Bemba traditional Prime Minister Mr. Chisashi and eight to Lozi *indunas* (= councillors), including four to the Ngambela (Lozi traditional Prime Minister): three to the outgoing Ngambela Mr. Suu (who was demoted by President Kaunda in 1972) and one to the new Ngambela Mr. Mukonde. As far as status, functioning and relations vis-à-vis the modern central state are concerned, these councillors are so much part of the neo-traditional chiefly structure that I do not hesitate to include them in the data set on chiefs, despite the existence of sub-national, neo-traditional constitutional distinctions that define the councillor's status as that of commoner.

Since Zambian newspapers are physically made in the urban centers, where the concentration of journalists, politicians and news-generating bureaucracies and enterprises is highest, one could advance the hypothesis that a chief's chances of news coverage are greater, if:

- (a) the capital or headquarters of the chief is in the per-urban area of a major city - the Zambian journalist's habitual haunt; and/or
- (b) the chief is a member of the House of Chiefs, which not only has its annual sessions in the national capital but which also tends to bring its members into all sorts of interaction with senior politicians and bureaucrats who in themselves are already in the focus of journalists' attention.

The effect of both factors is manifest but far from overwhelming: about half of all references concern chiefs who are neither members of the House of Chiefs nor dwell in peri-urban areas. There is considerable overrepresentation on chiefs (particularly Senior Chiefs Mushili and Chiwala) in the rural and peri-urban areas of the Copperbelt (not too far from the offices of the *Times of Zambia*).²⁰ Yet the coverage of less conspicuous chiefs is surprisingly large - in the items reported by the newspapers' own reporters as well as in those provided by the Zambia New Agency (ZANA).²¹

However, a closer look at the contents of items for which information was collected in rural towns and villages suggests that an additional factor influences news coverage on chiefs. On the regional and local level, chiefs interact with modern politicians and civil

20. Due to the early colonial pattern of land appropriation in the Lusaka region (as elsewhere along the 'line of rail'), and the extent of Lusaka Rural district, no equivalent peri-urban major chiefs (of the Soli, Sala and Lenje) are found in the immediate vicinities of Lusaka; cf. Brelsford 1935, 1965.

21. In the corpus, reference is made to as many as 60 different chiefs. Among these 60, only 10 chiefs have more than two references. Peri-urban location and membership of the House of Chiefs again turn out to be major factors of such multiple reference, but they fail to account for two other multiple-reference clusters: chiefs from Northwestern Province whose confrontations with government development agencies created substantial problems; and the Litunga and the Lozi chiefly aristocracy at large - indicative of the crucial role the latter has played in colonial and post-colonial Zambia, as both a threat to and (e.g. in Princess Nakatindi's case) a keystone of UNIP's nationalist politics.

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servants, and journalists whose assigned duty it is to report on the latter, may more or less automatically include the former. In other words, even a news report on a chief derived from information gathered at his or her capital does not always mean that the reporter set out specifically to get news coverage on that chief: the reporter may simply have been following the trail of a prominent regional politician. This effect is clearest when public functions are reported at a chief's capital: chiefly funerals and installation ceremonies, as well as visits from other chiefs. Almost invariably a region's senior politicians and bureaucrats take part in these events, which in itself testifies to the importance attributed to chiefs in independent Zambia. These public occasions, generated by the dynamics of neo-traditional political life, can be said to have an important function in bringing together chiefs and modern officials, giving an opportunity for exchanging information and establishing or maintaining social and political ties.[3.18; 4.2].²² This leads to newspaper reports like the following:

8000 see new Chief Mwangala installed

More than 8,000 people celebrated the long-awaited installation of Chief Mwangala at Tafelansoni, in Chadiza district.

The ceremony was conducted by Paramount Chief Undi of the Chewa.

Mr. Joseph Phiri, 28, is the new Chief Mwangala. The late chief died in January last year.

Among those present at the installation ceremony were the Minister of State for Southern Province, Mr. Zongani Banda, governors from Chipata, Chadiza and Lundazi, Chief Chikomani of Lundazi, Provincial and district heads of departments, and party officials of the province.

Addressing people at the ceremony, permanent secretary for Eastern Province, Mr. Samuel Kafumukache, said that the Government laid much emphasis on the importance of the role played by traditional rulers in the development of the country. He said chiefs were required to participate actively in promoting and fostering the spirit of unity among the people in their areas for the success of the country's development. ZANA [3.18].

22. The Appendix gives the item numbers (displayed in the text between square brackets), newspaper, date and headlines (if any) of all 1972-73 items that constitute my corpus of data.

As this quotation demonstrates, reports on such neo-traditional rallies may reveal interesting relations linking modern and neo-traditional politics. Not only is the primary officiant, Paramount Chief Undi, President of the House of Chiefs and a member of the Chona Commission, but specific mention is also made of the Minister of State for *Southern* Province, Mr. Zongani Banda: obviously a subject of Chief Mwangala, called to high modern office in which he oversees a different part of the country, yet keeping in close contact with his rural home and his chief in Eastern Province.

The rallying function of chiefly funerals is also very well documented for the funeral of Princess Nakatindi (see below), which brought President Kaunda and "more than 4,000 mourners from various parts of Zambia" [4.9] to Nawinda, the Princess' chiefly headquarters, way out in Sesheke district [4.6, 4.9, 4.10, 4.11]. Incidentally, similar neo-traditional rallies are generated by kinship ceremonies and rites of passage involving senior politicians, chiefs, and/or their kinsmen. Towards the end of this paper I shall discuss one such kinship ceremony: a name-inheriting ritual focusing on President Kaunda's deceased mother, Mrs. Helen Kaunda. Another example is the female puberty rite staged for a niece of the Vice-President Mr. Mainza Chona:

Chona at Chisungu

Vice-President Mainza Chona was among several hundreds of people who attended a two-day 'chisungu' (initiation) ceremony of his niece, 21-year-old Miss MacLeanah Hangala which ended yesterday.

It was held at Nampeyo, Chief Chona's headquarters [sic] about 24 kilometers east of Monze.

Miss Hangala is an employee with the Standard Bank in Mufulira and is a former student of Saint Mary's Secondary School in Livingstone.

The ceremony was also attended by the Minister of State for Administration at Freedom House, Mr. Ali Simbule. Kalomo District Governor Mr. Joseph Hamatwi, Monze District Governor Mr. Cox Sikumba and District Governor for Mazabuka Mr. Gideon Simusa. [sic] Mr. Chona later returned to Lusaka. [7.13; cf. 7.13a]

The event is interesting even beyond the fact that a young woman who by education, upper-class position and relatively advanced age could be expected to opt out of this neo-traditional rite of passage, yet went through it. The participation of senior politicians suggests that the ceremony has come to combine its cultural function with

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that of a social function for Southern Province's political leadership. Bringing together the Vice-President, a Minister of State from the UNIP national headquarters, and three district governors, at the capital of Chief Chona (a member of the House of Chiefs and clearly a close relative of Mr. Mainza Chona), the ceremony suggests a considerable continuity between neo-traditional and modern leadership and shows how a chief's capital can still form the focus of regional ties between modern politicians.

This is an apt illustration of the unexpected structural insights the newspaper material may yield. Other items from the same material (see below) enable us to explore these relations further, e.g. when Mr. Hamatwi displays himself as a traditionalist very much in support of chiefs' claims to powers over nature and fertility; or when it turns out that some of the participants in the initiation ritual found themselves, only ten days earlier, in an large Southern Province mourning delegation to the name-inheriting ceremony in President Kaunda's family in Chinsali, Northern Province - seeking to combine traditionalism, Tonga ethnic solidarity, and national unity under UNIP and President Kaunda.

Plenty of material from very remote districts and concerning relatively unknown chiefs has found its way to the newspaper columns. Sometimes the personal links involved in this rural-urban transmission of information are unmistakable, for instance when the death is reported of chief Nyalugwe of Petauke district (Eastern Province), with the addition that the Editor-in-Chief of the *Zambian News Agency* is his nephew. [2.7]

On other occasions the coverage seems to reflect an editor's desire to champion a popular cause and challenge the government,²³ for example when a quarrel between Chief Ishinde (Zambezi district, Northwestern Province) and the Permanent Secretary for Northwestern Province on the establishment of a forest reserve on this chief's land was commented upon in the following terms in an editorial:

It is hard to believe that a chief could tell the Government to go and jump in the lake. Yet this is precisely what appears to

23. For systematic analyses of challenges by the national press of the Zambian government and party, cf. Kasoma 1986: 117f, 134f, 194f and *passim*; and Lungu 1986.

have happened in the North-Western Province district of Zambezi.

(...) Such courage is to be admired. The chief's concern for the welfare of his people is to be praised too. In fact, if we had more chiefs with such a profound concern for their people, half our rural development problems would be solved.

We are not encouraging the chiefs to be defiant against the Government. Far from it. (...) What the chiefs need is to be treated with respect, the respect accorded them by their own people.

Only in this way can the Government hope to obtain their co-operation in development. We are glad that in the Zambezi situation, no attempt has so far been made to browbeat the chief into submission. It would be a grave mistake to underestimate the intense resentment of the chief's subjects if this were done.

The chiefs, regardless of what some critics would like us to believe, still occupy an important place in Zambia. It is even more important now that the success of the rural reconstruction programme may ultimately depend on their co-operation. (...) [3.24]

This editorial not surprisingly led to a considerable row and a restatement of the official policy on chiefs:

The Secretary-General to the Government, Mr. A.A. Milner, has denied the accusation carried in yesterday's Times of Zambia opinion column which accused the government of not according the chiefs the respect which they command from their people. Mr. Milner called the allegation most unfortunate and very misleading.

In a statement last night, Mr. Milner said: "Since independence, the government has been at pains to preserve the respect and authority of our traditional rulers. The government has always treated these traditional leaders with the respect they deserve." (...) [3.23]

Citing such convincing examples as the establishment and functioning of the House of Chiefs, "two salary increases for chiefs since Independence", chiefs' membership of the Chona Commission, and their new roles under the Village Registration Act of 1971 - I shall return to all these points in the course of my argument - Mr. Milner tried to play down the conflict and concluded:

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The government has been particularly conscious of the need to honour and respect our traditional institutions. This is the reason why it has preserved traditional practices of selection and election in various parts of the country. This respect for tradition is profoundly rooted in our Party and government policy. [3.23]

In this case, the *Times of Zambia* - independent from, and always fairly critical of government - may have been over-zealous in representing the underdog's point of view. By and large, however, it can be said that, whatever the prejudices of individual journalists and correspondents, the Zambian newspapers at the time had a neutral view of chiefs, accepting them as part and parcel of the Zambian society they had the duty to report on, with measure, often as a by-product of their reporting commitment *vis-à-vis* modern politicians and bureaucrats, and only occasionally taking sides.

Three Academic Views on Zambian Chiefs

In the period covered, three University of Zambia lecturers were given the opportunity to write extensive newspaper articles on the place and future of chiefs, and in these articles the pros and cons of chieftainship were very neatly matched. The three articles together contain major elements of the contradictory perception of chieftainship in Zambian society.

Mr. G. Kalenga Simwinga, a Zambian junior lecturer, pictures chiefs as incompetent *vis-à-vis* modern bureaucratic and political structures, as foci of ethnic divisiveness, as unnecessary for rural development now that the Party has fully captivated the allegiance of the rural masses. The institution of chieftainship is called too expensive:

In the past three years alone, the Government has spent about K 1,837,150 on chiefs and their retainers. [3.16]²⁴

What is more, chieftainship is obsolete and should be allowed to die out, as it has in Europe, where its remnants (monarchies) can only be seen in the most backward of countries:

(...) The prevalence of conservative and general reactionary attitudes among the rural folk is largely attributable to the

24. In 1972, K 1.00 equalled c. US\$ 1.32.

existence of this institution. (...) [H]e can only be regarded as a good chief if he does what is expected of a chief as dictated by custom. His actions are therefore dictated by the need to fulfil the expectations of his people. These expectations lead to a vicious situation which results in stagnation.

(...) At this time of nation building in Zambia, the institution of chief also represents one of the obstacles to the process of welding the many ethnic groups into a unified whole.

