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**Meeting the Requirements of a New Localism:
Local Government in Sub-Saharan Africa, The Case of Uganda and Zimbabwe**

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Ph.D.
Graduate Department of Political Science
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Abstract

Meeting the Requirements of a New Localism: Local Government in Sub-Saharan Africa, The Case of Uganda and Zimbabwe

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The globalization of the economy and its accompanying restructuring has not only called into question the role of national governments but also has spawned a greater interest and focus on urban local governments as they grapple with the local consequences of these processes. In both developed and developing countries the focus is on new strategies and new policy arrangements that include non-governmental actors in 'the new localism'. While structural adjustment has reduced the role of the central government in sub-Saharan Africa, one might ask what relevance the new localism has in a part of the world where urban local governments have little autonomy, fewer resources and a poor record of delivery. However, this thesis argues that there is a case for a historically specific new localism in sub-Saharan Africa. Historically, colonial powers in sub-Saharan Africa created a bifurcated state in which they used local government as the linchpin for controlling the African population in what Mahmood Mamdani has termed a decentralized despotism. Mamdani argues that one of the political challenges for African governments is to create democratic openings at the local level in order to re-engage society and break the constellation of power, characterized by patronage politics, which stems from the bifurcated state form. Using historical material from Uganda and Zimbabwe, this thesis develops some historically specific requirements for a new localism. Empirical evidence, obtained from fieldwork conducted in two municipalities in Uganda and Zimbabwe, provides a comparison of decentralization programmes and their impact at the local level, in theory and practice, and an analysis of the possibilities of meeting

the political challenges of developing a new localism. This thesis argues that, put to the test of meeting the requirements of a new localism, a comparison between Jinja and Mutare reveals that Uganda has gone some way to meet those requirements while Zimbabwe has not.

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CHAPTER 1:

The Case for a New Localism in Sub-Saharan Africa

Introduction

Global economic restructuring has caused a renewed political interest in local government around the world. In the developed countries it has spawned the idea of a new localism with far-reaching implications for the way individuals see themselves and the way they are governed, especially with regard to the public/private, state/civil society relationship. In developing countries, and especially in sub-Saharan Africa, restructuring under IMF structural adjustment programmes has led to prescriptive calls for decentralization, transparent and accountable government and the participation of civil society under the rubric of governance. While much of this prescription centres on economic development, the introduction of the concept of governance has added a much-needed political dimension to the debate on African development.

This thesis argues that the concept of a new localism is relevant to sub-Saharan Africa not only because sub-Saharan Africa is caught up in global restructuring but also because of the historically specific circumstances of the African state. Local government is at the heart of sub-Saharan Africa's political challenge and accountability, or lack of it, lies at the heart of the state/civil society relationship. Thus the thesis question: how and with what existing links is the governance relationship of state and civil society being forged? This chapter attempts to establish the theoretical framework for investigating local government in sub-Saharan Africa within the context of a new localism.

I Globalization and "the new localism"

Currently there are compelling reasons for studying local government. It is apparent that worldwide structural adjustment, sometimes characterized by the term globalization, has precipitated increased interest in activity at the local government level (Clarke and Gaile 1997; Goetz and Clarke 1993; Brown and Fry 1993; Pickvance and Pretecielle 1991; Cohn, Merrifield and Smith 1989; Fry 1986). Edward G. Goetz and Susan E. Clarke have termed this new focus on local government "the new localism":

Recent evidence of intensified economic and political demands on localities and increased local development initiatives hints at a new local terrain with unexpected commonalities. Local officials the world over operate under heightened conditions of economic and political uncertainty. They now have social and economic roles and responsibilities that are often new and unanticipated. In each instance, global restructuring pressures compel local officials to reconstruct relations between the public and private sectors at the local level as well as to reconsider the most basic governance issues (Goetz and Clarke 1993, 2).

As Goetz and Clarke use it, the term "the new localism" refers to an externally driven process. It means that the consequences of restructuring in a globalizing economy, often beyond the control of national governments, inevitably are felt in local places. Indeed, in their comparative analysis of six Western democracies¹ Chris Pickvance and Edmond Preteceille (1991) conclude that "economic restructuring and the rise of neo-liberalism have formed the key context for changes in the territorial organization and financing of government" (218). They report that there has been an increased focus on, and expanding political activity at the local level of politics. Thus, the new localism is externally driven by the need to create, through foreign trade and investment at the local level, a market share within the globalizing economy.

¹ The volume contains case studies of Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom, France, the United States and Canada.

Susan Clarke and Gary Gaile (1997) suggest that there are two faces to this new, externally driven localism. Clarke and Gaile argue that the new localism "does not imply the withering away of the national state but it underscores the increased salience of other scales where globalization materializes" (31). Taken from this point of view, communities see a tremendous opportunity to raise their status by finding a niche in the global economy. Local government is characterized as having an advantage because "with its greater salience local government acts as a catalyst of processes of innovation and cooperation" (Clarke and Gaile 1997, 31). However, the authors note that there is another, bleaker side to the new localism in the undermining of local community. In this scenario urban populations are divided between those who are purported to have weak community ties, since their interests lie with the global economy, and those who, while affected by the global economy, are limited by a lack of mobility and economic opportunities. The increased competition for jobs at the local level also heightens social tensions within the latter group. Thus, civic responsibility is eroded in both groups (Clarke and Gaile 1997, 32). Another dimension to this bleaker side is the loss of local autonomy in cities that are less able to take advantage of the new global context. In one of the case studies in Pretecielle and Pickvance, Hartmut Häußermann (1991) notes that this is definitely the case in the Federal Republic of Germany where old cities cope with the legacies of the industrial economy and high unemployment while new cities bask in new-found wealth.² Thus, it is evident that globalization is having a tremendous and varied impact

² In this case, Häußermann asserts that, even when there is a transfer of funds from the national government, local power of decision making is eroded:

grotesquely enough, the blame for the present differences in the economic situation of the towns, resulting from national and international developments, is being laid on the towns themselves. Given the concept of regional crises, which the geographical distribution of unemployment and growth rates

at the local level.

Whatever the effects of this externally driven new localism, they require a great capacity for implementing change at the local level. As Robert Putnam (1993) asserts, social capital is an important component of effective local government³; and the new externally driven localism depends on a great deal of internal social capital. Clarke and Gaile note that the most revolutionary change is the "emergence of a third sector of nonprofit organizations, and the reconstruction of the local institutional infrastructure to accommodate different bargaining and negotiating practices" (33). Instead of being the primary provider of services, more and more local government becomes the enabler, bringing together a wide variety of actors and, therefore, "moderating difference and negotiating cooperation is a new local government responsibility" (33).⁴ Consequently, there is a greater need for political skill and

supports so well, responsibility for solutions is shifted particularly to local policy. The towns that accept this concept are compelled to receive special grants for restructuring to promote growth (116).

³ Using his extensive knowledge of regional reform in Italy, Putnam notes that it is in a civic community where citizens "though not selfless saints, regard the public domain as more than a battleground for pursuing personal interests", that effective political and economic development take place (88). He argues that associational life creates social capital, that is, "features of social organization, such as trust, norms and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating co-ordinated actions" (167). It is the horizontal ties of associational life rather than the vertical ties of more formal institutions which mould the civic community and, according to Putnam, it is in civic communities that government effectiveness and accountability is strongest.

⁴ Gerry Stoker (1995) notes that this enabling function of local government is emphasized in academic analyses in the UK (Cochrane 1993) and is viewed as a catalytic role in academic analyses in the US (Osborne and Gaebler 1992). Stoker argues that regime theory, as developed in the work of Clarence Stone, emphasizes this evolving form of political action at the local level:

Because of its emphasis on the way governmental and nongovernmental actors work across boundaries, regime theory is especially relevant, given the shifting role of urban government...Regime theory provides a new perspective on the issue of power. It directs attention away from a narrow focus on power as an issue of social control towards an understanding of power expressed through social production. In a complex, fragmented urban world the paradigmatic form of power is that which enables certain interests to blend their capacities to achieve common purposes. Regime analysis directs attention to the conditions under which such effective long-term coalitions emerge in order to accomplish public purposes (1995, 54,55).

mediating ability on the part of local government in its provider function. How successful this new reconfiguration is depends not only on the local institutional infrastructure, public, non-profit and private but also their ability to interact.⁵ Clearly, what is required for the new localism to succeed is not only a rich and varied institutional infrastructure, both public and private, but also, and maybe most importantly, a creative politics.

Although the structural influences and their consequences might push towards the new localism across the world, the political response is located within the specific historical context of national and local politics. In their study of northern countries noted earlier, Pickvance and Preteceille observe that there were variations in trends and their explanations for these variations "concerned the strength of neo-liberalism, the nature of state structures (e.g. the strength or weakness of central/federal government), the distribution of political forces between levels of government and the extent of politicization of central-local government relations" (222). Thus they observe both centralization and decentralization trends, depending on the particular context:

Centralization of control was a response to local opposition to neo-liberalism in countries with strong central states seeking to promote neo-liberalism. Decentralization of control was a means of promoting neo-liberalism by appealing to local support, in countries with a weak central state. Decentralization of functions and control could also be a means of promoting expansion of collective consumption (222).

⁵ Even if there is a rich and varied public private and non-profit pool to call upon, the coordination of efforts to create a new institutional mix may bring local political struggles to the fore. Clarke and Gaile point out that problems arise because "noneconomic groups may be plentiful and interactive but fragmented, underfunded, and unlikely to share a collective understanding of an agenda that does not support their constituencies" (1997, 35). A good example of the complexity of the problem is presented by Warren Magnusson (1996) in his case study of women's transition houses in Vancouver. Faced with cutbacks, feminists found themselves outmanoeuvred by politicians which wished to retain the service but without what they considered to be a leftist feminist philosophy (1996, 241-259). What Magnusson points out is that, in the new configuration of public, nonprofit and private institutions, flexibility and permeability are the attributes needed to obtain a favourable outcome but specific constituencies may lose political ground. Nevertheless it is at the local level and within this context of the new localism that these constituencies find political space to grow.

While the increased political significance of the local level is a common trend, the authors assert that it does not necessarily lead to open and more democratic government; nor are alliances necessarily forged between divergent, especially class, actors whose struggles are conducted from their own point of view (Pickvance and Preteceille 1992, 223). Clarke and Gaile also note that local officials choose between differing opinions on the new localism and "adapt these interpretations to fit the political and economic context in which they work" (1997, 43). Certainly, as Warren Magnusson reminds us, local government, at least in North America, has a strong legacy of boosterism which is narrowly concerned with the promotion of local business interests above all (1996, 143). In short, while globalization has uniformly drawn new attention to the local level through the need for structural change, how that is played out in political struggles depends on historically specific factors both at the national and at the local level.

