

of power and prestige, to an almost puritanical public emphasis on sexual propriety and on church affiliation. And this is not just a façade of paying lip-service to modern norms and ideals: actual behaviour has also changed, and promiscuity as well as sexual joking are far less the norm now than they were in the early 1970s.

Much like in Kinshasa as described by Devisch, in urban Zambia people do not accept any longer that the town should be a place without order, and (in the face of impotence or unwillingness on the part of the state to *create*, and impose, order) they go out of their way to create such order themselves.

F. SPONTANEOUS ORDER AND INSTANT JUSTICE AROUND A LUSAKA BUS STATION, ZAMBIA. An impressive example is the situation around Kamwala bus station, Lusaka's main bus terminal. The nature of the Zambian transport system has been such that (not unlike many other such places in the South) hundreds of people often have to spend the night here, or several nights, in the open, waiting for connecting transport. For decades, especially after Independence (1964), the bus station was a place of violence, theft, rape and general insecurity. In the early 1990s, the young men trying to squeeze out a living by showing people to their seats and carrying their luggage (monopolising the right to seats and to luggage services in the process) organised into vigilante groups, which much to the satisfaction, and with the grateful support, of the public, create an authoritarian but effective order around the bus station, not only handling (in a fair and efficient way) the allocation of seats, but also giving chase to, and physically punishing (to the point of severe injury, sometimes death), all evil-doers on the station's premises, including luggage thieves, people trying to travel without a valid ticket *etc.* But while now their action is focused, organised and publicly sanctioned, it also carries on the tradition which has existed for decades in urban Zambia, that of 'instant justice', where especially street thieves have been known to risk their lives since every year several of them were mobbed to death in every Zambian town.

Thus the city appears as a place where order is now being created and effectuated. At the same time we have reason to suspect that the present-day killing of thieves in Kinshasa may not be a totally new phenomenon only interpretable in a context of the rise of notions of 'villagisation', but may have been there for decades – albeit with a slightly different meaning. Another example shows that the concept of villagisation does not very well illuminate the situation of Zambian towns today, since the order created is here is no longer really dependent on the reality, or even dream, of a home village out there in the distant countryside.

In this Section's first case study, above, we have discussed girl's puberty rites in Zambian towns. Such ceremonies, whose basic outlines were conceived in terms of local historic cultures, have constituted a feature of Zambian towns ever since these towns were created as from the beginning of the 20th century CE. Habitually, their reference was explicitly to the village, where (to summarise the urban actors' views in anthropological terms) the kinship and conjugal structures and roles, the pattern of production and reproduction, the symbolism and cosmology, and the expertise about all this, were supposed to be preserved to a greater extent than in town, so that often some participation by actual villagers had to be an aspect of the urban rites. Research by Thera Ra-