(...) In the implementation of development projects in a country like Zambia, where political mobilisation of the masses through the party is so strong and successful right down to the grass root level of society the need for chiefs to solicit the support of rural folk does not arise. The party can easily and effectively achieve this without the Government paying for a bit of mystical support from the chiefs.

(...) The question we should ask ourselves now as we enter the Second Republic is not whether this anachronistic, divisive, undemocratic and costly institution should be preserved, but how long it is going to be with us. (...) [3.16]

Without picking up the obvious loose ends in Simwinga's argument (party support was very far from unanimous among Zambian peasants at the time, and the Scandinavian countries, Holland, Belgium, and Great Britain can scarcely be described as underdeveloped) Dr. V. Subramaniam, a professor of public administration from South Asia, who mainly draws on parallels from that part of the world, agrees with Simwinga's view that chiefs are obsolete. He stresses how African chiefs were dependent on the colonial state, how both chiefs and colonialists were taken by surprise by the rapid development of African nationalism, and how chiefs proved unable to turn themselves into a modern elite. However, Professor Subramaniam's main purpose is apparently to sound a note of caution:

There is little to be said against the abolition of chieftainships - except that, done summarily with trumpet and fanfare, it would lead to false expectations. An old and shrinking institution may be allowed to disappear slowly and any dramatic step against it can be considered a diversionary tactic.

A more urgent problem for the Zambian economy and policy is the flabbiness and lack of self-discipline of the emerging professional and commercial middle class.

Finally, Mr. B. Kakoma, a Zambian junior lecturer of history, offers both the most sophisticated and the most optimistic view of chieftainship. He demonstrates that the institution of chieftainship is

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capable of far-reaching adaptation to modern politics. King Sobhuza's case in Swaziland is generously interpreted as an amalgamation of a chiefly tradition with the one-man-one-vote principle, whereas two recent Zambian cases of chiefly succession are cited as proof that neo-traditional constitutional arrangements are capable of adaptation so as to accommodate chiefly candidates well-versed in the modern political domain and acceptable to the central government: that of the Lozi Litunga in 1968, when Mr. Godwin Mbikusita succeeded Mwanawina; and that of Kanongesha, the senior Southern Lunda chief in Mwinilunga district, Northwestern Province.²⁵ Far from regarding chieftainship as on its way out in Zambia, Mr. Kakoma makes it very clear that the chiefs are still very important factors in modern politics in the rural areas:

(...) In Zambia the forces of nationalism are firmly entrenched in national leadership. The chiefs, even as a collective group in the obscure House of Chiefs, have never questioned the nationalist claims. In defending their passive approach to major political issues, the chiefs' spokesmen have argued that the institution serves as a unifying force in the present situation of multi-party politics where competition for party members has sometimes erupted into violence. In any case, as paid servants of the Government, chiefs cannot afford to oppose the Government and at the same time expect recognition. But the more politically-minded among them have not failed to condemn politicians for being too power-hungry and discountenancing patronage to their traditional leaders.

The base of the chiefs' political power lies in their local areas. In those areas where the institution of chieftainship is strong the selection of a new leader through traditional procedures more or less serves as an automatic guarantee of his popularity. (...) It is for this reason that political parties seek to captivate local support through the chiefs because it is essential for winning both local and general elections. In part, this explains why clandestine grooming of qualified candidates whose loyalty is unquestionable is undertaken by the nationalists. UNIP policy consists in, as far as possible, appointing in rural areas regional and branch officials, men and women who are, if not entirely native to their districts, at least acceptable

25. For details on the controversial Litunga succession, tacitly supported by President Kaunda, see e.g. Caplan 1970. Chief Kanongesha had been active in Zambian politics before his accession and subsequently was an active member of the House of Chiefs.

to the community as a whole. They must be persons who can gain the co-operation of the local chiefs. During local elections, with most of the chiefs' areas being designated as wards (or local constituencies) it is a common practice to put up candidates who are approved by the chiefs.

(...) [I]n Western Province where chieftainship is very strong (...) UNIP's initial success was derived from its appeal to the chiefs, particularly in the campaign against the corrupt regime of the late Mwanawina. When the party promised reform the elders took this to mean restoration of power to the chiefs. Hence UNIP scored an overwhelming victory in the 1964 election. However by 1968 when the next general election came, the traditional leaders had been estranged by the Government's nationalist reforms which increased central government control. The price which UNIP paid for this was the loss of the province to the opposition party. That seems to be largely a direct confrontation between the Government and the chiefs. But more often than not conflict between chiefs and nationalist have tended to be precipitated at the low levels with the latter capitulating in the end. [2.16]

Having argued the continuing political importance of chieftainship in contemporary Zambia in such candid and convincing terms, Mr. Kakoma's conclusion scarcely follows and seems to be meant for the gallery:

In independent Africa, therefore, it is for the nationalists rather than the traditional chiefs who have risen as the masters in charge of all the decision-making processes. They are able to override the chiefs because they have the mandate from the masses.

Although at the local level the chief appears to command his traditional popularity the inherent weakness - the fact that his influence is restricted to his immediate domain which is only a tiny portion of the nation state - is irreconcilable with [sic] supra-tribal national outlook.' [2.16]

The Negative Image of Chieftainship

The view of chieftainship as expressed by Simwinga - an obsolete survival from precolonial times when the institution was surrounded with mystical power and heroic glory - finds other isolated expressions in the newspapers. At a time of controversy over the Zambian recognition of the Angolan MPLA, Dr. Mutumba Mainga, a University

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of Zambia historian of Lozi origin (cf. Mutumba Mainga 1973), stated the historical Zambian claim to eastern Angola, as part of Lewanika's empire in the late nineteenth century [4.1]; and while treating the much-debated issue of the boundaries of that empire²⁶ with sophistication and a minimum of Lozi chauvinism, her account implicitly confirms popular images of chiefly splendor, of formal hierarchical organization of the precolonial Lozi state, and of the existence of 'Lozi subject tribes' such as the Luvale. Similar popular images are evoked by newspaper items on a mystery giant mushroom appearing on the grave of the Lozi king Mulambwa (early 19th century) [7.16]; on a sacred tree associated with the Bemba kings and now threatened with demolition by the Forestry Department [7.17, 7.18]; and on a sacred lake on the Copperbelt, concerning which Senior Chief Chiwala has made proposals for recreational development to the Mpongwe Rural Council.²⁷ Near the southern town of Livingstone, the recently installed Chief Mukuni of the Leya gives food to the mysterious connotations surrounding chieftainship by depicting his capital as threatened by witches [7.19], and by staging a neo-traditional rain ritual that received detailed newspaper coverage.²⁸

Much of what seeps through in the newspapers with regard to chiefly succession and the attending disputes, including allegations of usurpation, in part corroborates the image of chieftainship as an impotent neo-traditional survival, disrupted by internal bickering [2.6; 2.12; 4.14; 7.19]. When the focus is on specific interaction between a rural chief and his or her followers, the account tends to be negative: a junior chief on the Copperbelt is beaten up when urging peasants to have their villages registered by a registration team working in the framework of the 1971 Village Registration Act [2.15];

26. Cf. Prins 1980; Mutumba Mainga 1973; Coillard 1971.

27. 7.20. Senior Chief Chiwala's pragmatic attitude has two sides. On the one hand he is keenly interested in taking development initiatives in his area. On the other hand, as an incumbent of an immigrant Swahili chiefly title established less than a century ago among the local Lamba - and still strongly resented by some of them [5.24] - he cannot be expected to take to heart the interests of pre-existing local cults of the land (in which the Chilengwalesa - meaning: 'God's Creation' - Lake in question, also called Sunken Lake, has been a central place). On the history of the Chiwala title, cf. Namushi and Mwewa 1972; Brelsford 1965; and, in Zambian newspapers of the period covered, 5.26, 5.27. On the cult of the land in this part of Zambia, cf. Doke 1931; and in general, Van Binsbergen 1981: ch. 3.

28. See 7.4; 7.5; 7.5a; cf. also Shimwaayi Muntemba 1970.

Senior Chief Chiwala goes to great length to assert that he, for one, has not been beaten by his Lamba subjects [5.24]; and the Solwezi District Governor, when faced with allegations that the government has usurped the chiefs' power, points to the new responsibilities of chiefs and headmen (in terms of state-initiated village registration and village regroupment), which, far from usurping, lend new life to the chiefs' role, *now that villagers no longer offer them tribute in the form of locally-brewn beer and manorial corvée services in agriculture, as they used to do in the past* [4.25]. In other words: chiefs are depicted as having lost their rural followers' respect (and only the state can restore something of their earlier prestige). Nor do the relationships between chiefs look any better: the Nkoya Chief Kabulwebulwe, ousted from his capital at the Kafue river (cf. van Binsbergen 1985b, in press, and in preparation) at the creation of the Kafue National Park in the 1930s, is reported as formally requesting land from his neighbors, Chiefs Shakumbila and Moono, in Mumbwa district (Central Province), but his plea is turned down [1.1]. In Solwezi district, Chief Mukumbi is accused of meddling in the succession of the late Senior Chief Musele, to such an extent that the Cabinet Minister for Northwestern Province, Mr. J. Mutti, feels obliged to intervene [4.14].

In conjuring up this conflict-ridden picture of Zambian chiefs the journalists' access to and selection of news seems to play an important role. The nearness of the complex and conflict-laden peri-urban situation on the Copperbelt (with chiefs like Mushili and Chiwala surpassing most other Zambian chiefs in news coverage) eclipses the numerous cases of peaceful and respectful interaction between chiefs and their subjects elsewhere. Succession disputes have news value, but they seem to affect only a few of the dozen or so cases of chiefly succession which must occur every year, considering the demographic fact that Zambia has about 280 recognized chiefs, normally of middle age or older. That chiefs' installation ceremonies are reported to attract crowds of thousands shows in itself that in general chiefs are respected and supported by their people. Two Kunda chiefs visiting the line of rail (see below) are said to be treated with great respect not only by their own subjects among the urban migrants, but also from other ethnic groups:

Senior Chieftainess Nsefu and Chief Munkhanya of the Kunda yesterday appealed to the people on the Copperbelt and the Midlands, especially loafers [i.e. unemployed urban migrants, WvB], to heed President Kaunda's call to return to the land. The leaders made the appeal in Lusaka where they were visiting their people, particularly Mr. Patterson Ngoma, Minister

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of State in the Office of the President who [Mr. Ngoma] had been sick for the past three months.

(...) While on the Copperbelt and the Midlands, they have been paid courtsey [sic] visits by members of various tribes who have presented them with gifts, particularly the Bemba tribe from the Northern Province. [3.25; also see below]

And to balance the negative reports on interaction between chiefs, Chieftainess Nkomeshya of Lusaka Rural district is reported to have sent, on behalf of her people and her fellow chiefs of that region, a moving condolence letter on the occasion of the death of her colleague, Princess Nakatindi [4.11].

The Positive Image of Chieftainship: Land, Order and Development

In other words, the journalists' negative picture is far from consistent. The image of chiefs as backward, clad in primitive mystery, full of colonial connotations, despised by their subjects, incapable of cooperation with other chiefs, and irrelevant in a context of modern government, is on all counts set off against statements of the contrary - in such a way as to vindicate, rather, Mr. Kakoma's views as quoted above.

Some appreciation at least is detectable, in the newspaper reports, of the essential basis of Zambian chieftainship: the chief as the guardian of the rural land and its resources [3.24; 3.23; 4.7] and the chief as the guardian of tradition,²⁹ morality, law and order (morality and ecology go hand in hand in the ancient world-view of South Central Africa). It is in the context of this chiefly responsibility that chiefs make pronouncements concerning decency and morals:

Chiefs [meeting, WvB] in Mwinilunga have passed a resolution appealing to the government to ban minis.³⁰[2.10]

29. One example is the following:

Ndola City Council has suggested that (...) [t]he House of Chiefs should be remodelled and their powers increased so that they become more effective on matters of tradition (...). This was among recommendations made by the Council to the Commission of Inquiry into a One-Party State, which is now preparing its findings for presentation to the President. [2.8]

Likewise, Senior Chief Mushili calls himself 'a traditionalist' [5.9].