The new focus on local government is not wholly confined to developing effective measures to face the challenge of economic restructuring. It is the view of some writers that political adaptation at the local level, within the context of the new externally driven localism, is providing an important new way to approach politics in general and often challenges the practices of the national state (Magnusson 1996; Kirby 1993; Nossal 1993; Schuman 1992; 1986; Feldman and Feldman 1990). Some initiatives at the local level include issues of social justice and the environment as community groups have demanded changes in national and international policy, instituting what Michael Schuman has referred to as a "local foreign policy". In a more radical analysis, Andrew Kirby (1993) asserts that local governments, as hybrid institutions, are part of the state but more permeable to local initiatives and better able

to provide initial responses to societal change. He argues that real change takes place at the local level and the survival of the state depends on this function even as a compromise is struck with notions of national sovereignty.⁶

Addressing the same issues, Magnusson (1996) goes even farther and suggests that local government may provide a model for the national state so that it may better function within the context of globalization. He argues that the ambiguous and liminal nature of local government may be the characteristics nation states need to chart a course in a globalizing world. Magnusson proposes that, in this time of globalizing trends we not *devalue* but *revalue* the sovereign state by decentring it. He notes that the state has never lived up to its ideology of sovereignty but that with global economics, global culture and global movements it is no longer feasible even to keep up the pretense. He suggests that, instead, we conceptualize the state as a municipality writ large in order to give it the flexibility needed in the midst of globalization. He recognizes that there is the triple constraint on local political action of capitalism, statism and new disciplinary regimes, which "privileged the knowledge of professionals and determined priorities not already given as requirements of the state and the market", but also notes that movements such as feminism and environmentalism have started locally and pushed through the liminal local state to national and international venues (163).

⁶ Borrowing a phrase from Benedict Anderson, Kirby describes the national state as an "imagined community" that has raised itself above its localities as a single monolith when in reality it "consists of many disparate parts" (118, 139). This creates an always conflicting relationship in which the disparate parts are a chaos that must be confined by state force; but, Kirby asserts, the growing complexity of civil society confounds these attempts, revealing a chaotic state. Citing examples of the resistance of women and gays and the actions of communities on the border between Mexico and the United States, Kirby notes that "the networks of everyday life are more powerful than the tendrils that go to make up the 'imagined community'"....[and thus] higher order governments can be induced to lower defensive postures and initiate formal agreements [internationally]" (132, 133). Accordingly, change comes from the multitude of complex struggles at the local level and "the survival of the state is an eternal compromise" between real change that is taking place and the posturing of the monolith state (Kirby 1993, 137).

Magnusson asserts that a municipality is ambiguous and liminal: ambiguous, because it is seen as the seat of democratic self-government located in everyday life in a localized space but also is not recognized to be in itself effective politically; and, liminal because political action often starts locally but quickly moves beyond to national and international dimensions. He suggests that the municipality's ambiguity and liminality may be the characteristics the nation state needs in a globalized world:

it is the municipality - archetypically limited in its authority and its command over popular loyalties, weak in relation to the global processes that form people's identities and shape their behaviour, and ambiguous in its position at the boundaries of human existence - that presents the most realistic political model (302).

Magnusson reconfigures the world order as the global city in which the states are glorified municipalities and where statism and capitalism are seen as the most powerful movements but interacting with other movements. Here we see that local politics not only provides a space for political action but also a model for rethinking the role of the state in a globalizing world. Thus, the externally driven new localism has brought local government to unprecedented prominence.

The preceding discussion leaves no doubt that the externally driven new localism is an important topic, at least in the so-called developed world. However, experts also are looking to local initiatives as a key to successful economic and political development in the developing world, especially in sub-Saharan Africa where, unlike Asia, centralized authority has not enjoyed success (Goetz and Clarke 1993; Hyden 1990; Wunsch and Olowu 1990). Certainly sub-Saharan Africa has felt the consequences of global restructuring with the effect that most countries were under strictly controlled IMF structural adjustment programmes by the late 1980s. The bleak side of the new localism, so aptly described above by Clarke and

Gaile, has not been lost on sub-Saharan Africa. Nevertheless, if responding to restructuring through a new localism presents a difficult challenge to national and local governments in developed countries, where a strong internal institutional infrastructure (public, private and non-profit) with a comparatively rich resource base exists, what sort of solution is it for sub-Saharan Africa? This discussion begs the question: what significance does a new localism have for Africa?

II Localism in sub-Saharan Africa: the decentralization debate

Localism under colonialism

Localism, loosely used here to describe an externally driven emphasis on the local level, is not new in sub-Saharan Africa. Since colonial times, decentralization has been a key concept in the modern history of sub-Saharan Africa which has come in and out of fashion, creating, as Mawhood describes it, a pendulum effect (1983, 8). The term itself becomes confusing as it often conflates at least three different meanings. (Laleye & Olowu 1990; Mawhood 1983; Olowu 1987; Cheema and Rondinelli 1983). It has been used to describe bureaucratic, or administrative, deconcentration from a central administration to a more localized field of administration whose officials still report to the central headquarters. Secondly, it may mean delegation, which means the shifting of a responsibility from the central government to a sub-national level. This may be done for various reasons, such as better delivery of service, and usually involves some restructuring of revenue sharing to provide for the means of administration. Finally, the same term has been used to describe a broader and more political concept of devolution of authority. Unlike the first two, this concept involves power sharing between levels of government, giving the local government

autonomy of decision-making in certain designated areas and fiscal independence from the centre in order to carry out its specific responsibilities. At the policy level this sort of decentralization involves specific power sharing in fiscal and administrative arrangements which will facilitate the effectiveness of each level. It is only in this third meaning that decentralization can be properly referred to as local government (Mawhood 1983, 3-4). Francophone Africa inherited structures notably based on the deconcentration model, while local government structures inherited by Anglophone Africa were modelled after the British decentralized system which involves a degree of devolution. Nevertheless, O. M. Laleye and Bamidele Ayo (1987) point out that it is a mistake to think that Anglophone Africa has experienced devolution at the local level. In fact, African local authorities have rarely achieved the autonomy that would fit the devolution definition of decentralization and warrant the local government label.

During the colonial period, local authorities may have been variously viewed by the colonial authorities as instruments of economic development but they never strayed far from their primary function of political control through administration. Even under indirect rule, a policy attributed particularly to the British and which incorporated indigenous leaders at the local level, native authorities were kept firmly under the control of the central colonial administration through the appointment of District Officers (DOs) and depended on that authority for their very existence. Native authorities were run by indigenous leaders who held autocratic control over the local people and were concerned with local customary land allocation and dispute settlement as well as tax collecting for the colonial authority. The

native authorities were often manipulated or reinvented by the colonial power⁷ and the chiefs who made up the native authority were gradually professionalized for administrative duties (Fallers 1965). Laleye and Dele Olowu comment that, "during the colonial period, conflicts were rampant between the central government officials and their field representatives (DOs) on the one hand, and local authorities, or native authorities, on the other, culminating in their dissolution by the central authority". (1990, 80). Later, decentralization became a key policy to contain African political movements which proliferated during and after the depression of the 1930s. In the case of Kenya, for instance, the containment of political power bases in local government institutions was seen to be the key in the bid to "formalize and localize the arena of political agitation" (Oyugi 1983, 112; also for Sudan see Norris 1983, 53).

In the pre-independence period of the 1950s, the degree of local autonomy was at a relatively high point, although still tightly controlled from the colonial centre. R. E. Robinson elaborates on the rationale behind the British move to establish autonomous government in 1947, commenting that there were two main arguments:

One was administrative. They would be much more effective agencies for development than the traditional native authorities before them; and the other was political. Africa's national leaders demanded English style local government and would have no other, while their overlords could think of no better school for mass education in democracy. Through the local authorities on their doorstep, peasant and herdman, schoolmaster and trader were to learn the arts of democratic initiative and control which would soon apply to parliamentary government at the centre. And when independence came, the local authorities would stand guardians of local and individual liberty against the hand of absolutism at the top (1961, 5).

These late colonial structures, heralded as the school for democracy, were a move towards the model of English local government structures and away from the existing native authorities.

Indeed, the development of the colonial state had depended greatly on the this backbone of

⁷ In Kenya, for instance, the British created their own Headman system since the indigenous institutions were not appropriate for their purposes (Oyugi 1983, 110; also see Rosberg and Nottingham 1966, 80-96).

colonial rule. Yet, suddenly, it seems, they were regarded as too traditional and parochial to serve as vehicles for good government and too limited in their knowledge of administration to manage development (Summer Conference 1961, 17-19). Thus, local government institutions which had never performed except under political and bureaucratic control from the central colonial power were, nevertheless, suddenly to be transformed into a panacea for self-government as well as the vehicles for more effective economic development. In actual fact, colonial authorities were the most enthusiastic about autonomous local government when independence became inevitable and the need for a transition to independent politics was considered a priority. Their tolerance increased as their political interest waned.

Localism after independence

The fact is that after independence indigenous central authorities have been no more tolerant of autonomous local government than their colonial predecessors. Post-independence politics have centred on capturing, and keeping, national power for two important reasons. First, Philip Mawhood notes that post-independence governments needed to emphasize national unity and legitimacy amongst diverse populations and local autonomous political authority was considered to be inimical to this process (1983, 8). Commenting on the trend in Francophone and Anglophone West Africa, Laleye and Ayo assert that, "all governments have consistently attempted to influence the representatives of the population, so as to avoid local governments becoming some kind of counter-powers to the central authority" (1987, 61; also see Gboyega 1983; 1978; Harris 1983; Mawhood 1983a; Norris 1983; Oyuji 1983). A second phenomenon which has affected the character of local government in Africa is the fact that aid funding, international loans and joint ventures with private multinationals have all created

circumstances where access to government decision-making on development projects has meant access to opportunities for gaining wealth, prestige and political power; the power is derived mainly from the ability to let others in on these opportunities. While Nigeria, especially during the oil boom years in the 1970s, may be a prime example (Graf 1988; Jibrin 1994; Koehn 1990; Panter-Brick 1978), this phenomenon is present all over sub-Saharan Africa (Bayart 1993; Oyugi 1983, 136-8; Reilly 1983, 144-46). Herein lies another rationale for decentralization: national political elites give in to pressures for creating sub-national units; pressures fuelled not by the need for local political expression but by the political trade-off in which local elites trade political support in exchange for a piece of the national pie (Bayart 1993, xvii; Graf 1988, 180-89; Oyugi 1983, 127-28). At the same time, in order to hold onto their power and prestige, national elites at the top must keep a highly centralized decision-making mechanism for dispensing opportunities (Koehn 1990). This phenomenon makes administrative decision-making highly suspect, whether the decisions are coerced by the politicians or are the result of the dubious activities of administrative personnel. Thus, for national political elites with precarious legitimacy there exist strong pressures for creating local structures without political substance.