30. I.e. miniskirts, an attire much debated in Zambia at the time.

In a similar vein individual chiefs engage in a battle against witchcraft [Chief Mukuni, 7.19], or against the illegal and incompetent practice of medicine by local healers [7.2]. The latter point already shades over into chiefs assuming on their own initiative responsibilities which strictly speaking are those of the modern central state: the battle against the country's alarming crime rate,³¹ the identification and expulsion of illegal immigrants who may threaten the country's international security,³² and the implementation of health regulations which normally fall under the responsibility of Local Authorities.³³ Against this background of chiefly activity it is understandable that the government is urged to restore the formal judicial powers chiefs used to have under the colonial government, and which were taken away from them with the reform of the local court system in 1965.³⁴

Speaking during a two-day seminar on humanism, chiefs (...) called on the government to give them the power they had during the colonial days and said they should be empowered to arrest troublemakers in their areas. - ZANA. [2.10]

In this general concern for law and order in the country, chiefs - even as depicted in the newspaper reports - do not merely look to the past and the local level. Their role in implementing national development as a first condition for law and order is recognized not only by themselves but also by senior politicians. The ideal chief is depicted as an agent of progress, in the first place by President Kaunda himself:

31. 2.10; 2.18; 5.8; 5.17; 5.18; 5.27. The latter four cases all involve Copperbelt chiefs. Since these chiefly aspirations encroach upon the prerogatives of the Zambian police, newspaper reports reflect senior Copperbelt chiefs' views of that institution. Senior Chief Chiwala, for example, requests an extension of police services in his area [5.17]. By contrast, Senior Chief Mushili, a member of the House of Chiefs, in his statement to the Chona Commission, is critical of the alleged fact that police officers cannot carry out their duties without interference from politicians [5.7].

32. 4.25; 4.26; 4.32; 5.5; 5.16; 5.17; 5.18; 5.19; 5.22; 5.23. Except for item 4.25 (which is on Solwezi), these cases all involve Copperbelt chiefs.

33. 5.20. The chief in question, Senior Chief Chiwala, was an Assistant Health Inspector before his accession to the throne.

34. Cf. Aihe 1972; Colson 1976; Hoover et al. 1970; Spalding 1970.

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So 1973 is truly a year of real challenges, but it is also a year full of hope for Zambians. [italics original, WvB] Let us be united in our determination to work out our own future. All of us have an important role to play in building this nation. Mayors, Chairmen of Local Councils and Councillors, together with Section leaders, have a tremendous task ahead to improve the outlook of our cities and towns, to improve services for the people. *Chiefs, Headmen and other Village leaders* [italics added, WvB] have the task of accomplishing the objectives of the Rural Reconstruction Programme. The Party and Government will continue to provide the leadership and services but it is up to the people of the rural areas to undertake the task of improving the quality of life.

(...) We are now in the Second Republic, more united than ever before. So we must now fight all the problems and enemies as one team. Whether we are members of the Central Committee, Ministers, Members of Parliament, Judges and Magistrates, members of the Civil Service, Army, Air Force, Police or Prison Services, whether we are Managers of Parastatal Organisations or private enterprises, Teachers, Churchmen, Party and Labour leaders, Students, *Chiefs, Headmen* [italics added, WvB] and all other categories of workers in towns and villages, we must act together in fighting our enemies. [3.2; similar examples are: 3.18, 4.9]

President Kaunda's words reflect a tangible reality. A prominent traditional ruler like Senior Chief Mushili is quoted as rejoicing in the large number of development projects he has managed to attract to his area [5.21 as quoted below]. In this, he is merely bringing into practice the chiefs' right to propose and initiate development projects, which the Secretary General to the Government, Mr. A.A. Milner, stressed an essential benefit of the 1971 Village Registration Act [3.20; 3.23, as quoted above]. We see some chiefs (mainly on the Copperbelt, again) clamoring for more schools, dams, tractor services, postal services and rural industries in their areas, and even suggesting local administrative reforms such as the creation of additional sub-bomas [2.11; 5.13; 5.21; 5.28]. On the Copperbelt, Chief Nkana goes to the extent of posing as a self-styled labor recruitment officer for a newly reopened local copper mine [5.12].

Other chiefs, outside the Copperbelt, are depicted as highly successful farmers. One of them is Chief Chibuluma, whose professional roles

include chairmanship of the Mumbwa Agricultural Show.³⁵ Chief Chanje of Chipata district is vice-chairman of the National Resources Advisory Board, and recipient of a Standard Bank grant for an agricultural study tour to the United Kingdom [6.4; 6.8]. Significantly, both Chief Chibuluma and Chief Chanje are members of the House of Chiefs. Various chiefs are reported to make pronouncements against urban unemployment and in favor of the return to the land of the young urban unemployed [3.25; 6.5 (House of Chiefs debate quoted); 6.9]. In general, the chiefs' essential role in agricultural development is emphasized, e.g. in the field of village regroupment [4.24; 4.25]. The introduction of alternatives to the destructive slash-and-burn *chitemene* agricultural technique is accompanied by extensive news coverage of a demonstration flight during which President Kaunda and selected Northern Province chiefs viewed the *chitemene*-devastated countryside of Northern Province.³⁶

Chiefs and National Politics

Senior Zambian politicians can hardly be said to share the negative views of chieftainship implied in some newspaper reports and made explicit by Mr. Simwinga as quoted above.

The costs involved in chiefs' subsidies are not complained about. On the contrary, official government statements proudly point to repeated increases of chiefs' subsidies since Independence, as a sign of the high esteem in which the government holds the chiefs [3.20; 3.23 as quoted above].

As far as national unity is concerned, not the chiefs but dissident politicians are considered to be foci of ethnic machinations. The chiefs themselves feel safe enough on this score to level the accusation of tribalism against others who are not chiefs. One example is Princess Nakatindi's political testament: a letter to the editor published in the *Times of Zambia* half a year before her death [2.19]. Another example concerns Senior Chief Mushili, Princess Nakatindi's colleague in the House of Chiefs:

35. 2.4. In this modern capacity, the chief took the opportunity to criticise the performance of Zambia's National Agricultural Marketing Board, on which both modern farmers and peasant farmers are entirely dependent for inputs and for the marketing of their cash crops.

36. 3.22. Northern Province chiefs' statements in defense of *chitemene* are, however, also reported: 6.2; 6.3.

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(...) Senior Chief Mushili (...) has suggested that Ndola Rural should have two sub-bomas if it has to be administered properly[:] (...) one (...) at old Mpongwe and another at Chief Shimukunami. (...) Last week Chief Mushili put this suggestion to the Copperbelt Permanent Secretary, Mr. Hosea Ngwane when he visited the area. He told Mr. Ngwane that if the government agreed with his suggestion, "all tribal and personal squabbles in the area would come to an end."

Chief Mushili attacked some senior government officials who he said were practising tribalism. Chief Mushili said as a result of tribalism development projects were being delayed. He also accused some members of the Ndola Rural Council, District Development Committee [sic] of not being happy with the number of development projects which were taking place in his area. - ZANA. [5.21]

With each chief ruling over only a small part of the population of Zambia (a point emphasized by Kakoma and Simwinga alike), the chiefs' calling is defined as: to bring their respective sections within the fold of the nation as a whole and not to foster sub-national divisiveness, let alone secessionism. Although the Barotseland case is there to prove the contrary, this ideal image of chiefs as enhancing national unity behind the leading party, UNIP, does seem to be widespread in Zambian politics at the time. When politicians lash out at tribalists, chiefs are not implicated [e.g. 3.5; 3.7; 3.18; 4.10; 4.11; 4.23]. With the exception of some controversial testimony before the Chona Commission, in which a few chiefs expressed a negative view of UNIP's women and youth wings [4.29; 5.8], the newspaper reports contain no cases of explicit confrontation between UNIP and chiefs in the period covered.

Against the background of colonial and post-colonial political developments in Barotseland, and of conflicts between the Lozi aristocracy and the Zambian state, it is understandable that the Lozi Litunga Mbikusita is particularly keen to avoid such trouble, even in the face of strong political discontent among the Lozi aristocracy:

Lozis told to ignore circulars

The Litunga of Western Province, Mbikusita Lewanika Two, including some of his indunas [councillors], visited Yuka village, the capital of Chief Kandala in Mongu district at the weekend. The visit follows an invitation made to the Litunga two months ago.

On behalf of the Litunga and Kuta, Induna Kalonga advised a crowd of people who welcomed the Litunga to ignore anonymous letters which were circulating in Mongu district. The letters would cause confusion and misunderstanding between individuals and the government. Induna Kalonga said that such activities would help nobody and that it was the work of cowards and troublemakers, he added. If they speak of law, let them sign their names, and addresses, the induna warned. [sic] The people who tried to implicate the name and office of the Litunga for their personal grievances or political ambitions by writing or sending him copies of their letters were acting contrary to customs and traditions and were dangerous to the society. The Litunga's name cannot and should not be used in anything that was controversial. Political matters should be channelled through to the Ngambela's office.

Induna Kalonga thanked the people for the warm welcome accorded to the Litunga to make his visit enjoyable. - ZANA [4.23]

On the other hand there are signs that senior modern politicians avoid open confrontations with the Litungaship itself. Thus the Litunga's Ngambela (neo-traditional Prime Minister to the Litunga), Mr. Suu, is given the blame for allegedly having advised the Litunga not to welcome President Kaunda at Mongu airport when the latter flew out to Western Province. Even though the Litunga was in fact present, the President had Mr. Suu deposed and his subsidy discontinued [4.15; 4.16; 4.16a; 4.16b; 4.16c]. But in 1972-1973 we are still a far cry from the installation, in 1983, of Mbikusita's successor Iluta Yeta as a member of UNIP's Central Committee.

Including both chiefs and modern politicians, UNIP seminars at the district and provincial level have a somewhat similar rallying function to chiefs' funerary and installation ceremonies in bringing together a selection of local office-bearers from modern and neo-traditional politics and furthering their interaction [2.2; 2.10].

One reason why the relation between chiefs and 'tribalism' may be less close than critics of chieftainship, such as Mr. Simwinga, suggest, is illustrated by the case of Senior Chief Chiwala: representing a Muslim Swahili minority among the Lamba, he is resented by the latter as an alien [5.24, 5.25, 5.26]. Even in the rural areas, chief's territories are seldom ethnically homogeneous, and chiefs may occasionally find themselves belonging to an ethnic minority among their own subjects. On the other hand, numerous cases could be

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cited³⁷ where chieftainship is at the core of a cultural ethnic identity and chiefs advocate neo-traditional culture, the use of the vernacular in education and broadcasting, etc.³⁸ Such cases are also reflected in the newspapers of the period; that they all involve Copperbelt chiefs seems accidental in this case [5.9; 5.11; 5.12]. The transition from cultural to political ethnicity however only takes place when the allocation of scarce resources by bureaucracies and representative bodies of the modern state is involved (e.g. Bates 1973); and here chiefs, by contrast to modern politicians, normally do not wield sufficient power and influence to champion regional interests as clad in an ethnic idiom.

As to the colonial and hence anti-nationalist connotations of chieftainship, this issue could hardly be overlooked at a time when UNIP, a nationalist party which derives popular support mainly from its success in the struggle for independence, was about to establish a one-party state. Significant in this respect is a newspaper report on an ancient chief (Chief Chikuwe of the Chewa) deposed by the colonial government for what he claims to be refusal to betray the nationalist cause, and now a businessman on the Copperbelt; in the news item he announces his intention to regain his throne on his successor, depicted as a colonial stooge.³⁹

On the national level, when the Vice-President presents the bill to establish a one-party state to Parliament, in December 1972, he makes explicit reference to the fact that Mr. Godwin Mbikusita (who occupied the Litungaship from 1968 to 1977) early in his career created a major break-through for nationalism, but he soon was to side with the colonial powers, and lost the nationalist initiative to Mr. Harry Nkumbula, the founder of Zambia's first nationalist political party, ANC [4.7]. In the same speech the Vice-President extensively quotes the constitutions of both UNIP and ANC. His purpose is to show how close they really were; the one-party state meant that after more than ten years of political opposition ANC had to be incorporated into UNIP. But in the context of our present

37. Including the Lozi and the Nkoya of Western Province; cf. Moltano 1974; van Binsbergen 1985a.

38. On the complex language situation in Zambia, cf. Kashoki 1978.

39. 2.6. The case is not without parallels elsewhere in contemporary Zambia: Shortly before World War II the Nkoya Chief Mutondo Muchaiyila was deposed and for ten years even exiled from Kaoma district to Kalabo district. When his successor Chief Mutondo Kapulikila died in 1982, the aged ancient chief was reinstated.

argument it is interesting to see the Vice-President, implicitly, reviewing the nationalists' stance *vis-à-vis* Zambian chiefs and treating this position as still essentially valid in 1972. Thus Mr. Chona cites the following goals and principles from the ANC Constitution:

(...) (d) To work in a spirit of mutual understanding with *Native Authorities* [i.e. chiefs and their staff, WvB] and such other organisations as have the welfare of Africans at heart save in matters which are detrimental to African interests; (...)