Localism and the influence of international development ideology

International development ideology and its changing nature has contributed to the pendulum effect described by Mawhood. Shifts in development thinking have resulted in the call for varying degrees of attention on the local level and local participation depending on the prevailing development ideology. Although, scholars at a conference on local government in Africa in 1961 commented that "(I)t is our view that a strong system of local government

can act as a unifying force in times of rapid social and political change", R. E. Robinson concluded that "the question now is whether Africa can afford the luxury of liberty at the price of squandering its meagre resources in administrative waste" (Summer Conference 1961, 6; Robinson 1961, 5). The conference concluded that local government in Africa was unequal to the task of economic development and participants called for "stricter control and increased central aid" (Robinson 1961, 7). The 1960s saw a move towards consolidating central power but a decade later when basic needs became a goal of many international development initiatives, the methodology moved to incorporate local participation with appropriate technology and away from centrally controlled and capital intensive projects (Olowu 1987, 50).⁸ The move to a basic needs strategy corresponded with the development of a mixed authority at the local level. Decentralization in this context became a methodology for the prevailing development theory without any real reference to local conditions beyond the perceived stage of national development. An important document of that time, *Employment Growth and Basic Needs* (1976), which evolved from the Tripartite World Conference on Employment, Income and Social Progress and the International Division of Labour and was published by the International Labour Office in Geneva, involved a collaboration with the World Bank and the University of Sussex in which,

the skeletal framework of a "typical" developing country at the present time was established. It does not reflect the structure of any particular country, but the figures used do take into account empirical data on different types of country, especially Latin American countries (ILO 1976, 36).

⁸ This approach was inaugurated by the World Bank in 1972 in light of the new evidence that the modernization model had not worked. Despite growth in the Gross National Product (GNP) in African countries there were vast numbers of people who remained in poverty. In order to take this into account, growth with equity became the dual approach to development planning. The thrust of this approach was to target poor groups with poverty alleviation programmes that had a particular emphasis on the household, local participation and decentralized services. For an explanation of the basic needs approach and practices see Liepziger and Streeten (1981). For a critical analysis of this approach see Sandbrook (1982).

Perhaps the most startling evidence for this phenomenon in Africa is the fact that such policies show up on national development agendas regardless of national ideology or local political will.⁹ Philip Mawhood notes that decentralization efforts in Tanzania differed little from those in Sudan or Ghana. He comments that, "(T)here is a certain shared climate of opinion internationally, so that changes made in one country are replicated in another at the same time, or after a few years' delay" (Mawhood 1983, 7; 1987). By 1983 the World Bank noted that deconcentration and delegation were the chosen forms of decentralization in most countries and that devolution was not favoured because "Africa's political leaders tended to see local government as incompetent, profligate and politically divisive".¹⁰ Nevertheless, the World Bank recommended devolution (autonomous local government) for two reasons: "First the growing desire to find new ways of mobilizing resources; and, second, the recognition that local government employees could be used more efficiently than they have been"¹¹. Thus, administration, not political development, was the prime concern and a "shortage of technical and administrative skills" was the problem.¹² By 1984, the World Bank's attention had already been shifted from basic needs to the debt problem and decentralization and privatization of services with user fees crept onto the agenda.¹³ If post-independence political imperatives

⁹ The ILO document sees decentralization as the key to employing a basic needs strategy but does add that redistribution of land must take place in the rural areas. In the urban areas a basic needs approach calls for an "effective, decentralized and democratic *administrative* structure" (my emphasis, ILO 1976, 66; 47-70) Paul Streeton, a main spokesman of the World Bank on basic needs, recognized the political barriers but also pointed out the need to 'deliver' basic needs in a short period of time (Streeton et. al. 1981, 148,149).

¹⁰ World Development Report 1983, 120.

¹¹ Ibid., 121.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ *Toward Sustained Development in Sub-Saharan Africa*, World Bank Report 1984, 30-31.

brought about local authorities with no political substance, it is equally true that those local authorities also remained subordinate to the more important task of development which was strongly influenced by ideological trends.

Characteristically, the literature up until the mid-1980s centred on decentralization as a vehicle for development and focused on administrative problems rather than local political development. Olowu, who has provided a detailed review of the literature on African local government (1987), comments that,

Two central themes have dominated the study of African local government. The first is how to reconcile the drive towards rapid socio-economic development with decentralization strategies. The other theme has been what type of decentralization strategy is most appropriate - devolution of power to local self-governing institutions or deconcentration through field units of the central government (1987, 48).

Thus, local self-governing is only considered as a strategy for the more important task of development. Olowu points out that while early publications, just before and after independence (Cowan 1958; Hicks 1961; Maddick 1963; Alderfer 1964; Wraith 1964; Campbell, Brierly and Blitz 1965; Smith 1967; Humes and Martin 1969), referred to local 'government' and contained a mixed concern for both administrative efficiency and development of political institutions, by the 1970s administrative concerns took precedence.¹⁴ He notes that the reactivated interest in the 1970s spawned new material (Cheema and Rondinelli 1983; Mawhood 1983; Rondinelli 1983) that maintained a strong emphasis on managerial concerns, leading to the general conclusion that "decentralization policies suffer from implementation problems" (1987, 51). Thus, this later round of decentralization, seen as

¹⁴ Olowu comments that,

The mood of this drift was captured by Ronald Wraith when he revised his 1966 book. The new title was *Local Administration in West Africa*, a change [from government to administration] he made, according to him, because of the changing tides (1987, 50).

a useful policy instrument for the administration of development, seemed to distance itself from 'politics'.

By the late 1980s, criticism of the decentralization thrust of development planning maintained that it was not necessarily inimical to centralizing political imperatives nor was it as apolitical as planners might think. Richard Stren (1989) points out that the Tanzanian effort to decentralize was purported to bring Tanzanians closer to local democracy by bringing more efficient development but remarks that,

Ironically, the pursuit of this "local democracy" involved the abolition of all local government councils in both rural and urban Tanzania and their replacement by regional and district committees dominated by central government officials (1989,23).

Going further, David Slater (1989) argues that, in the case of Tanzania, decentralization provided "a cloak for increasing state control, combined with reliance on foreign aid, including World Bank funding for export-oriented agricultural projects" (Slater 1989, 514). Furthermore, in his debate with Dennis Rondinelli, he points out that technical approaches to decentralization tend to use a depoliticized discourse, through arguments of preferences, efficiencies and choice, while at the same time espousing the promotion of equitable economic development without any serious consideration of the politics of peripheral capitalism (Slater 1989; 1990; Rondinelli, McCullough & Johnson 1989; Rondinelli 1990). Slater asserts that the combination of rational choice and traditional political-economy approach used by Rondinelli is part of a neo-liberal agenda that is now entering the decentralization debate and comments that, "a rather arresting association is emerging between the watchword of decentralization and the privatization of provision" (1989, 521). In this case, decentralization can be a mask for the very political issues of privatization, deregulation and

the dismantling of the social function of the state (Slater 1990, 516).

If decentralization serves varied political interests it still tends to leave out local politics. Joel Samoff points out that local politics "remains a secondary concern" noting that "success is to be measured by improved implementation of development schemes, not increased political mobilization" (1990, 516). He also observes that the decentralization proponents, although purporting to be objective, have,

an intensely political initiative on two fronts. In the academic arena the assertion that a disinfected discourse, one protected from the germs of politics and ideology, is both possible and essential functions to delimit the scope of the debate by specifying the acceptable terms and analytic constructs. In diverse Third World politics a similarly sanitized perspective privileges techniques and technicians and is thereby more likely to reinforce authoritarian rule than to extend democratic participation (1990, 527).

Slater contends that if decentralization can be used for these purposes "alternatively it can be linked into a discourse that combines ideas of collective empowerment, democracy and socialism. Hence the need for, and importance of, an alternative vision of decentralization... the combination of representative political forms with direct participatory forms is of primary significance" (1989, 523). However, Slater concludes that popular democracy must reach all levels of government, not just local, in order to "breathe real life into decentralization... But without a break from the political logic of peripheral capitalist development, the necessary, although certainly not sufficient, conditions for an articulation of decentralization and substantive democracy cannot materialize" (1989, 523). Thus, if, from the technical discourse, we have a depoliticized theoretical discourse on decentralization which is lacking in substantive political content, from the political economy perspective we have a content-heavy analysis which precludes political development until necessary conditions are met. While Slater's criticism brings political concerns into the decentralization debate it does not provide much hope for local government in sub-Saharan Africa.

The renewed call for localism in sub-Saharan Africa

As in the developed world, the immense structural change since the mid-1980s has resulted also in a renewed interest in local government in Africa. Over-burdening debt, fiscal collapse and the resulting economic restructuring has brought about several important social consequences. The most serious collapse of faith in centralized government since independence has resulted in widespread demonstrations calling for democratic reform in the early 1990s. There has been a tremendous growth of informal social and economic activities spawned by wide-spread unemployment, the inability on the part of governments to pay adequate wages and the reduction of government services. The urgent need for governments to establish a tax base, as a result of the requirements of the IMF in restructuring programmes, has resulted in demands for more accountability. These changes are having a particular impact in the cities where much of the informal activity takes place and where growing informal settlements increase the demands for local government action (Stren and White 1989). Rodney White comments that "Although the region is not highly urbanized by global standards, the trend in that direction has been extremely rapid" (1989, 2). Indeed, The Global Report on Human Settlements 1996 reports that in some cases the urban population has grown sevenfold spawning "spontaneous, popular housing areas " while, at the same time, there has been a deterioration of services and a serious erosion of the employment base (1996, 86)¹⁵. Thus, the stress on cities increases at the same time as government's ability to renew old infrastructure and provide services declines. In relation to this crisis, Richard Stren

¹⁵ The Report on Human Settlements acknowledges that describing urban population changes in Africa is "particularly problematic because of large gaps in basic demographic data" and, thus, "one becomes more reliant on studies for particular settlements or city neighbourhoods or sectors that give an insight into the scale and nature of change" (1996, 84).

comments that solutions to problems "must be formulated locally, by local people, on the basis of local experience and information... Their solutions will require both imagination and enormous dedication" (1989a, 66). In this context decentralization of responsibility and strengthening local government is once again being viewed as an antidote to state-centred development; however, positioned as it is, closer to local demands and struggles, it is now also seen as potentially more accountable and, therefore, a pathway to more democratic practices (Hyden and Bratton 1992; Stren 1989a; 1990).

Localism and the governance debate

A key concept within this recent emphasis on the local level of government is that of governance. The recent debate over governance does bring a much broader focus to the study of local government and development (McCamey, Halfani and Rodriguez 1995; Hyden and Bratton 1992; Leftwich 1994; World Bank 1990; Wunsch and Alowo 1990; Wunsch 1991). The concept of governance, at least, has brought politics and political development back into view as far as it is viewed as a relationship between citizens and political leaders. Hyden defines the concept of governance as:

the use of political authority to promote and enhance societal values - economic as well as non-economic - that are sought by individuals and groups. It refers to the processes whereby values in society, at different levels, are being realized. The concept is broader than "government" in that it presupposes that values are being allocated and defended by structures other than the government or the state (1990, 246).

The concept of governance brings forward political culture as "an independent variable in the analysis of development" (Hyden 1992, 8). Inherent in the concept of governance is the need to look at the dynamic interaction between community and government as governance is an "interactive process by which state and social actors reciprocally probe for a consensus on the rules of the political game" (Bratton and Van de Walle 1992, 30). In the 1990s this debate on

governance has challenged theorists to move beyond the technical problems of administration at the local level. Diana Lee and Richard Stren lay the groundwork for this movement by pointing out that

an alternative approach... should pay more attention to how the society and the indigenous economy organizes itself, and less attention to the organizational dynamics of the institutions of the state. While neither can be studied in isolation from the other, the balance between the two elements of the relationship needs to be altered. A new approach to the study of African urban management needs to start with the state of society, rather than with the society of the state (Lee-Smith and Stren 1991 as quoted in McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez 1995, 99).

McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez note that the concept of governance goes some way in fashioning such an approach, asserting, in agreement with Michael F. Lofchie (1989), that

Its appearance in the development literature throws new light on the configuration of forces whose interactions determine the direction of change in society. By precluding a pre-determination of the locus of power, the notion of governance permits an incorporation of forces and factors which previously were considered to be only marginally involved in formulation, implementation, outcome and impact (McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez 1995, 99).

The authors assert that, in reference to these new research needs, a definition of governance "refers to the relationship between civil society and the state, between rulers and the ruled, the government and the governed" (1995, 95). They suggest that studies of governance must focus on both administrative and political structures in the government, on the structures of civil society and on the interaction between the two since solutions to urban management problems need a multi-factored approach. Likewise, the concept of decentralization must be understood and approached in this broader aspect (98-108). Elsewhere, McCarney concludes that,

Urban governance thus allows us to reconsider local government as more than just a technical or administrative arm of central government in the developing world. In the context of decentralization, governance permits an understanding of local government as more than just a bureaucratic structure with new autonomous powers and functions. When urban governance is introduced as the relation between actors in civil society engaging with local structures, new territory is opened up for reviving local government. Recognition of the importance of the local level in discussions of democratization focuses new attention on this tier of government in the development dialogue (1996, 6).

The governance debate brings both economic and political realities to the forefront of the discussions of local institutions.

While research and opinion in the governance debate reflect the recognition of a wider field of actors, it is argued that a great deal of emphasis on the state and administration (local or central) remains (McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez 1995). For example, papers coming out of the World Bank Annual Conference on Development Economics in 1991 remain firmly oriented towards institutional and administrative policy-making (Boeninger 1991; Landel Mills & Serageldin 1991; Martin 1991). However, some writers have analysed how the informal political and economic activities of community-based associational life do, or might, interact with formal local government institutions (Mabogunje 1992; 1994; Lee Smith, 1989; Goetz 1993; Onibokun 1996; Attahi 1996). Edward G. Goetz, in a cross-national study, analyses both the vertical (centre-local) and horizontal relations (redefinition of public/private, reconstitution of local government roles vis-a-vis the market) and concludes that vertical restructuring of political and administrative activities between centre and local levels is effective only when there is "the formation of effective institutions and political mechanisms at the local level" (Goetz and Clarke 1993, 203). His solution is the creation of strong local institutions through the process of devolution, initiated by central government, to provide the environment for renegotiation between community and government at the local level (Goetz and Clarke 1993, 14). Akin L. Mabogunje, in his useful analysis of the informal political and economic activity of community-based associational life proposes that the only way to create effective local government is to encompass those activities and bring them into a more formal context (1992; 1994; 1995). Noting that informal institutions can rise to considerable status,

Mabogunje sees the need to formalize and legalize such entities. He also sees "institutional radicalization" as an answer, whereby traditional institutions are maintained in form but with new content reflecting societal change (1995, 24). The implication of Mabogunje's analysis is to put emphasis on the state's role to better encapsulate vibrant informal activities, how "to formalize the informality of large sections of urban life" (1995, 40). Koffi Attahi (1996) notes that in Francophone Africa, between 1993 and 1995, a new wave of decentralization (Benin, Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso) has stressed good local governance and "differs from the preceding wave of decentralization in its participatory approach, and its constant search for consensus on its goals, processes and means of attaining decentralization" (175). He also notes that some modification of political institutions at the local level has begun in order to permit more participation. Thus there is some emphasis on internal political efficacy which might constitute a local government rather than just an administration.

There are several limiting factors in these arguments for a new, more internally driven local government in Africa. Research shows that, so far, there are scant ties between formal government, especially local government, and community-based associational activity in sub-Saharan Africa (Mabogunje 1992; 1995; Ngau 1993; Olowu 1993; Stren, Motabar and Attahi 1993; Attahi 1996; Onibokun 1996). In a study of four communes in Côte D'Ivoire the authors observe that local government officials have few mechanisms for bringing together community groups, if they exist, and, indeed, cooperation was not forthcoming because it was seen by some groups as a vote of confidence for those in power (Stren, Motobar and Attahi 1993). Commenting on Anglophone West Africa, A. G. Onibokun states that,

Simply stated, current practices cannot lead to sustainable development. The requisite vision and commitment are lacking, the required popular confidence does not exist, and partnership between

government and civil society is a mirage (1996, 168).

Speaking of Francophone Africa, Attahi observes that participation of civil society is undermined by "a lack of awareness of urban authorities with respect to their potential role in economic development. Second, local authorities do not trust many economic and associational groups. Finally, there are so few organizations on the ground which are capable of responding to social demands, developing and managing projects competently and transparently" (Attahi 1996, 180-1). Researchers, such as Mabogunje, suggest that, at the local level community associations are able to raise revenue, provide service and remain accountable and, thus, enjoy more legitimacy than formal political structures. However, when they do connect with formal institutions, they often bypass local government and forge ties with the centre where the real power lies. Limited indeed are the existing organic links with which to support governance at the local level.

The lack of ties to formal institutions is compounded when gender is considered in the analysis. Women's struggles in development, caught up in the complexity of gender relations, remain a concern for theorists and policy-makers alike (McCarney 1993; Moser 1993; 1995; Sen and Grown 1987; Shiva 1989; Stamp 1989). Maxine Molyneux divides women's interests into strategic and practical gender interests, the former including broad issues (eg. sexual division of labour, political equality, freedom of choice of childbearing), and the latter including interests which "arise from the concrete conditions of women's positioning by virtue of their gender within the division of labour" (1986, 284). Although women of different classes have different practical interests and also may differ on strategic interests, in practice, Women in Development (WID) and Gender and Development (GAD) initiatives have shown

that, given the complexity of gender relations, practical needs cannot be separated from strategic ones (Moser 1993, 37-54). Moreover, as Caroline Moser points out, women are extremely important actors in their local communities, performing as they do the triple role of production, reproduction and community managing (1993, 27-36). In addition, women's associational life, which has burgeoned during the structural adjustment period, has been an important avenue towards empowerment for women (Moser 1993; Sen and Grown 1987). However, the link to formal institutions becomes more tenuous, given that the combination of Western patriarchal attitudes and institutions and indigenous gender bias makes access to formal structures, both from within informal community-based structures that are not gender specific and through women's groups, much more difficult (Stamp 1989).¹⁶ Thus it would seem to be harder for women than for men to make links to formal institutions.

Although restructuring has brought about a focus on the new localism worldwide and the new round of the decentralization debate in Africa calls for a more inclusive and dynamic local politics, what still seems to be missing is a theoretical framework to help fit local

¹⁶ As Carol Pateman (1988) argues, the Western patriarchal attitude toward women remained unchanged even as consciousness of liberal individualism took hold. Thus, she asserts, patriarchy had two elements, the paternal rule of the father over son and the masculine rule of husband over wife; the liberal contract of individuals overcame the first but subsumed the second by making the relationship between the sexes natural and, thus, unchangeable. Guaranteeing access to women (something that had been previously controlled by the patriarchal paternal right) and the material and psychological benefit that that entailed and, moreover, the right over progeny so as to "generate new political life and political right", this modern ascriptive rule of men over women "created a political bonding for the brotherhood (Pateman 1988, 115, 113). Thus, in theory, women could never move into civil society. Liberal theory, Pateman argues, has never moved beyond the abstract individual and, while women have been able to move in to civil society, they can only do so if they disavow their bodies and act as men because the "civil individual has been constructed in opposition to women" (Pateman 1988, 122). The concrete reality is that if women wish to enter civil society as women, they must enter into the triple role to which Caroline Moser refers. Thus, says Pateman, "The most profound and complex problem for political theory and practice is how the two bodies of human kind and feminine and masculine individuality can be fully incorporated into political life" (1988, 122). A gender analysis compounds the complexity of the concept of civil society.

government, an internally driven localism, into an African political analysis. To borrow Atul Kohli's comment (made in another context about rational choice concepts), speculation about localism in Africa "tends to snuff the specific African context out of" the discussion (1987, 243). Mawhood points out that, "Paradoxically the existence of an unchallenged central authority ...gives the best hope that solid local government can be constructed" (1983a, 103). William Graf (1995) argues that not only does the implementation of restructuring entail a strong central government but also the state "remains the major, and perhaps only, framework within which important social and political issues can be dealt with in the context of a world system permanently stacked against peripheral societies and economies" (159). Graf concludes that "(W)ithout a real state and a real state theory, then, the South would appear to have no way forward, out, or back. The question that needs to be posed, therefore is not: state or market? but: what kind of state and whose state?"(1995, 159). What might be added is: where would localism come in? There is a need to locate localism in Africa in a more complete political analysis of African politics.

III Locating localism in an analysis of African politics

Getting to the bottom of responsibility and accountability

The current debate over governance makes the location of local politics in an analysis of African politics even more urgent because governance is a complex idea that aims at the heart of political power. This is because it involves the notion of accountability and responsibility which, far from being a remedy available for application, is the *product* of a complex political process. Patrick Chabal (1992) argues that political accountability cannot be removed from the context of political power. He asserts that the analysis of political

accountability is “the analysis of the constantly changing determinants of the theory and practice of political obligation between those who hold power and those who do not” (Chabal 1992, 54). Regarding post-independence African governments, Chabal argues, there were “more important, deeper, prior and more historically significant political processes for which the liberal notion for representation did not provide an adequate framework” (1992, 57). It is this configuration of power relations which determines accountability and responsibility and only when there is a change in the relations of political power can changes in accountability emerge. Likewise, John Lonsdale states that the meanings and practices of political accountability change as rulers and people “have striven to define and redefine what accountability would most usefully mean to them in their own situation” (1986, 128). Lonsdale notes that the pursuance of ‘development’ appeared to solve the crisis of accountability for newly independent countries but argues that “(T)here is room to doubt, now, how far the appearance was also reality” (Lonsdale 1986, 153). For many international development actors, as well as African national political elites, development, and the accompanying argument for governance, remains the surface answer to accountability without their delving into the deeper historically specific political reality.¹⁷

Relations of power between state and civil society

Gramsci's ideas on political society

If the issue of accountability involves the deep relationships of political power

¹⁷ Peter P. Ekeh terms these ideologies of legitimation and argues that they carried on from colonial ideologies of legitimation and result from the recognition, at some level, of the lack of legitimacy. The ideologies may range from “an unconscious ideological misrepresentation of the truth” (such as African elites’ belief that Western education necessarily elevated them and entitled them to benefits) or a deliberate lie (especially colonialist claims that colonialism was a great cost to Europeans (Ekeh 1975, 99).

encompassing state and civil society, the concept of civil society cannot be divorced from these deeper, historically specific relations of power in African politics. Some of Antonio Gramsci's insights from early 20th century Italian politics, as discussed by Joseph A.