(h) To seek to break down *tribal* and language barriers, and to promote a spirit of harmony and brotherhood among all Africans. [4.7; emphasis added, WvB]

Similarly, Mr. Chona's summary of the objects of UNIP before independence includes the following:

(...) (d) To maintain, protect and promote understanding and unity among the people of Northern Rhodesia by removing individualism, *tribalism* and provincialism.

(e) To promote and support worthy African customs and cultures. (...)

(o) To secure acceptance by the Northern Rhodesia government of the fundamental principle *that all land in all parts of Northern Rhodesia is ultimately vested in the chiefs and people of Northern Rhodesia*. [4.7; emphasis added, WvB]

These statements of intention may since have undergone changes in form, but not in content:

(...) Mr. Speaker, there are amendments that have been made to the UNIP Constitution from time to time since our independence but most of these alterations have merely been designed to marry some of the objects with a view of shortening the list. [4.7; emphasis added, WvB]

Within a week, President Kaunda himself dramatically brought home another message concerning the anti-nationalist stance of at least some major chiefs: he allowed himself to be reconciled with Mr. Chisashi who had once, as traditional 'Prime Minister' (Chief Councillor) of the Bemba Paramount Chief Chitimukulu, banned Kaunda and other nationalist organizers from Chitimukulu's area:

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The Spirit of the 2nd Republic

PRESIDENT Kaunda yesterday forgave Mr. Abel Chisashi and warmly shook hands with him. Mr. Chisashi, [sic] was the man the President had never thought of forgiving for what he did during the struggle for independence. His forgiveness comes in the wake of what the President said at the closing session of the three days UNIP National Council in Kabwe that "the time when we enter the second republic is a time for forgiveness since love comes first and therefore extend a hand of friendship to all."

Mr. Chisashi former president of the Kasama Urban Court had before Independence declared President Kaunda a prohibited man in the district. Mr. Chisashi, then prime minister of Ilamfya traditional executive council also banned Mr. Mukuka Nkoloso and his militant Eleven Devils to enter the district.

He had travelled all the way from his home in Kasama to come and deliver his apology to Dr. Kaunda. Mr. Chisashi was accompanied to State House by Lusaka Urban district governor, Mr. Justin Kabwe. [3.11]

Significantly, the newspaper reports are somewhat vague about the precise nature of Mr. Chisashi's neo-traditional office at the time (cf. Whiteley 1951; Roberts 1973; Richards 1935), and the name of Chitimukulu is not mentioned. In the period covered, only one passing reference to the Chitimukuluship could be traced in the newspapers, which is truly remarkable, considering the fact that UNIP used to be strongly Bemba-orientated. The one reference concerned the installation of piped water in Chitimukulu's capital, in the context of general development in the wake of the TanZam railway [6.7]. The modern state knows how to honor even a controversial Paramount Chief: in 1973 with piped water, ten years later with a seat in the Central Committee.

But as always, the usable past is a selective past. In the struggle for Independence the chiefs' record may not have been too impressive, but that does not seem to deter the Minister of Legal Affairs, Mr. Chuula. He freely draws on the colonial situation when he wants to make the point that in a modern African state, such as independent Zambia under the Second Republic, too extreme a distinction between the executive and the judiciary may not be necessary or even desirable: after all, were not the colonial chiefs an apt example of the successful merging of executive and judiciary powers in the Zambian tradition?[3.6].

The Amazing Career of Princess Nakatindi

References to the anti-nationalist past of some Zambian chiefs were not allowed to stand in isolation. They were balanced by the nationwide attention, on the occasion of the death of Princess Nakatindi, for a career (see table 1) which provides convincing evidence of the fact that chieftainship and the nationalist cause can be very well combined.

The two most remarkable aspects of Princess Nakatindi's career are that from 1968 to her death in 1972 she formed a unique combination of modern party-political (as District Governor) and neo-traditional leadership at the district level; and that by and large her neo-traditional office as *Mulena Mukwae* of Sesheke and her membership of the House of Chiefs formed the culmination, the final phase (perhaps I should say the retirement phase), of a modern political career, rather than the steppingstone towards a modern career. As a Litunga's daughter, she might be considered a member of the Lozi aristocracy capturing the modern state, but it is equally valid, if not more so, to regard her as a modern politician through whom the state and the party successfully captured at least part of neo-traditional Lozi politics.

The career of Princess Nakatindi is in this respect exceptional, but not unique. Her close relative Mr. Godwin Mbikusita had a similar career, as we have seen; and so had Chief Kanongesha. The data on certain other chiefs reiterate this pattern on a smaller scale: Chief Mukuni was an employee with Zambia Railways before acceding to the throne in 1971 [7.19]; Senior Chief Chiwala was an assistant health inspector before his accession.⁴⁰

40. 5.20. Outside the 1972-73 newspaper material, many similar cases could be cited. Among twentieth-century Nkoya chiefs of Kaoma district (cf. van Binsbergen, in preparation), for example, Chief Mutondo Kanyinca, who reigned between World War I and II, started his career as a *boma* messenger; Chief Mutondo Kapulikila was a teacher before accession; Chief Kahare Kabambi, a longstanding member of the House of Chiefs, has not only been a UNIP trustee but likewise started his career as a *boma* messenger before succeeding his father, Chief Kahare Timuna, in 1955.

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TABLE 1 THE NEO-TRADITIONAL AND MODERN POLITICAL CAREER OF PRINCESS NAKATINDI, 1922-1972.
[sources: 4.9; 4.10; 4.11; 4.12; 4.12a; 4.13]

| <i>year</i> | <i>neo-traditional career</i> | <i>modern career</i> |
|-------------|--|--|
| 1922 | - Born in Lealui as second youngest daughter of Litunga Yeta III | |
| 1951 | | - Educated at Tiger Kloof Institution in Cape Province, South Africa - One of the founder members of the Girl Guides local association in Barotseland - Member of the African Methodist Episcopal Church |
| 1952-64 | | - Served on the Mongu-Lealui district education authority |
| 1953 | | - Among the first to start welfare work in Barotseland |
| 1960 | | - First female personality to welcome UNIP to Barotseland |
| 1962 | | - First woman to contest the 1962 general elections - Member of the UNIP Central Committee |
| 1963-67 | | - Director of the UNIP Women's Brigade |
| 1964 | | - Member for Nalikwanda, National Legislative Assembly |
| 1965 | | - Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Social Development - Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Mines and Co-operatives |
| 1966 | - Chieftainess (<i>Mulena Mukwae</i>) of Sesheke | |
| 1967 | | - Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Co-operatives, Youth and Social Development |
| 1968 | | - lost her Parliamentary seat to ANC in General Elections - District Governor, Sesheke - Member, House of Chiefs |
| 1972 | - died in Lusaka, survived by her husband and 11 children | |

Essential Continuity yet Qualitative Difference

With the amazing career of Princess Nakatindi before us, we can hardly be surprised that *the bridge* constitutes the dominant metaphor to describe the chief in Zambian politics (or at least, the chief who has adapted to modern politics). In President Kaunda's emotional funerary speech of Princess Nakatindi he did not hesitate to call her a "freedom fighter", who "was among nation-builders and stood side by side with gallant men of this country" [4.11]; but the leading image of the speech was that of "*Nakatindi the bridge*", linking the old and the new, neo-traditional politics and the modern state and party [4.9; 4.11].⁴¹

The image of the chief as bridge had become a cliché of Zambian political expressions.⁴² It combines a sense of continuity with the admission of a qualitative difference: a gap to be bridged. But when Zambians apply the image to the relation between chiefs and the postcolonial state, usually it is the continuity more than the difference that is stressed. Thus, speaking as a chief, Princess Nakatindi herself repeatedly stressed the essential continuity that she perceived between the democratic principles underlying chiefly rule, and those underlying UNIP's One-Party Participatory Democracy [2.19].

It is in this context that senior government officials can afford to recognize chiefs as political protagonists at the local and regional level. And the chiefs are even capable of extending praise to their modern counterparts [2.17]. The National Commission of Enquiry into

41. This metaphor received an interesting geographical expression when within days after Princess Nakatindi's death the newly completed Livingstone-Sesheke tar road was named after her [4.8]. The symbolic significance of this gesture lies in the fact that the building of this road marks the final phase in the geographical opening-up of Barotseland after more than a century in which the relative inaccessibility of this region along the southern route had formed a factor in Barotseland's survival as a neo-traditional state structure. Cf. Gann 1958; Niddrie 1954; Philpott 1945; Stokes 1966. The southern town of Livingstone was the capital of Northern Rhodesia until the mid-1930s. In other words, calling this road after Princess Nakatindi symbolizes effective penetration of the central state.

42. Thus it was used by the Cabinet Minister for Western Province when speaking at the installation ceremony of the new Ngambela [4.2 as quoted below].

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the Establishment of One-Party Participatory Democracy counted two chiefs (including the Chairman of the House of Chiefs) among its eighteen members;⁴³ senior chiefs and chiefs' councillors were among both the hosts and the witnesses to that Commission,⁴⁴ and a considerable part of the commission's proceedings concerned the role of chieftainship in post-Independence Zambia. Princess Nakatindi suggested that two ministers of the cabinet should be recruited from the House of Chiefs [4.31]. Chief Mushili advised the appointment of eight Paramount Chiefs in Zambia, not on an ethnic but on a territorial basis: one for every province of Zambia [5.7]. These and other suggestions are reflected (although not copied) in the extensive passage on chiefs in the Chona Commission's report (Republic of Zambia 1972:24-25).

This emphasis on essential continuity between chiefs and modern state politics does not mean that government officials regard chiefs as colleagues. Even though the concept of leadership as advanced in this context might be thought applicable to Zambian chiefs (whose *subsidies* in fact are often called *salaries* by the government [cf. 3.23 as quoted above]), in discussions of the Leadership Code chiefs are never explicitly mentioned as falling under the strict regulations concerning gainful employment by 'leaders' [3.1; 3.4; 3.14]:

(o) no leader receiving a salary from Party or public funds shall (i) hold directorship in any privately-owned company; (ii) hold shares in a privately owned company except in government-controlled financial institutions; and (iii) engage in private trade or in commercial agriculture; (...) [3.14]

Sometimes the distinction is put bluntly and with pejorative implications for the chiefs:

The Minister for Western Province, Mr. Josephat Siyomunji has said that in our democratic government leaders *were not chiefs but public servants* who must be prepared to work hard for the nation. [2.13; emphasis added, WvB]

Here the image of continuity clearly fades into one of chiefs and modern state officials being complementary albeit qualitatively

43. 2.8; 2.19. Cf. Republic of Zambia 1972.

44. 4.28 (the Litunga); 4.31 (Princess Nakatindi); 5.7 (Senior Chief Mushili Mushili); 4.29 (a Lozi induna); 5.8.

different. This view also obtains, albeit for different reasons, among the chiefs' traditionalist subjects:

Litunga is not a "Mr"

Lozi elders in Livingstone have protested at the use of "Mr" in Press titling of the Litunga of Western Province. The Press, especially the Government-owned Zambia Daily Mail, has referred to the tribal leader as 'the Litunga of Western Province, Mr. Mbikusita Lewanika.' But an angry president of Livingstone local court, Mr. K. Makumba, said the correct title should be: "The Litunga, Mbikusita Lewanika." The use of "Mr" showed disrespect, he said. [4.27]

It is because of the essential distinction between neo-traditional and modern office-bearers that the modern government can sanction the traditional practices of chiefly selection and election, even if these differ in form from the type of democratic logic underlying the modern state and the party [3.23 as quoted above]. A similar note is struck in the speech by the Cabinet Minister for Western Province at the occasion of the installation of Mr. Mukonde as the Litunga's new Ngambela:

Senior induna installed as new Ngambela

The former senior induna Muleta of Libanda in Kalabo district, Mr. Griffith Musialike Mukonde, has been installed as Ngambela (prime minister) for Western Province. Mr. Mukonde has taken over the post from Mr. Francis Lishomwa Suu, who resigned last September.

The colourful installation ceremony at which Mr. Mukonde was installed as Ngambela was held at Lealui, the traditional capital of the province. The ceremony was attended by senior indunas from all over the province, Western Province Cabinet Minister, Mr. Josephat Siyomunji and Mongu governor, Mr. Green Mwaala.

Speaking at the ceremony, Mr. Siyomunji told Mr. Mukonde, who is 60, to take the post as "a big challenge." (...) He described the Ngambela as a traditional link between the people and the Government. "Such a link should be like a bridge leading people to peace and prosperity." Mr. Siyomunji urged the new Ngambela to keep tradition in step with changes in the second Republic. This would promote good relationships between the people and the Government. He assured Mr. Mukonde that the Government would continue to preserve traditions. - ZANA [4.2]

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But it is by virtue of the same distinction that the state, even while paying a subsidy to the chiefs (see below), can afford to deny the chiefs the sort of facilities and public services to which they could lay claim if they had been perceived as civil servants.

In this respect the newspaper material gives only a superficial and selective impression of the underlying tensions and of the chiefs' increasing demands. In other contexts chiefs insist on being formally recognized as part of the modern state, on being *civil servants*. They claim all sorts of material benefits from the government: cars, car loans, other transport facilities, secretarial services, etc. which are to serve both as neo- (or 'neo-neo') traditional status symbols, as signs of modern state recognition, and as genuine logistic means to enable the chiefs to play the development roles assigned to them by government. The discussions in the House of Chiefs go into great detail on these points, and I have analysed them elsewhere (Van Binsbergen, n.d.). In the newspaper reports these claims, and the discontent they manifest, are reflected only in a very indirect and presumably harmless form: not as a protest from the chiefs, but as an admonition put before high-ranking modern politicians by a medium in trance - as if he had to resort to these extraordinary means to drive his message home at all:

Plea from the spirits

A self-styled doctor of spirits yesterday called upon UNIP's national Council to provide chiefs and other traditional leaders with cars or Zambians would be doomed in road accidents. In a dramatic appearance, the "doctor", who gave his name as Morton Wazingwa of Chief Lwaimba in Isoka district, had earlier lain flat on the floor in Hindu Hall with a white piece of cloth across his upper body. (...) He was still lying on the floor and still covered until the national anthem was over. Later, the self-styled doctor, in a black suit and with a leather case, revealed he had left a petition for President Kaunda from the spirits, which he said he represented. Hysterical and weeping, Mr. Wazingwa said that unless Chiefs were given government transport like Ministers, road accidents would not end, but worsen.

The forty-one-year-old doctor, now resident in Kabwe, also said the government should convene a meeting with chiefs at which chiefs should offer white fowls and goats to appease spirits. Asked what would happen if this was not done, the be-spectacled 'ambassador' said political upheavals would result if spirits were not appeased.

Assisted to overcome his hysteria by President Kaunda's representative at the liberation centre in Lusaka and customary conductor of National anthems at public meetings Mr. Mukuka Nkoloso, Mr. Wazingwa also had a message for Rhodesian freedom fighters. He said until the leaders went to the historic Matopos hills to obtain the blessing of spirits, the freedom struggle would be unsuccessful. - ZANA [7.1]

Chiefs in Search of Patrons and Protectors

On the chiefs' side one can detect the notion of their being complementary to the modern state reflected, for example, in the fact that they seldom or never (not even in the sensitive domain of chiefly control over rural land) are reported to claim anything like autonomous and supreme powers. If they demand to be respected and consulted, it is because they consider themselves to be part of a wider structure which comprises the modern state and its officials. In other words, chiefs appear long since to have accepted the realities of incorporation into the modern state, upon which their colonial recognition and performance were based. This comes out clearest in the many cases of chiefs explicitly appealing to central state authorities for protection and redress: protection *vis-à-vis* their own subjects [2.15; 3.21], *vis-à-vis* disrespectful civil servants at the local and regional level,⁴⁵ *vis-à-vis* mining companies [5.13] and journalists [5.24; 5.25]. As if chiefs do not claim responsibility for nature, law and order in their own right, Chief Mukuni seeks the permission of the District Governor Mr. J. Hamatwi (who often manifests himself as a traditionalist) before enlisting the services of a witch-finder, and only stages a rain ritual after the same official has told him to do so.⁴⁶

45. 3.21. In a similar vein, Senior Chief Mushili complained to the Chona Commission that "some chiefs were unsure of their futures because district governors and UNIP regional secretaries appeared to have taken over their roles" [5.7].

46. 7.19; 7.5a; see also below. The chief's witchcraft accusations were primarily phrased in terms of *intra*-ethnic and inter-gender conflict:

The chief last year had turned down the post saying: "I don't want to be a chief, I shall have bought the passport to death." The chief was afraid to accept the position for fear to [sic] being bewitched and at that time all women Indunas were against him. [7.19] ----->

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It is the repetitious and consistent nature of this pattern that lifts it above the suspicion of being an artifact of journalists' self-censoring. The newspaper data available are sufficiently rich and varied to warrant the thought that, if the chiefs' claims had been more extreme and defiant, we would have found traces of this.

One gets the impression of a hierarchical model, in which chiefs perceive senior government officials as patrons capable of and prepared to intercede on their behalf. There are indications of this state of affairs. Copperbelt chiefs insist on being 'toured' by senior government officials, rather than resenting this form of exchange between state and chiefs that has such strong colonial connotations. In Northwestern Province chiefs ask their District Governor to communicate to government the solutions they are proposing for the problem of the rural exodus. [6.9] A Cabinet Minister speaks out in protection of a popular candidate in the case of a chiefly succession dispute; the District Governor for Choma does the same thing.⁴⁷ Mr. Joseph Hamatwi, the District Governor for Kalomo and one who is particularly keen to integrate the chiefs in his political performance as we shall see below, backs district chiefs' plea for national registration to be conducted at the chiefs' headquarters instead of distant *bomas* [3.9;3.10].

Yet they were not without an inter-ethnic background, which again points to the pivotal role attributed to chiefs in preserving the integrity of the local people's land:

One villager Mr. Gabriel Siachisiya said there were many witches in the village who were carrying bodies of dead men from the graveyards. These witches also came in the villages at night in form of "ghosts" and started *playing the Makishi dance*. "You can hear the rhythm but the people performing are invisible. They even come at the door steps but you cannot see them," said Mr. Siachisiya. [7.19; emphasis added, WvB]

In other words, in this area (populated by Toka and Leya people), anti-social elements are associated not only with women but also with the Makishi dance: part of a cultural complex centering on male circumcision and initiation (cf. McCulloch 1951), which numerous Luvale, Luchazi and Chokwe immigrants from Angola have brought with them to West and South West Zambia since the 1910s and particularly the 1960s; cf. Colson 1970.

47. 4.14; 3.12; 3.15. In a similar case interference from an unnamed 'top civil servant' is merely hinted at: 2.12.

It is as if the chiefs jockey for support and patronage wherever they can get it, regardless of the very substantial differences in power and formal institutional position between district governor, Cabinet Minister, etc. Either the whole logic of formal bureaucratic organization and its hierarchical implications somehow eludes the chiefs, or they can afford to take short-cuts across it. The very notion of patronage suggests the crossing of boundaries between socio-political spheres differing in power; and in this respect chiefs seeking to establish ties of patronage with modern politicians and civil servants are emphatically not civil servants themselves.

On a more personal level the newspaper reports show us glimpses (some already discussed above) of the links that exist between traditional rulers and the modern state in the form of subjects and relatives of chiefs who have become members of the modern elite: chief Nyalugwe and the Editor-in-Chief of the Zambia News Agency [2.7]; Chief Mwangala and Minister of State for Southern Province Mr. Zongani Banda; Chief Chona and the Vice-President Mr. Mainza Chona; Kunda chiefs and Mr. Patterson Ngoma, Minister of State in the Office of the President [3.25]; Mr. Chisashi, a Bemba former Chief Councillor, who seeks access to President Kaunda through Mr. Justin Kabwe, District Governor for Lusaka Urban.[3.11] Mr. Chisashi was lucky to gain such access, at a time when a reconciliatory gesture vis-à-vis the Bemba aristocracy would enable the President to clear further ground for the introduction of the One-Party State. The fate of the two Kunda chiefs was somewhat ironic: although ideal chiefs in so far as they supported the party and advocated rural development, the President was too busy to meet them [3.25].

The Subjugation of Chiefs by State Bureaucracies

Patrons close to the central state do not always honor the chiefs' appeals. Above we have seen the predicament of Chief Kabulwebulwe, who had been removed from his land at the establishment of Kafue National Park. A similar case is that of Chief Mburuma of Feira district, whom the colonial government moved away from his area because it was invested with tsetse-fly. Incidentally, in both cases the newspaper reports highlight chiefs who suffered, rather than benefitted, by the colonial state. Both chiefs now look to the post-Independence state for redress. And in both cases, the request to be restored in their ancestral lands is denied by the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources: Kabulwebulwe's land, now part of the Kafue National Park, has been set aside for the tourist industry, whereas Mburuma's land has been leased, by the government in conjunction

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with Chongwe Rural Council, to the Wild Life Conservation International Group.⁴⁸

These cases appear to be fairly typical for conflicts arising between chiefs and state officials at the local and regional level, and subsequently arbitrated by higher government figures (or requested, by either party, to be thus arbitrated). The newspaper reports show that conflict over chiefly land is a frequent issue here [1.1; 2.5; 3.24; 3.23; 3.20], in which chiefs are confronted by the Ministry of Local Government and Housing; by a Rural Council; by urban development projects staged by city councils in peri-urban areas [2.5; 5.4; 5.5; 5.10 - mainly on the Copperbelt]; by the Ministry of Lands, Natural Resources and Tourism; and by the latter's Forestry Department [3.24; 3.23; 3.20]. That these conflicts are taken very seriously is clear from the fact that one of them culminated in direct presidential action,⁴⁹ whereas another case involving Chief Ishinde as discussed above was extensively covered by the *Times of Zambia* and led to official statements at the highest level of the bureaucracy.

However, it is significant that in nearly all cases, complaints brought by chiefs against government departments were dismissed. The chiefs were denied the redress they were seeking from their patrons in the state's center.

The chiefs' dependence upon the central state is further brought out by the phenomenon of their government subsidy [3.20; 3.23]. Many chiefs and modern state officials seem to consider this monthly payment a regular salary qualifying the chiefs for the status of civil servants. Mr. Kakoma's theoretical observation that these subsidies are a powerful instrument in the hands of the central state to

48. 1.1. Feira chiefs appear to be particularly troubled by colonial connotations. On another occasion they propose to change the allegedly meaningless Portuguese name of Feira (which incidentally has the sound historical meaning of 'market', 'fair') into Luangwa district, apparently not realizing that the latter (admittedly Bantu) hydronym is not only the name of a river, but also an early colonial name for much of Eastern Zambia. 6.7; cf. Gann 1958, 1964; Stone 1979.

49. 5.4: President Kaunda imposed a deadline within which agreement had to be reached in the conflict over the proper jurisdiction of Chipulukusu squatter township, between Senior Chief Mushili and the Mpongwe Rural Council on the one hand, Ndola City Council on the other.

enforce chiefly conformity, is aptly illustrated by the deposition of Mr. Suu as Ngambela of the Litunga.⁵⁰

The subsidy is only one element in a set of formal bureaucratic arrangements by which the modern state seeks to capture the chiefs and bring them inside the fold of the modern state apparatus. A condition for subsidy, as stipulated in the Chiefs Act, is that a chief upon accession be recognized by the President of the Republic and gazetted as such in the *Government Gazette*. The newspapers report such gazetting a number of times for the period covered [2.1; 2.3; 3.19; 5.25]. In addition, the state seeks to create representative bodies which consist partly or wholly of chiefs. For unknown reasons (probably chance) the significance of Rural Councils (in many ways the post-colonial successors of the Native Authorities) is not explicitly acknowledged in the newspaper reports, but we do find mention of one Provincial Council of Chiefs, that of Luapula Province [1.5], and a number of references to the House of Chiefs [2.8; 4.12; 4.31; 6.5] - however 'obscure' even a sympathetic observer like Mr. Kakoma deemed that institution to be [2.16]. The limited references in the newspaper material however do not warrant inclusion of a detailed discussion of the House of Chiefs here (cf. however van Binsbergen n.d.).