Buttigieg, highlight this fact. Buttigieg points out that, for Gramsci, the distinction between political society and civil society was "purely methodological and not organic; in concrete historical life, political and civil society are a single entity" (Gramsci, Notebook 4, 38, as quoted in Buttigieg 1995, 28). He asserts that,

Gramsci regarded civil society as an integral part of the state; in his view, civil society, far from being inimical to the state, is, in fact, its most resilient constitutive element, even though the most immediate visible aspect of the state is political society, with which it is all too often mistakenly identified. He was also convinced that the intricate, organic relationships between civil society and political society enable certain strata of society not only to gain dominance within the state but also, and more importantly, to maintain it, perpetuating the subalternity of other strata (1995, 4).

Thus, for Gramsci, civil society was not free and benign but was dominated by hegemonic groups which set the rules of the game and the rules were often organized to exclude subaltern groups. Thus the political power manifest in political society finds its roots in civil society.

Buttigieg maintains that Gramsci, in understanding this organic connection between civil society and the state, realized that those who wished to change the state, and, thus, change the rules, would have to do so in civil society. He articulates Gramsci's insight:

...it is through their activities and autonomous organizations in civil society that the subaltern masses must first acquire their freedom or independence from the ruling classes and allied intellectuals, that they must learn to become themselves a leading force (1995, 20).

Buttigieg points out another of Gramsci's important insights: Gramsci observed that it was only in well-developed, hegemonic civil societies that subaltern groups had a chance to find the space in civil society to develop a counterhegemonic socio-cultural presence. Thus if the

bourgeois civil society has not developed a universal approach and addressed the needs of other classes (as in Southern Italy at the time) then there is an impoverishment of civil society. In such cases there is a general ineptitude of the population. Intellectuals and political parties are unable to articulate ideas clearly, "newspapers become demagogic platforms, the forums of sterile polemics... [and] opposition to the government amounts to little more than mere rebelliousness" (Buttigieg 1995, 17). Here we can sense the enormous importance to civil society as it provides the ground in which reside not only the roots of political power but also the roots of political change.

State/civil society relationship in Africa

There has been no consensus among theorists on what relations of power encompass the state/civil society rule-making, or governing, relationship in sub-Saharan Africa. However, most theorists work on the premise of a mismatch between a Western state and an African civil society. Jean-François Bayart (1993) has used the image of "the politics of the belly" to describe the relationship between state and society based on several 'African' meanings of eating. He serves up ample evidence that this is a fitting metaphor for relations of accountability in African politics.

This 'African way of politics' furthermore suggests an ethic which is more complicated than that of lucre. A man of power who is able to amass and redistribute wealth becomes a 'man of honour'... In this context, material prosperity is one of the chief political virtues rather than being an object of disapproval (Bayart 1993, 242).

For Bayart, it is this way of doing politics which lies at the heart of the understanding of the African state. The practice of politics "rests upon autochthonous foundations and a process of reappropriation of institutions of colonial origin which give it its own historicity" (Bayart 1993, 260). Thus, for Bayart, it is this particularly 'African' way of doing politics which

reconfigures received institutions. James Ferguson, too, argues that in 'African' discourse the chief can be both "feeder of the people and eater of the people" (1995, 132). Within this discourse, there is moral judgement which sets the limits of accountability (eat some but not too much). He argues that national states tied to IMF conditionality are delegitimized because they must act on rational measures of 'scientific capitalism' rather than the 'African' moral economy of relationships between people.

Goran Hyden (1990) also rests his analysis on the peculiarly 'African' character of society. He asserts that the African state is a Western model, fashioned on the colonial state, which is a mismatch for African civil society. Hyden asserts that Africa is "bottom-heavy" with a society that is steeped in the community-oriented ethic of reciprocity. He argues that reciprocity is the organizing principle in local communities which assists in patron/client relations.¹⁸ Although Hyden admits that reciprocity is vulnerable to corruption, he asserts that local governments should be based on this principle but are not because of the alien central state which is based on the Western notion of the maximization of gains. Chabal (1992) also asserts that the Western-based colonial state caused a rupture between state and civil society which, after independence, led to the hegemonic project by the state to capture civil society; at the same time civil society sought to penetrate the state. He argues that the state won the battle but that the state is no longer able to absorb civil society and so is losing ground since

¹⁸ Reciprocity is characterized as the system of accountability growing out of a peasant subsistence culture. While the system demands accountability it is not on a *quid pro quo* or simultaneous basis as in Western culture. It is a covenant rather than a contract where individuals, neither utilitarian nor altruistic, are happy to gain but not at the cost of another (1990, 245-69). For a discussion of the problem of characterizing 'community', given the complexity of relations in rural communities, see Stan Burkey (1993), especially pp.40-68.

“unprovided clients become disenfranchised citizens and swell the ranks of civil society” in a counterhegemonic movement (1992, 142). Chabal asserts that political events in Africa are part of a world trend which rejects the “centralizing, homogenizing, coercive and politically supreme state, which is the legacy of nineteenth-century nation-building” and moves towards decentralization; thus, civil society in Africa is now more active in resisting the totalizing state (1992, 135). Nevertheless, he concludes that the “politics of civil society are aimed not at undermining the state qua state but at devising ways of penetrating it” (1992, 229). Despite the fact that all of these authors would agree that the colonial state was exploitative, in their analyses they still assume that the colonial state was somehow a ‘Western’ state and so did not differ in its power relations from other Western states. Thus, the poor product of accountability and responsibility, if we may call it that, rests on the fact that African society works on different principles of power relations from those of the state.

The seeming resurgence of civil society in the early 1990s has again sparked the debate over what constitutes civil society in sub-Saharan Africa and whether this resurgence will affect the rules of the game. The question often asked is whether civil society is theoretically relevant but empirically meaningless in the African context (Harbeson 1994). Thomas M. Callaghy argues that most literature about Africa “has merely mistaken resurgent societies for ‘civil societies’” and argues that much associational life has little to do with creating norms in a functioning public sphere (1994, 238).¹⁹ Dwayne Woods (1992) and

¹⁹ Callaghy maintains that,

older political logics, however, do not disappear just because authoritarian regimes are being challenged by resurgent societies; they might, in fact, be reinforced by such challenges (Callaghy 1994, 240).

Moreover, he argues that in African countries there are no “effective agencies of restraint” which are needed in

Michael Bratton (1989; 1994) are also guarded in their opinions about how much change this resurgence may bring.²⁰ These authors take the view that the movement in African societies is yet to form the sort of base in civil society, in the Gramscian sense, from which the rules may be changed and a reconfiguration of political power relations may take place.

It is in Peter E. Ekeh's analysis (1975; 1992) of the peculiar character of civil society in sub-Saharan Africa and of the complex relationship between civil society and the state that we may locate the tools for integrating the above analyses and making some sense of them. Ekeh emphasizes the enormous impact that the imposition of the colonial state had on African civil society ("it is to the colonial experience that any valid conceptualization of the unique nature of African politics must look" [1975, 93]) but in a much more nuanced and historically specific analysis of these relationships; an analysis that sharpens the focus by avoiding the

civil society in order for political decisions by the state to be sustained and, thus, there is no support for the development of accountable institutions (1994, 246).

²⁰ They agree that the revival of civil society is evident in the calls for democratization but see it as a middle class phenomenon since it is highly represented by lawyers and other professionals. Bratton argues,

One would also therefore expect the expansion of civil society to be led by, and accrue to the advantage of social classes well positioned to exploit economic opportunities in a capitalist economy (1989, 427).

However, he is circumspect about whether resurgence will bring about a change in the power structure signified by a change in the rules, maintaining that,

Although actors in civil society learn the public acts of associating and expressing collective interests, they always seek autonomy from the state. The expression of civic interests does not extend to efforts to gain and exercise control over the state (Bratton 1994, 57).

Bratton concludes that, although there has been a resurgence, the "ascendancy of civil society may prove to be short lived" (1994, 77). Woods asserts that "there are indications that an organizing principle is emerging in several African countries based on the idea of political accountability and a sharper separation between public and private interests" and that this impetus comes from middle class elements: intellectuals, professionals and organized religion (1992, 91). However, he argues that ethnic interests, the economy of affection and vertical patronage ties all undermine such an emergence. The 'economy of affection' "reinforces personalized and paternalistic relations" and will undermine attempts to change the rules, especially in countries where the informal sector "is large and outside of both formal associational and state control" (Woods 1992, 92). Thus, Woods is less sanguine than Hyden about the relations of 'reciprocity'.

Western state/African society dichotomy which acts as a smokescreen. Therefore, his analysis is worth considering at length.

Ekeh asserts that the imposition of indirect rule produced two publics, one a primordial public based on kinship, the other a civic one based in the colonial state structure.²¹ Both publics are presided over by the elevated African administrative elite created by the colonial state. Thus, although Ekeh does not argue this, in Gramscian terms, each public contains both elements of state and civil society. The civil society portion of the primordial public (eg. ethnic voluntary associations) is based on ethnic kinship ties and moral sentiments, providing security for Africans who were subject to the whims of the colonial masters. The civil society portion of civic public (eg. unions, political parties, student unions) arises from the colonial, and later independent, state structures. Ekeh characterizes civil society in the primordial public as a kind of sleeping giant with latent power based on very strong moral sentiments and the psychological security it provides. The civil society in the civic public, is active and interacts with the state but it is the necessarily weaker one because it is amoral and easily banned or absorbed by, colonial and later independent, state power. An important point that Ekeh makes is that independence brought no change to this structure of two publics because administrative elites merely presided over the colonial structures they inherited.

²¹ Ekeh argues that this was made a bonafide public with ideas of citizenship because,

Taking advantage of its kinship structures as public institutions, colonial rule canonized kinship, making them even bolder in the colonial period. For colonialism's most daring policy on this score, indirect rule was by and large a celebration of kinship institutions to which the colonial state delegated important state functions of providing security and welfare needs of the ordinary colonized African. In other words...colonialism compelled the individual to rely on kinship institutions in decisive ways, even in political matters (Ekeh 1992, 192).