The Relative Suppression of Chiefly Symbolism

That the chiefs allow themselves, that they even strive, to be incorporated into the general fabric of the modern state, its formal organizations and its political and administrative culture, and that in this process they hardly insist on representing an independent and autonomous source of power, is also clear from the forms and accoutrements they adopt in their dealings with the central powers.

From numerous other sources than newspaper reports⁵¹ we know

50. 4.15; 4.16. Less than a year earlier, however, another Lozi *induna*, apparently unheeding of this danger, had advocated that the unremunerated Silalo (the Litunga's neo-traditional Council) *indunas* should also be paid from public funds [4.30]. More generally, cf. Kakoma's argument [2.16].

51. E.g. Chiwale 1962; Brelsford 1965; Gluckman 1968; Papstein 1978, 1985; Fagan 1961; Yeta 1956; Van Binsbergen in press; references cited there. Personal observations confirm these accounts in the literature: I visited Senior Chief Chiwala in April, 1972 (with M.

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that symbols of chieftainship abound at the chiefly headquarters: ceremonial robes and headdresses, animal species or parts thereof (e.g. leopard skins, eland tailfly-switches, hippopotamus tails) which are exclusively reserved for chiefs, ceremonial ironware, stools, barges, musical instruments and musicians, particular architectural details such as royal shrines, or the royal fence with pointed poles in Western Zambia. These chiefly paraphernalia in the widest sense are particularly in appearance during installation and funerary ceremonies. In addition to these material manifestations of chieftainship, there are the procedures and underlying notions of courtly culture which, however diverse throughout Zambia, tends to have recurrent features such as:

- physical separation of chief and subjects;
- communication between chief and subjects through a commoner senior councillor or 'Prime Minister';
- restricted commensality (eating and drinking together) between chief and subjects;
- avoidance between chiefs who are considered to be of equal power;
- the use of perpetual kinship and positional succession, linking various chiefly titles within a region in a permanent hierarchy which is expressed in a kinship idiom;
- ecological, sexual and sorcery connotations of chiefly power;
- the domain of chieftainship and that of death are considered to be mutually exclusive, hence a living chief's avoidance of funerals, and the building of an entire new chiefly capital after a chief's death;
- the mechanism of chiefly succession, in which elders select a suitable candidate from among a sometimes extensive pool of candidates qualifying by kinship affiliation to previous incumbents (fixed kinship rules of inheritance and succession do not play a decisive role).

These and many other elements in the contemporary chiefly culture have undoubtedly undergone changes in recent decades (cf. Papstein 1985; Prins 1978). For instance, there is a decided move towards fixed

Wright and Q.N. Parsons) and Chief Mukuni in December 1972. I established close relations with Chief Kahare, a member of the House of Chiefs, during his official visits to Lusaka in 1972, and I lived at his headquarters during a week in May 1973 and from August 1973-April 1974, September-November 1977 and September 1978. In 1977, I conducted extensive interviews at the headquarters of Chief Mutondo, and less extensive ones at those of Chief Kabulwebulwe.

succession rules, and within these, towards patriliney. Certainly the features as listed above are neo-traditional in the sense that they have adapted to colonial incorporation, taking on new paraphernalia (including chief's robes and perhaps new types of headdress), assimilating new organizational principles,⁵² and selectively dropping elements (such as manorial service, slavery, ritual murder, ritual incest etc.) which were less favored by the colonial state, Christianity, etc. (Cf. Van Binsbergen, in preparation). But despite (or rather: precisely in view of) these recent processes of change, it can be said that the culture of chieftainship is very much alive in rural Zambia.

Now the amazing thing is how little of this ceremonial and material culture is carried over to the situations where contemporary chiefs interact with the modern state and its officials. Elsewhere (Van Binsbergen, n.d.) I make this point at length with reference to the style of debate and general procedure of the House of Chiefs. But the newspaper material is also quite telling in this respect. A picture taken in the House of Chiefs [3.16] shows gentlemen in European suits, with white shirts and neckties. Only on very close scrutiny do some suits turn out to be outmoded and of faded color and some neckties clumsily knotted. Only one of the chiefs on display has completed his European attire with typical headdress such as worn by chiefs of the Lunda people in Northwestern and Luapula Provinces. In the other visual materials depicting official chief/state interaction at the country's center, neo-traditional elements likewise scarcely more than sneak in.⁵³ The few examples in which isolated symbols seep

52. Particularly: the extreme emphasis on fixed territories of jurisdiction and fixed hierarchies between chiefs in a region in a way which emulates the colonial bureaucratic logic. Cf. Chanock 1985.

53. I have referred above to the visit of two Kunda chiefs to Lusaka, where they were in the care of Mr. Patterson Ngoma, Minister of State in the Office of the President, and one of their Kunda subjects. The picture accompanying this item [3.25] shows a group of persons standing behind or sitting at the feet of two persons on chairs: an elderly man and a woman in her thirties. The woman, holding two children, and dressed in an ordinary bright sleeveless blouse and *chitenge* skirt which in no way distinguish her from any Zambian peasant woman visiting town, turns out to be Senior Chief Nsefu; her elderly companion is her junior chief, Munkhanya, in a shabby version of the western suit, tie and white shirt. The only persons wearing insignia of office are two *kapasus* (chief's retainers), in their khaki uniforms seamed with red. The Minister himself is shown in the

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through are: one or two leopard skins covering Princess Nakatindi's coffin during her state funeral, specifically her funerary service at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Lusaka;⁵⁴ and a neo-traditional gesture made by Mr. Chisashi when shaking hands with President Kaunda (both wearing European suits) at their reconciliatory encounter.⁵⁵

It is only in the absence of direct official state connotations that the newspapers allow the chiefs to show more of their paraphernalia.⁵⁶

picture informally dressed in a white shirt and dark trousers.

54. 4.11. A posed portrait (4.13) of Princess Nakatindi, not depicting any recognizable interaction setting, shows her in the Victorian dress that women missionaries at the end of the last century introduced in Barotseland and that was to become the region's 'national dress' for women. Here again specific chiefly symbolism is largely absent, although the heavy ivory beads of her necklace could be construed to refer symbolically to the Lozi royal rights to game animals, particularly elephants.

55. 3.1. Mr. Chisashi, when extending his right arm to shake hands with President Kaunda, supports that arm near the wrist with his left hand - a perfectly common neo-traditional gesture of politeness but one without specific political implications. The President, on his part, is holding his white handkerchief in his left hand, and so can afford not to return the gesture without giving offence.

56. An interesting contrast can be noted in this respect between two pictures taken near Chinsali, Northern Province, President Kaunda's home area. I have already mentioned that in mid-August, 1972, the President's family staged a name-inheriting ceremony in which - after a cultural practice generally observed throughout contemporary Zambia - the name of the recently deceased Mrs. Helen Kaunda, the President's mother, was given to a junior relative. No doubt as a manifestation of the Bemba/Tonga alliance which had come to dominate Zambian national politics since 1968, the ceremony was attended by "74 mourners who had travelled all the way from Gwembe in Southern Province" [7.15a]. A *Times of Zambia* report [7.15] puts their number at 80, and specifically mentions as leading members of the delegation: Senior Chief Mweemba, Chief Monze, Chief Mapanza, Mrs. Mapanza, Monze District Governor Mr. Cox Sikumba, and a prominent Monze UNIP member, Mr. George Cornhill. In one picture President Kaunda and Mrs. Kaunda are shown sitting next to Chief Monze, Chief Mweemba and Mr. Sikumba. The men are all wearing informal European dress: open-collared shirts, and trousers in a contrasting color, only in Chief Monze's case completed by an equally

Incidentally, these pictures suggests considerable, deliberate posing - they are state portraits emulating the combined clichés of nobility and of the social uses of photography.⁵⁷

The study of visible symbols of power and their manipulation is an underdeveloped aspect of Africanist political science. Yet it should be clear that particularly in these pictures the newspapers offer collective representations that make up the contemporary Zambian political culture. The language of the photographs puts across, more effectively and with less offense than the written word, the subtle accommodation, the avoidance, the desired hierarchy between the neo-traditional and the modern political sphere.

informal jacket. There is no sign whatsoever of either presidential or chiefly status, except perhaps that President Kaunda clutches his inseparable white handkerchief in his left hand. It is only in a second photograph published *the next day*, showing Chief Mweemba *alone* at Mrs. Helen Kaunda's grave with a European-type wreath in his hands, that the chief wears, on top of his very same multicolored shirt, the long bicolored ceremonial robe of the type issued to chiefs by the colonial state [7.14].

57. Chief Chiwala for instance is shown [5.18] wearing a modern white shirt, but over it he has put a dark striped garment and on his head a dark furry cap reminiscent of a fez - while his short beard and moustache also add to his striking appearance. Even though Muslims constitute a very tiny minority (in 1972 an estimated 10,000 of a national population of 5 million, or 0.2%), this image seems to evoke Islamic rather than chiefly associations. However, another photograph, taken during a visit of Copperbelt Permanent Secretary Mr. Ngwane to Senior Chief Chiwala's headquarters, shows the chief in informal multicolored shirt and contrasting trousers similar to those worn by the senior civil servant [2.11]; again, in the presence of the state neo-traditional symbols are shed. A picture of Chief Nkolemfumu, one of the most senior Bemba chiefs, accompanies a newspaper report [6.2] on his private visit to the Copperbelt, where he issued a careful statement on the controversial *chitemene* agricultural system of his people. The statement can be read as in support of the traditional ways or of the official anti-*chitemene* policy as propounded by President Kaunda. Like the House of Chiefs members, the elderly chief's attire consists of white shirt, dark European-style jacket and necktie, but on his head he wears a neo-traditional headdress in the form of a crochet bonnet of a light color with two horizontal bands in a darker color [6.2]. Newspaper report 7.14 is also a case in point, cf. preceding footnote.

The Selective Use of Chiefly Symbolism by State Officials

In a context where chiefs seek to emulate a modern, westernized political elite in style of dress and official speech, and allow their own chiefly symbolism to go virtually suppressed especially in situations of direct interaction with state officials, one ought probably not to be surprised to see precious little of this neo-traditional symbolism incorporated into the modern political culture. *President Kaunda and his senior political and administrative office-bearers do not (at least not in 1972-73) consistently pose as modern versions of Zambian chiefs.* When the President performs in major state ceremonies, such as opening a session of the National Assembly [3.2], or when a state portrait is taken, he wears a self-styled long gown with horizontal multicolored bands (presumably meant to represent the colors of the Zambian flag). The gown rests on one shoulder and passes under the other armpit (so that a short-sleeved white western shirt is visible). If the overall impression generated by this gown is African at all (it might also be Roman or South Asian), it has connotations of West Africa, Nkrumah, Pan-Africanism. It does not seem to emulate any style of dress which existed in precolonial Zambia, although it may have been inspired by the chief's gown issued by the Northern Rhodesian government. On other occasions, only slightly less formal, the President may wear a white western suit⁵⁸ or a gray safari suit. On less formal occasions, including mass rallies which require a popular appearance, he may don a multicolored shirt [3.3; 7.1]. The only constant insignia of his presidential status is the white handkerchief in his left hand - an idiosyncratic symbol which aptly evokes connotations of peace, non-violence, cleanliness and sentimentality, but which draws on symbolic repertoires (European, Christian, Ghandist) entirely outside the neo-tradition of Zambian chieftainship.

Yet elements from that tradition do seep through even in President Kaunda's very personal style of leadership. Like elsewhere in Africa, royal drums are emulated in modern state ceremonies. Thus the President arrives at a mass rally in Lusaka "in a copper-plated open

58. E.g. during the Independence anniversary celebrations at State House, 24 October 1972: 7.12.

Landrover, heralded by the beating of traditional drums.⁵⁹ As part of a drive to further African authenticity,⁶⁰ not only is a famous traditional dancer decorated on the occasion of the Zambian Independence anniversary celebrations in 1972,⁶¹ but at the opening of the fifth session of the National Assembly, the first after the establishment of the one-party state, neo-traditional drumming is displayed on an exceptionally large scale [7.3] - as if it is hoped that continuity *vis-à-vis* a more distant past will make up for the rupture *vis-à-vis* the First Republic.

Clearly, ceremonial drumming is only one, far from original, aspect among the many elements of chiefly symbolism that could be adopted into the modern political culture. This was realized by the secretary of the Kafue Township Council, Mr. Sondashi, who, in his evidence to the Chona commission,

(...) reiterated the need to change some policies of colonial bearing to suit the traditional Zambian conditions. Mr. Sondashi said that one example of some policies of colonial bearing is the civic ceremony for urban local authorities. He said that the civic ceremony should be changed to bring it in line with the ceremonies performed during the installation of a chief, and village headman. Mr. Sondashi also suggested that councillors should be dressed in colourful tribal regalia. Mr. Sondashi said that the installation of a mayor should be accompanied by drum beating and dancing in order to attract every resident in town, to promote publicity and sense of interest and pride among the residents of the town.(...) [1.4]

Earlier, a similar plea was made by the Town Clerk of the Ndola City Council [1.4]. It is noteworthy that both proposals should come not from national-level politicians (who, as we have seen, tend to

59. 3.3. Copper, as Zambia's main export product, is a dominant national symbol, used as such in the national flag, the souvenir industry, etc. The roof of the National Assembly building in Lusaka is copper-plated.

60. Zaire's President Mobutu, who had only recently launched that concept as a keystone in national mobilization, was a guest of honor at the Zambian Independence anniversary celebrations in 1972, along with his Tanzanian colleague President Nyerere [7.12].

61. 7.12. Among the 43 people decorated on that occasion were two chiefs: Senior Chief Muchinda, and the Lozi chieftainess Mulena Mukwae Makwibi.

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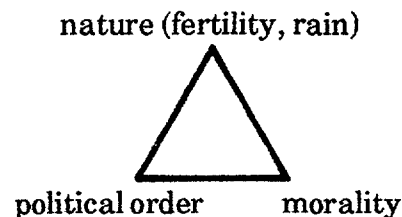
dissemble rather than advocate the ceremonial culture of chieftainship) but from local government officials: civil servants who by training are closely familiar with the ceremonial aspects of the British administrative and judicial culture, and who throughout the 1970s appear to have been struggling to carve out a distinct administrative domain for themselves, with as little control as possible from the national level.

There is a danger to be avoided here. A failure to distinguish between neo-traditional culture in general, and the culture of chieftainship, would confuse our reading of the data on this point. For instance, the name-inheriting ritual staged in memory of Mrs. Helen Kaunda did not in the least suggest that the President of the Republic intended to emulate a chiefly rite. Such ceremonies are a cultural practice which is observed throughout contemporary Zambia by commoners and royals alike. A chiefly installation ceremony is merely an exalted version of the ordinary name-inheriting rite. The changes of names that urban Zambians frequently undergo point to the fact that this practice is not restricted to rural traditionalists. If anything, we encounter in the Chinsali episode an instance of symbolic and ritual *bricolage*:⁶² the presence of chiefs (among them two members of the House of Chiefs, including the Vice-Chairman Chief Mapanza) and commoners from Southern Province, government officials and journalists lifts this rather commonplace private kinship rite towards the national plane (not quite reaching it: Zambia is much, much larger than Southern Province), and allows us a glimpse at processes of ethnic mobilization, inter-ethnic alliance, and the interaction of modern and neo-traditional political office. But no well-informed Zambian observer would interpret the episode as an attempt on President Kaunda's part to pose as a chief: not only does the absence of status symbols in dress and other paraphernalia preclude this, but also the selective presence of the Southern Province delegates makes us all the more aware of the embarrassing absence of local, i.e. Bemba, chiefs from Chinsali and Northern Province at large.

So far we have been dealing with the deliberate, but rather limited, selection of chiefly symbolism for inclusion in the modern political culture. The other side of the coin is that modern politicians in

62. 'Bricolage': a social actor's idiosyncratic free variation and experimentation on the basis of a selection of pre-existing socio-cultural material. The term originally, in the work of Lévi-Strauss, had a somewhat more specific, structuralist meaning.

Zambia, in ways that defy their conscious choices and perhaps even their conscious perceptions, operate within a socio-cultural field where key notions of power and control are permeated with references to the chiefly model. It is inevitable that this model is projected onto modern officials - even if one of them (Mr. Siyomunji, as quoted above), insists that they are not chiefs. Underneath the pragmatic issue of road transport for chiefs, for example, such projection of the chiefly model seems to underly the 'plea from the spirits' as discussed above [7.1]. The mechanism also came out, most clearly, in the Fall of 1972, when the entire country was anxiously awaiting the rains. In a Letter to the Editor in the *Zambia Daily Mail* the old triad:



was invoked, and the government, as if it were a chief, was held responsible for the drought because it had passed the immoral Abortion Act:

Sir,

Many people complain about rain which is not coming down. Is it true that story about the rainmaker of Kalomo whose bones have been exhumed? As an African, I am superstitious [sic], but not as far as that.

I would rather believe there is no rain this year because of the Abortion Act. God alone is master of life and also master of rain. - J. Jere, Lusaka. [7.7]

In Parliament as well, a play of words could be heard linking modern politicians and rain in ways that only make sense by reference to the same triad:

(...) Rural Development Minister Mr. Reuben Kamanga (...) was replying to a question from *Mr. Nalumino Mundia* (ANC, Libanda) [emphasis original] who had urged Government to reconsider its policy in view of the uncertain weather conditions. (...)

If the rains delayed there would be a poor yield next year "even if the Chitandika spirits" brought rain. [Mundia still

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speaking, WvB] Chitandika is another name of the Rural Development Minister. (...)

Mr. Kamanga said Government was not responsible for controlling rain - President Kaunda had not appointed a 'minister of rain' in his Cabinet! [7.6]

On the district level, Mr. Hamatwi, the District Governor for Choma, responded in an even more explicit fashion. When members of the local community attributed the delay of the rains to the fact that in the course of public works the bones of the old rain spirit Choonga had been dug up,⁶³ the District Governor not only ordered the bones to be buried again, but also

(...) instructed chiefs, churches, rainmakers and all elders in his district to pray to God for rain. Mr. Hamatwi said Chief Nyawa, who is a member of the House of Chiefs, travelled more than 50 miles to present a petition and to know what the government was doing about lack of rain this season.

Mr. Hamatwi added, "I have appealed to them to start praying to God. The prayer should also go to all dead chiefs and ancestors of Kalomo district." The governor added: "Mini skirted girls and boys in tight trousers should be excluded from the exercise. Let people brew beer and give their sacrifices to God to give us rain now". - ZANA [7.11]

The point on decent dress could be seen as a modern variant, phrased by a modern politician, of the concern for morality that belongs to the old triad. The neo-traditional and the modern political sphere seem to merge entirely in the face of perennial moral and ecological concerns.

Conclusion

The exploration in this paper has brought together ample material to demonstrate that the chiefly model, and the incumbents it defines, constitute an intimate part of political relations and of the political culture of post-colonial Zambia.

The notion of a fairly rigid separation between chiefs and the state - both with their appropriate spheres of influence, symbols of power,

63. 7.10. On the rain cult in Southern Zambia, cf. Colson 1962; O'Brien 1983.

and formal legitimation - in itself belongs to that political culture and has found its way into the products of scholarship and journalism. But in dialectical interplay with this separateness and avoidance, peripherality and opposition, we come across many and systematic instances of state/chief accommodation, incorporation, dual careers in both the neo-traditional and the modern political sphere, patronage, economic support and modern constitutional legitimation of neo-traditional chiefs.

Are chiefs penetrating the Zambian state, or alternatively is that state seeking to capture the chiefs' ideological⁶ and political support in order to reach down to the rural (and the ineffectively proletarianized urban) masses? These questions no longer appear to be appropriately phrased, for they suggest a more rigid distinction than the actual intertwinement of activities, roles and cultural aspects between chiefs and the state seems to warrant.⁶⁴ Anyway, if the facts of chief/state relations in Zambia are so charged with stereotypes and biases that they have managed to elude academic treatment so far, it is still somewhat early for theorizing on this point. Let us cherish the fundamental ambivalence of the situation as the main result of the present exploration.

This ambivalence permeates Zambian political life, shapes (and blurs, and denies) fundamental conceptions of power and legitimacy in the Zambian political culture, and brings out the severe limitations (in terms of conceptual model, legitimation and mobilizing power) of the imported North Atlantic model of the formally bureaucratic, secular, nationalist state. The political culture has continued to rely, in part, on the chiefly model; the incumbents of positions in the state

64. It therefore increasingly seems doubtful whether the political, judicial and symbolic aspects of contemporary chieftainship in the South Central African and Southern African context can be adequately accounted for in terms of *articulation of modes of production*, as recently advocated by Beinart (1985). As a particularly sophisticated form of dualism, which has proved its usefulness when applied to a great many aspects of modern African society (e.g. van Binsbergen and Geschiere 1985a), I would limit its application in the field of chieftainship to the economic domain: production, exploitation and circulation (van Binsbergen and Geschiere 1985b). An approach whose main purpose is to account for the discrete, mutually-irreducible logics of the various articulated modes, does not seem to fit the pattern of intertwinement and accommodation found in the data as examined in my present argument.

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political structure of Zambia, in their effective exercise of legitimate, popularly supported power, simply cannot do without chiefs. That two decades after Independence Paramount Chiefs have finally found their way onto the Central Committee is therefore not a regression to traditionalism, but the mere recognition of this built-in and persisting ambivalence. Already in 1972, in her testimony before the Chona Commission, Princess Nakatindi argued that the House of Chiefs should be given greater powers, by allowing it to contribute two ministers to the Cabinet. And the House should be "more effective on matters of tradition" (a suggestion from the Ndola City Council, [2.8]). A similar drive to increase the formal powers of the chiefs within the established institutions of the modern central state could be detected in Induna Lutangu's suggestion to the same Commission, "that chiefs should be nominated to become members of Parliament on merit by the President." [4.30]

The newspapers picked up these statements not because they are traditionalistic and out of place, but because they are in line with deep-seated tendencies in the Zambian political culture. Chiefs could and can afford such aspirations, and to a considerable extent have managed to put them into practice, for two reasons. As products of modern state penetration in the early decades of colonial rule, the chiefs have in the most literal sense been part of the modern state ever since the latter's implantation in Zambian soil. And secondly, the chiefs still represent, and through their numerous subjects control, an indispensable part of the ideology that defines social order, legitimacy and power in the contemporary Zambian context - not just by reference to a distant past, but also to values, norms, procedures and cultural forms that are still very much alive.

But against such assertive claims of the chiefs' political competence and popular support, there is always, as the other leg of the fundamental ambivalence, the chiefs' quest for patronage and protection, their awkward use of the state's organizational logic and symbols of power, their occasional reverting to almost colonial models of deference and submission.

The academic, external view of chieftainship as representing a separate field of traditional political careers, aspirations and values totally different from modern life centering on the state, bureaucratic rationality, capitalism and modern urban mass culture has thus been rendered untenable. Even if Princess Nakatindi's is an extreme case, we cannot escape the conclusion that state and chieftainship are closely interlocking aspects of modern Zambian life. In the face of the evidence one can no longer maintain the fiction that modern

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political and neo-traditional leadership constitute two totally separated worlds, each with a logic, a field of relationships, a sphere of competence and jurisdiction, a history of its own.