Ekeh argues that, for both the elite and the ordinary African, "citizenship has acquired a variety of meanings, which depend on whether it is conceived in terms of the primordial public or the civic public" (Ekeh 1975, 106). The two elements of rights and duties, usually combined in Western ideas of citizenship, are divided in African politics, Ekeh argues; they are split between the two publics through corresponding meanings of citizenship. He explains:

The individual sees his duties as *moral* obligations to benefit and sustain a primordial public of which he is a member. While for the most part informal sanctions may exist that compel such obligations from individuals, duties to the primordial public have a moral side to them... Informal taxation in the form of 'voluntary' contributions to ethnic associations ... are a prominent feature of modern Africa. Although the African gives *materially* as part of his duties to the primordial public, what he gains back is not material... [but] intangible, immaterial benefits in the form of identity or psychological security.... The citizenship structure of the civic public is different. Because it is amoral, there is a great deal of emphasis on its economic value. While many Africans bend over backwards to benefit and sustain their primordial publics, they seek to gain from the civic public. Moreover, the individual's relationship with the civic public is measured in material terms - but with a bias. While the individual seeks to gain from the civic public, there is no moral urge on him to give back to the civic public in return for his benefits. Duties, that is, are de-emphasized while rights are squeezed out of the civic public with the amorality of an artful dodger (Ekeh 1975, 107).

Ekeh maintains that the "ideologies of legitimation" of both colonial and nationalist rulers have reinforced these two ideas of citizenship and "have given credence to the myth among the ordinary African that the civic public can never be impoverished. On the other hand, the primordial public is pictured as needful of care - in fact from the civic public" (Ekeh 1975, 108).²²

In the "dialectics of the two publics" we see the complexity of political relationships in African political society (Ekeh 1975, 108). Educated Africans, many of them part of the state administration, are part of both publics and their behaviour, Ekeh argues, also parallels

²² Among these 'ideologies' are the ideas that Africans were backward and had a backward past; that the colonial administration brought untold benefit to Africans and outweighed any benefit that the colonizers might reap; and, that Western education automatically brings material benefit.

the ideas of citizenship:

A good citizen of the primordial public gives out and asks for nothing in return; a lucky citizen of the civic public gains from the civic public but enjoys escaping giving anything in return whenever he can. But such a lucky man would not be a good man were he to channel all his lucky gains to his private purse. He will only be a good man if he channels part of the largesse from the civic public to the primordial public (Ekeh 1975, 108).

Here we may see the complexity of the product of accountability produced in such a dialectic; moral disapproval remains in the primordial public and split from the civic public where the transgressions occur. Moreover, the primordial public actually sanctions transgressions in the civic public. Thus, Ekeh argues, voluntary associations which are the civil society part of the primordial public "do not complement the civic public; they subtract from it" (Ekeh 1975, 110). Ekeh argues that 'tribalism' and corruption are the result of this dialectic as elites belonging to different primordial publics compete for the resources in the civic public.²³ It is in Ekeh's dialectics of the two publics that we gain a more dynamic analysis of African civil society and understand better the role that it plays in African politics.

We might suppose from Ekeh's analysis that a move to democratic governance is no simple matter in African politics. The relationship between the two publics and the dynamics involved would have to undergo a fundamental shift in any satisfactory transition to democracy. The very character of primordial associations and their dynamics keep them from direct interaction with the civil state. The civil associations in the civic public, Ekeh argues, may hold some sway and "(A) reconciliation of the primordial public and the civic public realms through the values that they yield would be a fair approach in African circumstances, but there appears to be little attempt in that direction" (1992, 208). The likelihood of reaching

²³ Ekeh proposes that 'tribalism' originated in the cities as the colonial government policy forced those who migrated to urban areas to seek out protection and security from their kin in ethnic associations.

some sense of universality in civil society in Gramscian terms seems remote. However, the analysis *does* give a much more specific focus for research.

Using Ekeh's analysis, we may observe from the work of empirically based researchers subtle changes to the composition of African civil society as well as to the rules of the game. Both Aili Tripp and Janet MacGaffey argue that the resurgence of associational life, especially in the informal sector, affects the deeper structures of power and is in the process of changing the rules of the game (Tripp 1997; 1992; 1994; 1994a; MacGaffey 1994, 1992). MacGaffey asserts that, in the face of an almost totally absent state in Zaire and a completely personalized formal economy, the 'second economy' provides the government-sanctioned public space in which classes struggle over the rules of the game.²⁴ While one might question whether there has been any fundamental change of the rules of the game, MacGaffey maintains that the relationships formed in the second economy are more reliable than those in the so-called formal economy. Her evidence does point to an upheaval of the two publics, even the disintegration of the civic public, and, therefore, we must assume that there is an opportunity for new relationships to form. Tripp presents a more positive sense of change in the rule-making relationship between state and civil society and of the ability of emerging groups, informal women's associations and the informal sector in general, to affect it.²⁵ She

²⁴ MacGaffey maintains that it was "President Mobutu's specific incitement to people in the past to ' fend for themselves' (*debrouillez-vous*) and to 'steal a little in a nice way' which amounted to official license for the activities of the second economy" (1994, 182). She maintains that it is within this second economy that classes struggle and "the subordinated classes not only challenge the state by evading its exploitation but also undermine the power of the dominant class by contributing to state decline" (1994, 172). This struggle within the second economy takes place within "relations of personal dependency", a phrase MacGaffey prefers to 'patron-client relations' because it "leaves open to investigation the exploitative nature of these relationships" (1994, 179).

²⁵ Tripp argues that women's associations in both Uganda and Tanzania create a public space for women in which they may be able to redefine their role and the rules of the game may be changed (Tripp 1994a; 1994).

argues that both local and central government officials have had to pay attention to the demands of the informal sector and relax their rules. Moreover, Tripp (1997) argues that in this role civil society actually helps the state maintain legitimacy in the eyes of its citizens. Thus, of the two, Tripp presents the more positive evidence that a public space exists in which the rules can be changed, resulting in the enhanced legitimacy of both state and civil society. Here we may observe some hybrid civic associations, particularly in the urban informal sector, which are not necessarily either civic, in the formal sense of unions or professional associations, but neither are they primordial. More importantly, they seem to be interacting with the civic state in a different way from the dialectics of the two publics described by Ekeh. The important work of these writers emphasizes the movement that is taking place in African political society and underscores all the more the need for a theoretical framework in which local political space may be located.

Locating a new, democratic localism within complex relations of African political society

Mahmood Mamdani's argument, recently put forward in his attempt to broaden the thinking on "Africa's impasse" (1996), illuminates further the historical split in African political society observed by Ekeh (although Mamdani does not use Ekeh's analysis). Unlike those whose analyses that assume the African state's 'Western' character, Mamdani examines the form of the African state as it was forged during colonialism and finds it to be of a very historically specific nature. The African state, fashioned through the policy of indirect rule,

Of the informal sector in Tanzania, Tripp asserts:

The persistence of various forms of informal economic activities and the transformation of associational life in Tanzania provided pressure points that formally and informally, openly and through noncompliance, forced the state to change or reconsider its rules (1997, 195).

"was Janus-faced, bifurcated... [and] contained two forms of power under a single hegemonic authority" (Mamdani 1996, 18). While the urban areas had a civil authority based on the rule of law and protecting rights based on race (the exclusion of 'natives'), the rural areas had a despotic native authority, with a "fused" power over judicial, legislative, executive and administrative functions, which was tribal in nature and based on customary law. This bifurcated state, based on "decentralized despotism", shaped power relationships which in turn, shaped African politics.

Mamdani argues that this form, highly developed through half a century of colonialism, continued to shape African politics after independence. The nationalist struggle was a struggle by "embryonic middle and working classes" to enter civil society. At independence, the nationalist state, through policies of indigenization, deracialized the state but, Mamdani contends, was unable to deracialize civil society in that "historic accumulated privilege (usually based on race) was embedded and defended in civil society" and remained the prerequisite for entry (1996, 20). Thus, after independence, the institutions of the embryonic civil society (such as unions) were collapsed into the state and politics and became one with the state. Since the population was divided along ethnic, regional or religious lines (sometimes all three coinciding), which was the form of customary power in the bifurcated state, it was in this form that political power was forged. Mamdani argues that in such a state form, power was so shaped that patrimonialism was the only non-violent form of politics available to politicians to unite the rural and the urban, the local and the centre, and gain political power. He asserts that the "tribal logic of Native Authorities easily overwhelmed the democratic logic of civil society" (196, 289). Thus, rural politics shaped the form of urban-

based politics of the centre as it necessarily became tribalized and that very tribalization of politics by urban inhabitants reinforced decentralized despotism.

Mamdani argues that African societies after independence remained split between those that were able to enter civil society (citizens mostly connected to and absorbed by the state) and those that remained under customary rule (subjects in the local state). The majority of the people in the urban areas reflect this bifurcation of which their position in civil society is a product: they live "within the confines of modern civic power... [but] formal access to legal institutions [is] rendered fictional in most cases by the absence of resources with which to reach these institutions" (Mamdani, 1996, 137). On the other hand, for those under customary rule it is not "access to the law or reach, but the actual law (customary law) and its implementing machinery (Native Authority) that confront them" (Mamdani 1996, 137). Thus, Mamdani argues that it is the form of the African state which presents the problem and that "the most important institutional legacy of colonial rule ...may lie in the[se] inherited impediments to democratization" (1996, 25).²⁶ It is in the context of this historicized state that we can see how inherently inadequate, simplistic, and potentially "explosive" are solutions that do not look beyond 'free and fair' elections at the centre and the simple demand for accountability; democratic change is an extraordinarily complex political challenge (Mamdani 1996, 300).

²⁶ Mamdani argues that radical states, such as Tanzania, that attempted to detribalize at the local level only replaced the structures but not the form and so the state remained despotic but under centralized despotism:

The ideological text may change from the customary to the revolutionary - and so may political practice - but in spite of real differences, there remains a continuity in administrative power and technique: radical experiences have not only reproduced, but also reinforced fused power, administrative justice and extra-economic coercion, all in the name of development (1996, 291).

However, Mamdani puts the ball firmly back in the political court and therein lies the particular relevance of his argument to a new, historically specific, and internally driven, localism in Africa. Mamdani asserts that, given the form of the bifurcated state, there were three political challenges at independence: "deracializing civil society, detribalizing the Native Authority and developing the economy in the context of unequal international relations" (1996, 287). He argues that only a limited success in deracialization was achieved, through indigenization, and that the failure to detribalize the local authority and, thus, democratize at the local level, "explains why deracialization was not sustainable and why development ultimately failed" (1996, 288).²⁷ Mamdani's insights make it clear that the political challenge entails a political transformation *both* in the centre and at the local level; and, the challenge is necessarily a complex one which requires not only a fundamental change in centre-local relations but also an elemental change in relations between government and community at the local level, urban and rural. Intrinsic to the task is the challenge to overcome the opposites which bring about the paradox pointed out by Mawhood ("Paradoxically the existence of an unchallenged central authority ...gives the best hope that solid local government can be constructed" [1983a, 103]). Mamdani asserts that rather than opposing centre to local, and preferring one over the other, the challenge for Africans is to reconcile local autonomy with alliance at the centre and local participation with representation at the centre. Likewise, instead of opposing customary to civil, rather, the challenge is to "disentangle authoritarian and emancipatory practices in both" (Mamdani 1996, 299). From Mamdani's argument, we may conclude that a new localism is an important political challenge for African countries

²⁷ Mamdani notes that there are more expatriates in Uganda than ever.

and that a democratic opening at the local level would be a beginning to dismantling the bifurcated state and reconciling Ekeh's two publics.

Mamdani's insights make a compelling argument for a new, internally driven and democratic localism in Africa but, along with Ekeh's analysis of African civil society, they also give us a way to peer into the political complexity of the relationship between the state and civil society in Africa and the shape of accountability and responsibility issuing from it. Rather than shaping our analysis from mere descriptions of the 'poor product' of responsibility and accountability, we might start with the historically specific form of power that produces that product. Using this framework, we might expect that political behaviour, both of government and of people, has been shaped by this historically specific form of power. In fact, Ekeh's analysis, although he does not use the term, demonstrates the bifurcation of political society into two publics with their own version of civil society and citizenship. The relationship between the state and civil society in their governing capacity, which is the locus of responsibility and accountability, has been powerfully influenced not only by the lack of a strong indigenous capitalist economy but also by the historical political impediments inherited from the bifurcated state and its particular form of political power. We might also expect that the political action of women, complicated by the layering of Western patriarchal control over customary practices, has been powerfully affected by the power relations of the bifurcated state. We are led to question analyses which privilege an 'African' way of doing politics and prefer an analysis which takes into consideration the circumstances within which this way of doing politics has been forged. In short, the consideration of the power relations of the bifurcated state and their political remedy lies at the heart of the

question of governance: how and with what existing links is the governing relationship between state and civil society currently being forged?

The critical juncture and a new localism for sub-Saharan Africa²⁸

If developing a new internally driven and democratic local politics, a new localism if you will, is part of the challenge of breaking the pattern of the bifurcated state, I would argue that the time is auspicious for that pattern to be broken. There is no doubt that a critical juncture has occurred globally and the notion of the new localism is part of - and Magnusson's work attests to it - a complete rethinking of the role of the state and civil society in the face of immense structural change. Structural change necessarily brings into question not only the relationship of state to civil society but also the identity of the individual (Burchell 1991; Gordon 1991).²⁹ While there is great potential for change in consciousness as well as political practice we cannot say how the new configurations of power and the resulting terms of accountability will align politically.

What is the effect of this global critical juncture on African states? Phillip A. Huxtable

²⁸ Leonardo Villalón (1998), who adopts the term from Ruth Berins Collier and David Collier (1991) and uses the analytical framework provided by the Colliers, Stephen Krasner (1984) and Merilee Grindle (1996), explains that a 'critical juncture' provides for political openings in the following way: it is a period in which elites have to make choices and take action in response to a crisis; these choices shape new arrangements but are also constrained by past choice; and, these choices shape the nature of state and state-society relations for some time to come (Villalón 1998, 6,7).

²⁹ Graham Burchell argues that in the West it is not surprising that, in this time of great structural change, we witness a return to themes such as civil society,

since we seem to be witnessing a significant mutation of liberal government rationality which aims to modify the relation of individuals to political power by seeking, in part, to get them to economize on their expectations and demands on government (1991, 145-6).

In other words, the rules are changing. It follows, says Burchell, that in changing our relationship to government we will have to change our relation to ourselves. This change is quite evident in neo-liberal thinking, says Colin Gordon, where "the individual producer-consumer is in a novel sense not just an enterprise, but the entrepreneur of himself or herself" (1991, 44).

(1998) argues that the post-colonial African state, modelled as it is on the idea of the Western nation state, has survived because it has been supported by the global belief that this is the only legitimate form of political organization. We also might argue that if reconfiguration is taking place within Western states then it will be acceptable in African states.³⁰ We can agree that economic restructuring is global and that the process of reconfiguration within states is global; but we must also acknowledge a current and hegemonic neo-liberal discourse, based on market solutions, which tends to limit the variety of options. However, the global critical juncture has created a fluid time when the accepted norm is political reconfiguration.

Although we may lament the heavy-handedness of IFIs such as the World Bank and the IMF, perhaps there has never been such an auspicious time for the acceptance of a broad range of political possibilities.

This critical juncture has brought African political society to a turning point. The crisis has been well documented (Villalón and Huxtable 1998; Ellis 1996; Harbeson, Rothchild and Chazan 1994; Wunsch and Olowu 1990; Chabal 1992). At this time there is evidence that some of the barriers to effective local government may be weakening. While autonomous local authorities have been seen as threats to post-independence governments' centralizing strategies, strategies that were used either for the purpose of unifying and keeping power over disparate groups or for the purpose of appropriating state wealth, Leonardo A. Villalón (1998)

³⁰ Huxtable actually argues that,

If this norm were to collapse in the rest of the world, so too would the state in Africa. The African state may disintegrate, not because of the failure of Africans to adapt to the world system, but because the state itself has become inadequate for the realities of the current world system (1998, 292).

But we have seen from the literature presented in the first part of this chapter that, rather than disintegration, there is a reconfiguration taking place within Western nation states.

argues that a combination of internal (ethnic and generational struggles, predatory elites) and external (end of cold war, global markets, structural adjustment) factors rendered these strategies bankrupt by the early 1990s creating a critical juncture. He asserts that while political change has been slow in response to the demands for change in the early 1990s, this critical juncture marks the end of a phase and sets in motion forces of change. The bankruptcy of these strategies may bring about conditions favourable to local political change.³¹ However, as Pickvance and Preteceille (1991) point out, how that reconfiguration plays out politically depends upon a country's specific historical experience. This critical juncture presents opportunities both in the state and civil society which may lead to a reconfiguration of the bifurcated state that includes a new local politics and a new relationship between state and civil society. It is important to observe the political openings and opportunities that arise and to watch for signs of change. Therefore, a comparative study of local government is especially important at this time.

IV A comparative analysis as if a new localism mattered

The inquiry

While the externally driven new focus on local government is quite evident in the literature, case studies of a new, internally driven and democratic localism are not. This study of local government in Uganda and Zimbabwe explores the possibilities of a new, internally driven and democratic localism developing at this critical juncture. Although one must

³¹ Nevertheless, the authors in this edited volume who consider reconfiguration within the state at this critical juncture, give little currency to a new local politics (Villalón and Huxtable 1998). James S. Wunsch and Dele Olowu (1990a), concentrate on the failures of the centralized state and decentralization as a *strategy* for development but, although they entertain the idea of "the institutional empowerment of the people" at some local level in a normative sense, do not really perceive the openings as pregnant with possibility for a new *politics* (Wunsch and Olowu, 1990a, 294).

acknowledge that external pressures remain a reality, a new localism that is internally driven and democratic matters because it is one of the historically specific challenges posed by the bifurcated state. Therefore an analysis at the local level as if a new localism mattered should give insight into political society in general as it is currently evolving in these two countries.

Accordingly, the prerequisites for a new, internally driven and democratic localism are: the creation of democratic openings at the local level and a reconfiguration of power between levels of government that leads towards a more autonomous local government. In order to derive some more specific requirements from these prerequisites the study starts with a historical review of what I have called the old localism, that is, the organic political societies that existed in Uganda and Zimbabwe before the institution of the colonial state, and the impact of colonialism on it. The relationship between ruler and ruled which produced accountability and responsibility is examined as are the ruptures in it that took place with the imposition of colonial rule. This is the change from the old localism to the decentralized despotism practised under colonial rule that Mamdani describes so well. From this study I derive three requirements for a new localism: first, the consciousness on the part of political authorities of the fundamental political challenge posed by the bifurcated state and the political will, both at the centre and locally, to dismantle the structures of bifurcation, most notably decentralized despotism; second, the restructuring of the relationship between the centre and local government with the goal of creating an autonomous and direct relationship between the local government and the local population that makes policy makers directly accountable to the majority of the population, including democratic openings and a greater reliance on the local population for revenue; third, the development of institutions that involve

enough public participation to allow for the development of new public political behaviour from which some common conventions of accountability and responsibility might emerge, both in the interaction between local government and the local population and between local government and local civil society. An important component of all of these requirements is the full participation of women. Thus, several variables are under consideration here: the historical role of local government; the particular purpose of current decentralization programmes and their implementation from the point of view of central government and its leadership, including the political relationship between central and local governments; the institutions of local government in form and practice; and, the participation of the population in general and of the institutions of local civil society, including political parties.

The concept of bifurcation is important in this analysis. The bifurcated colonial state, as described by Mamdani, consisted of two branches: a central colonial authority that offered, to a very limited degree, a modern civil government; and a decentralized customary authority that was despotic and usually based on ethnic primordial ties. This form of state shaped political power so that control at the centre depended on centrally controlled, despotic authority at the local level, even after independence. During the colonial period African political behaviour was moulded by paternalistic relations with colonial officials and patron/client relations with customary authorities. After independence patronage politics, based on ethnicity, thrived. These political relationships I term the political relations of bifurcation. There are other ways that bifurcation has manifested itself. In the urban areas, especially, is the bifurcation of space where Africans are confined to certain areas of the town or city. The current legacy of this bifurcation of space can be seen in the degree to which the

formal Western city is separated from the poor, more informal one. In those areas also is found the bifurcation of administration. In colonial times European areas were under a Western-type civil authority while African areas were under both unrepresentative, paternalistic colonial authority in charge of policy and unrepresentative, despotic customary authority in charge of enforcement. Thus Africans were under two authorities neither of which were responsible to them. I call this a bifurcation of authority that produced no direct accountability or responsibility. There are variations and remnants of this bifurcation. Africans can also come under one urban authority which still practices bifurcation of authority, serving the formal, Western city in a civil fashion and the poor, more informal city in a paternalistic or clientelistic, and often despotic, fashion. Bifurcation is also manifested in separate budgets and policies. For women, bifurcation meant being under the double authority of African customary rules and Western notions of the domestic role of women. Not only were women deprived of direct representation, as were men, but also they had access to paternal or patronage relations only indirectly, through a man. A legitimate, independent existence in the city was, and is, elusive for women. These are the political relations of bifurcation for women. All of these aspects of bifurcation are explored in this study.