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Appendix: Titles, Sources and Dates of
Newspaper Items in the 1972-1973 Corpus

Note: ZDM = Zambia Daily Mail; TZ = Times of Zambia; STZ = Sunday Times of Zambia. Since the items were taken from a larger corpus not limited to references on chiefs the numbering is not entirely consecutive.

| <i>item</i> | <i>paper</i> | <i>date</i> | <i>title</i> |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--|
| 1.1 | TZ | 15.2.72 | WE WANT TO GO HOME - plead 'deported' chiefs |
| 1.2 | TZ | 9.2.72 | Hold your fire! ministry advises grumbling chief Mukuni's people |
| 1.4 | ZDM | 7.2.72 | Change the ceremonies |
| 1. | TZ | 4.2.72 | Chiefs pick their men |
| 2.1 | TZ | 14.9.72 | Lundwe chief |
| 2.2 | ZDM | 6.9.72 | Call for public execution of robbers |
| 2.3 | TZ | 19.8.72 | New chiefs named |
| 2.4 | ZDM | 31.7.72 | Mumbwa farmers show off their paces |
| 2.5 | ZDM | 20.7.72 | Plots hand-out to squatters angers chief |
| 2.6 | TZ | 15.7.72 | Deposed chief aims to regain throne |
| 2.7 | ZDM | 10.7.72 | Editor's Uncle dies |
| 2.8 | ZDM | 7.7.72 | One man-one wife, says Ndola Council |
| 2.9 | ZDM | 28.6.72 | [untitled item, beginning: "Mr. David Chiwele..."] |
| 2.10 | ZDM | 19.6.72 | [untitled item, beginning: "Chiefs meeting] in Mwinilunga..."] |
| 2.11 | TZ | 16.6.72 | 'LONELY' CHIEFS PROMISED VISITOR |
| 2.12 | TZ | 9.6.72 | Brothers argue over who should be chief |
| 2.13 | ZDM | 8.6.72 | [untitled item, beginning: "The Minister or Western Province..."] |
| 2.15 | TZ | 19.6.72 | Villagers turn away egistration team |
| 2.16 | TZ | 19.6.72 | Can our chiefs work with the ationalists? by Ben Kakoma |
| 2.17 | TZ | 7.6.72 | Makasa proved doubters wrong |
| 2.18 | TZ | 27.3.72 | UNIP SEMINAR SAYS IT LOUD |
| 2.19 | TZ | 6.3.72 | Letter to the Editor [by] Princess Nakatindi |
| 3.1 | ZDM | 5.12.72 | [report on President Kaunda's Leadership Code speech, Hindu Hall, Kabwe] |
| 3.2 | ZDM | 1.1.73 | [report on opening of the fifth session of the National Assembly] |
| 3.3 | ZDM | 10.7.72 | [report on political rally held at Kafue roundabout, Lusaka, 10.7.72] |
| 3.4 | ZDM | 4.12.72 | One leader, one income ...and these men are the leaders |
| 3.5 | ZDM | 26.1.73 | Leaders get tip on that Code |
| 3.6 | TZ | 18.1.73 | 'Violent changes' threat to society: Law chiefs warned by Chuula |
| 3.7 | ZDM | 18.1.73 | Top leaders told to stop practising tribalism |
| 3.8 | TZ | 16.12.72 | Prof.V. Subramaniam: Varsity Corner: Consider the whole before you decide |
| 3.9 | ZDM | 13.12.72 | 'Tour chiefs' areas' |
| 3.10 | TZ | 13.12.72 | Officials told to go into villages |
| 3.11 | ZDM | 7.12.72 | THE SPIRIT OF THE 2ND REPUBLIC |
| 3.12 | TZ | 5.12.72 | DG denies supporting wrong man for chief |
| 3.13 | TZ | 4.12.72 | From page one: Tough leadership code |
| 3.14 | ZDM | 4.12.72 | Leaders get new orders |
| 3.15 | TZ | 3.12.72 | DG accused in chief row: |
| 3.16 | TZ | 2.12.72 | Varsity Corner: G. Kalenga Simwinga: is it time our chiefs were abolished? |

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| | | | |
|-------|-----|----------|---|
| 3.18 | TZ | 13.11.72 | 8000 see new Chief Mwangala installed |
| 3.19 | TZ | 11.11.72 | THREE NEW CHIEFS WIN KK'S APPROVAL |
| 3.20 | TZ | 10.11.72 | Milner affirms Govt. stand on chiefs |
| 3.21 | STZ | 29.10.72 | Chiefs want respect |
| 3.22 | ZDM | 12.10.72 | Bemba chiefs on aerial trip of waste land |
| 3.23 | ZDM | 11.10.72 | Times got it all wrong, says Milner |
| 3.23a | TZ | 11.10.72 | [report on Mr. Milner's statements, cf. 3.23] |
| 3.24 | TZ | 10.10.72 | OPINION |
| 3.25 | ZDM | 9.10.72 | Go back to the land, chiefs tell loafers. |
| 4.1 | STZ | 12.11.72 | ANGOLA; PART OF IT IS ZAMBIA'S - The price of colonial rule was the loss of a big slice of the Lozi King's traditional territory - by Dr. Mutumba M. Bull |
| 4.2 | TZ | 27.12.72 | Senior induna installed as new Ngambela |
| 4.3 | ZDM | 11.12.72 | KK LEADS MOURNERS AT MUTTI FUNERAL |
| 4.6 | TZ | 8.12.72 | PRINCESS' FAMILY THANKS KAUNDA |
| 4.7 | ZDM | 7.12.72 | 'We have before us a bill designed to bring us all into one nation' - People have been crying for unity - second reading speech of the constitutional amendment no. 5 bill, made by Vice-President Mainza Chona |
| 4.8 | ZDM | 24.11.72 | New road to Sesheke opened |
| 4.9 | ZDM | 23.11.72 | Nakatindi the bridge |
| 4.10 | TZ | 23.11.72 | KK pays his last respects to Princess Nakatindi |
| 4.11 | ZDM | 22.11.72 | NAKATINDI GOES |
| 4.12 | ZDM | 21.11.72 | Princess Nakatindi dies in Lusaka |
| 4.12a | ZDM | 21.11.72 | Obituary [of Princess Nakatindi] by Robinson Makayi |
| 4.13 | TZ | 21.11.72 | Princess Nakatindi is dead |
| 4.14 | ZDM | 26.10.72 | Mutti steps into license row in Solwezi council |
| 4.15 | ZDM | 7.10.72 | Litunga's adviser resigns |
| 4.16 | TZ | 24.9.72 | [report on President Kaunda's trip to Mongu] |
| 4.16 | ZDM | 24.9.72 | [report on President Kaunda's trip to Mongu] |
| 4.16b | TZ | 25.9.72 | [report on President Kaunda's trip to Mongu] |
| 4.16c | ZDM | 25.9.72 | [report on President Kaunda's trip to Mongu] |
| 4.18 | ZDM | 16.8.72 | Nakatindi improves |
| 4.22 | TZ | 24.7.72 | Kafue Hook bridge ready, says Chona |
| 4.23 | ZDM | 16.6.72 | Lozis told to ignore circulars |
| 4.24 | STZ | 11.6.72 | Hospital is way behind schedule |
| 4.25 | STZ | 11.6.72 | SPOTLIGHT ON SOLWEZI: SHADRACK SOKO REPORTS |
| 4.26 | TZ | 3.6.72 | Opinion |
| 4.27 | TZ | 27.4.72 | LITUNGA IS NOT A 'MR' |
| 4.28 | ZDM | 25.4.72 | Chona warns petitioner against lies |
| 4.29 | ZDM | 22.4.72 | BAN THESE PARTY CARD [sic], SAYS INDUNA |
| 4.30 | TZ | 22.4.72 | Ban party cards, inquiry urged |
| 4.31 | TZ | 21.4.72 | Chieftain [spells out? - illegible] role of leader |
| 4.32 | TZ | 4.6.72 | Refugees move on |
| 5.4 | ZDM | 18.3.72 | Ndola feud gets Monday deadline |
| 5.5 | TZ | 23.3.72 | Problem area |
| 5.6 | TZ | 27.3.72 | INTRUDERS WARNED OFF |
| 5.7 | ZDM | 28.3.72 | Keep police out of politics, chief warns commission |
| 5.8 | TZ | 23.3.72 | Scrap the Youth Brigade, says chief |
| 5.9 | TZ | 30.3.72 | 'Lamba in class' plea |
| 5.10 | ZDM | 31.3.72 | Go-ahead signal for squatter area |
| 5.11 | STZ | 1.4.72 | 'Lamba in class' plea supported |
| 5.12 | ZDM | 4.4.72 | No ruling in Lamba row yet - Nyirenda |
| 5.13 | ZDM | 17.4.72 | Mine pumps out village water supply |

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| | | | |
|-------|-----|----------|--|
| 5.15 | TZ | 14.6.72 | SCARED VILLAGE CHIEFS REFUSE TO SIGN |
| 5.16 | TZ | 20.6.72 | Zairean 'invaders' persist |
| 5.17 | ZDM | 22.6.72 | Give us border post, chief asks again |
| 5.18 | TZ | 27.6.72 | CHIEF BACKS BORDERPOST DEMAND |
| 5.19 | TZ | 3.6.72 | 'be on guard' |
| 5.20 | TZ | 12.6.72 | Dirty bars will be closed, chief warns |
| 5.21 | TZ | 21.6.72 | Lamba chief want P.O. at his palace |
| 5.22 | TZ | 18.7.72 | CHIEF DEMANDS NEW ZAIRE BORDER POST |
| 5.23 | ZDM | 18.7.72 | Protect us from aliens - Chief |
| 5.24 | TZ | 26.7.72 | I was not beaten, says angry chief |
| 5.25 | ZDM | 28.7.72 | CHIEF CHIWALA IS THERE TO STAY SAYS MILNER |
| 5.26 | ZDM | 29.7.72 | CHIEF CHIWALA AND THE LAMBA AFFAIR |
| 5.27 | TZ | 26.10.72 | Make prison life harder - Chief[date approx.] |
| 5.28 | ZDM | 13.12.72 | Chief Mushili makes appeal |
| 6.1 | TZ | 29.1.73 | COUNT TO TRACE MISSING MEN |
| 6.2 | TZ | 4.1.73 | Sticking with the old ways |
| 6.3 | TZ | 12.12.72 | Chiefs stand by old farming system |
| 6.4 | ZDM | 20.12.72 | [untitled item, beginning: "The deputy chairman of the Natural Resources advisory board..."] |
| 6.5 | TZ | 27.10.72 | MP comes up with a new suggestion to speed up rural progress |
| 6.6 | TZ | 28.6.72 | ZAM-TAN: how does it affect the local people - A progress report |
| 6.7 | TZ | 29.3.72 | Feira's fed up with name |
| 6.8 | TZ | 17.6.72 | Chief goes on farm tour of UK |
| 6.9 | TZ | 13.6.72 | Loafers 'must be caught' |
| 7.1 | ZDM | 1.12.72 | Plea from the spirits |
| 7.2 | TZ | 18.12.72 | 'Too many herbalists' |
| 7.3 | ZDM | 9.1.73 | Drummers to hail the new leap forward to unity. |
| 7.4 | ZDM | 9.12.72 | Men escape after clash |
| 7.5 | ZDM | 7.12.72 | The night it rained beer on the graves |
| 7.5a | TZ | 7.12.72 | HUNDREDS AT RAIN RITUAL CEREMONY |
| 7.6 | TZ | 7.12.72 | FOR SALE: 1,000,000 BAGS OF BEST MAIZE |
| 7.7 | ZDM | 18.12.72 | [Letter to the editor] |
| 7.8 | TZ | 28.11.72 | Old bones bring rain! |
| 7.10 | TZ | 21.11.72 | Wizard's bones cause drought scare |
| 7.11 | ZDM | 29.11.72 | Government gets rain plea |
| 7.12 | TZ | 25.10.72 | A day to remember at State House |
| 7.13 | ZDM | 28.8.72 | Chona at Chisungu |
| 7.13a | TZ | 28.8.72 | VIP visitor |
| 7.14 | TZ | 17.8.72 | A CHIEF MOURNS |
| 7.15 | TZ | 16.8.72 | A new mother is born to KK -and Zambia |
| 7.15a | ZDM | 16.8.72 | [untitled item, beginning: "PRESIDENT Kaunda has thanked 74 mourners..."] |
| 7.16 | TZ | 3.5.72 | GRAVE GIANT BAFFLES LOZI MAGICIANS The great mushroom mystery |
| 7.17 | TZ | 24.4.72 | 'Mutu' tree |
| 7.18 | TZ | 2.1.73 | 'Mutu Mutanda' wins reprieve |
| 7.19 | ZDM | 21.1.72 | Witches are after my people, says frightened chief |
| 7.20 | TZ | 12.2.72 | [untitled item, beginning: "SENIOR Chief Chiwala is to ask Mpongwe Rural Council..."] |