Methodology

The empirical data on which this enquiry is based was gathered in two municipalities, Jinja in Uganda and Mutare in Zimbabwe, from January to August, 1995. Both are secondary urban centres with colonial origins. The choice of secondary centres fulfills the requirement of classifying their governments as 'local'. The choice of urban local government is two-fold: first, as argued above, in urban centres the effects of restructuring are evident in the provision

of service and other acute problems such as housing shortage; second, an urban area is the locus of the boundary of civil/customary society in the bifurcated state so we may see concretely the spatial and political legacies of bifurcation. These two countries make an interesting comparison since both have current national governing policies built on decentralization programmes and the development of local government. Furthermore, their institutional structure at the local level bears comparison. The National Resistance Movement (NRM) government in Uganda has established a Resistance Council (RC) (changed to Local Council (LC) in the 1996 constitution) system of decentralization, elaborated from RCs set up in occupied territory during the war waged from 1980 to 1986. On the other hand, Zimbabwe is building its local government on the inherited local government structures that were a function of, and well rooted in, the white settler community. Another point of interest in the comparison is that in Uganda a 'no-party' system of government has been espoused, under the leadership of Yoweri Museveni, while in Zimbabwe, effectively, a one-party system has evolved under the leadership of Robert Mugabe who heads the Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front), ZANU(PF), government. These two countries present the possibility of an interesting comparative analysis of local politics.

I gathered the information for this study in several ways. I conducted interviews with national ministry officials and politicians involved with the decentralization programmes and with local government officials and politicians. I had full access to budgets, reports and minutes of the local governments involved. In the case of Zimbabwe, I was able to interview ZANU(PF) local and national officials, attend polling stations during the ZANU(PF) local primaries in July 1995 and accompany a candidate on foot canvases during the primaries. I

also interviewed executives and members of local, community-based associations. In addition, I gathered information through attending various committee and council meetings at the local government level as well as meetings of community-based associations. Finally, I interviewed local media reporters and made extensive use of local and national newspapers and their archives.

Contents of chapters

The chapters in this study follow closely the guidelines of the enquiry discussed above. Chapter 2 examines the pre-colonial, colonial and post-independence periods of both countries until the beginning of the current decentralization thrust with the specific intent of illuminating the governing relationship between ruler and ruled and the tension of responsibility and accountability which is a product of that relationship. By means of this analysis I identify the inherited impediments at the local level from which I derive the above mentioned requirements for a new, internally driven and democratic localism. Chapter 3 examines and compares the decentralization programmes, their origins and foci, and their institutional makeup, with a particular focus on overcoming these inherited impediments in order to meet the first two requirements of a new localism. Chapters 4 and 5 examine, respectively, the municipal governments of Jinja and Mutare with respect to the third requirement, with a particular focus on political participation in practice. Chapter 6 examines community-based associations (including women's associations, friendship associations, tenants', ratepayers' and parent/teachers' associations [PTAs]) in light of the third requirement and considers how these associations, both in their internal relationships and their relationship to local government, may, or may not, contribute to a new internally driven and democratic

localism. Also included is an analysis of the partnership between the PTAs and the municipal governments under consideration, a partnership which was being forged in 1995 in order to provide primary education. In this way I attempt to make a preliminary assessment of the effects of the externally driven new localism (that has put more emphasis on the local level globally) on the development of a new, internally driven and democratic localism in sub-Saharan Africa. Finally, in the concluding chapter I summarize the findings and demonstrate how the study of local government 'as if a new localism mattered' enriches the analysis of African politics in general.

Chapter Two

Cutting the Ties that Bind: Colonialism and the Old Localism

Every nation having colonies or external dependencies acquires and holds them for the sake of benefits to its own citizens, whether as settlers, traders or investors of capital in those territories, and in so far as the sovereign nation orders the government of its colonies and dependencies, the dominant guiding factor in its policy will be the promotion of those ends. The policy of the Government in regard to native races is secondary and subsidiary. The exceptions to this rule are extremely few and such as must be considered to have been in the nature of accidents in the history of colonization

Sir Sidney Oliver, K.C.M.G., Governor of Jamaica, Universal Races Congress, London, 1911.

Tracing the governing relationship

This chapter explores the complexity involved in thinking about accountability at the local level in Uganda and Zimbabwe. Here accountability is defined as the product of political relations. By looking at the tension of responsibility and accountability (the political relations that produce accountability between ruler and ruled) in a historical perspective, we shall attempt to explore some of the "inherited impediments" referred to by Mamdani. To the extent that these relations bring interests together, benefiting both ruler and ruled, there will be shared expectations for public accountability and responsibility. We wish to understand the ties that bound society together under a ruler in precolonial Uganda and Zimbabwe and how these ties were affected by the imposition of colonial rule. The argument is that when the imperialists conquered and then administered these African territories the existing organic political relations that produced accountability within political society which I refer to as the 'old localism', were severed. What was instituted in their place was a form of split rule, what Mamdani has termed the bifurcated state, which not only could not redeem that relationship but also was unable to supplant it with a comparable one. Furthermore, neither in

the nationalist struggle in Zimbabwe nor in the independence period followed by political upheaval in Uganda, was there a transformation of this relationship.

I The old localism

The agricultural domestic community, through its organised capacity for production and reproduction, represents an integrated form of social organization which has existed since the neolithic period (Meillassoux 1981, 3).

In the latter half of the 19th century various sized kingdoms existed in the areas that are now Uganda and Zimbabwe¹, based on a more or less feudal (more in the case of Buganda) clan system with an agrarian material base (Cohen 1972; 1986; Fallers 1965; Bhila 1982; Ranger 1970; Kuper 1954; Jeater 1993). Politics involved alliance, both internal and external, out of which evolved a form of accountability and responsibility. While both intra- and inter-kingdom wars occurred, stable political relations existed and it is within this integrated, organic form that we may locate several checks and balances that produced responsibility and accountability in what I have referred to as the old localism.

Internal alliance

The internal alliances of these kingdoms were based on marriage this provided the elders with their political power and material wealth. In such societies women were very important as they not only produced children but also contributed their own labour to the clan. Marriage was exogamous which meant that women married into a clan different from that of their fathers. The clan was compensated for loss of a woman's productive and

¹ In this thesis Zimbabwe is used when referring to the country after independence and Rhodesia is used before African independence acknowledging that there were periods within that time that it was called Southern Rhodesia, that it was, for a short time (1953-1963), part of a federation with Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Nyasaland (Malawi) and that, after the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (1965) it was simply called Rhodesia.

reproductive labour by *lobolo*, or brideprice, of cattle and goods, which was paid to her father. Often the brideprice would be paid over a long term after the woman had reproduced for her husband's clan and it represented an ongoing alliance between clans. In the case of the Shona in Zimbabwe an alternative arrangement could be struck wherein a new husband would offer his services to his bride's family in lieu of *lobola* in which case the *lobola* of his own daughters would often go back to the father-in-law. Inheritance was filial, passing on to brothers until the generation was exhausted and only then passing down to the next generation of males. Each clan was ruled by a hierarchy of male elders who made decisions through a council of elders and controlled the material resources *through* their customary control of marriage. Thus, the paramount political control involved maintaining control over the mobility of people through the institution of marriage (Meillassoux 1981).

To understand the meaning of accountability in this civil power structure, based on the control over the mobility of people, it is important to understand the relationship of elder men to younger men. From his study of agrarian societies in West Africa, Claude Meillassoux (1981) argues that this cannot be a relationship of exploitation since the elders were all once junior men and the juniors will ultimately become elders. In addition, once they have attained a wife, the juniors already have the ability to produce and reproduce even though they have not yet attained the status of elder. Thus, he argues that it is a relationship where;

Conflicts between elders and juniors reflect an opposition which remains within the system, that the junior members strive to reproduce to their advantage as early as possible by having a wife. But such an opposition is not radical and does not aim at questioning the institution but at benefiting from it, and so always, by alienating a woman (Meillassoux 1981, 80).

Here we can see that it is the political power over people, specifically women and their children, which guarantees the elders the power to deliver wives to junior men. This

assurance plus the fact that they will, in time, assume the status of elder which socially binds junior men to the clan. Thus, it is through women, specifically the subordination of women, that men derive social cohesion and political power in the old localism.

Within this transaction women were excluded from political power.² Women upon marriage entered the territory of their husband's clan and had to prove themselves through hard work and child bearing before they were fully accepted. Because a woman still belonged to her father's clan she carried the spirits of alien ancestors and so could be accused of witchcraft if she did not get along with her in-laws. In a formal sense women were chattel since the executor of a deceased man's property was responsible "for the fair and legitimate passage of property, wives and children of the deceased" (Cohen, 1972, 7). Widows became the property of the husband's male relatives and were expected to marry a brother. However, there was a hierarchy of women as well (Schmidt 1992, 14-42). Because a woman's brideprice purchased her brother's wife she had some authority over her sister-in-law and, likewise, her female in-laws had some authority over her. Older women who had proved themselves by producing children also had more authority over younger ones.

² Gayle Rubin argues that although the woman brings the bride price she does not derive actual political power. It is the political relationship between men that makes marriage the pivotal institution:

If women are the gifts, then it is men who are the exchange partners. And it is the partners, not the presents, upon whom reciprocal exchange confers its quasi- mystical power of social linkage... women are in no position to realize the benefits of their own circulation (Rubin 1975, 174).

Diana Jeater also points out that it is the clan that has the political investment in marriage. She suggests that the best illustration of the public invisibility of women is in the fact that, in the case of rape or adultery, the offence was one against the clan. In the case of adultery, the perpetrator could only be a male because it was *through* the woman that the clan was violated. Thus, the penalty for adultery was compensation paid to the husband's clan by the perpetrator or his relatives (Jeater 1993, 35-7). Thus, sexual relations were not considered an individual act but political obligation between men. This 'male deal' as I have termed it elsewhere (Dauda 1992), is an integral part of political relations.

If women were excluded from direct political power, the exogamous character of marriage gave women's power to reproduce an overtly political character since it was also pivotal to the relationships of alliance between commoner and royal clans on which broader internal alliances and political accountability was based. David Cohen asserts that in Uganda,

Marriage appears to have been an important factor linking ruler and commoner. Because in each state there was only one royal clan, the ruler, in respecting the limits of exogamy which prohibited him from marrying women from his own royal clan, was obliged to marry women from clans of commoner status. The alliances established out of these marriages set the ruler and his allied in-laws in a certain balance against the proliferating group of princes (1972, 14).

Thus, apart from her productive and reproductive power, to a royal clan, a wife also brought the support of her kinsmen. In return she brought prestige and advantage to her own clan.

The relationships that women forged between clans were pivotal for the success of this broader internal alliance. Cohen points out that, in Uganda, commoner clans were often "inciters of royal succession wars in Busoga. A commoner clan gained tremendous status and wealth and power by being the 'mothers' or in-laws of a ruler" (Cohen 1972, 14). According to Cohen,

The possibility of a wife and her kinsmen being mother to a successor ruler was of paramount importance to peasant groups in Busoga as in Buganda, where it was at the same time the *raison d'être* and possible apex of a clan's organizing efforts within the political context (1972, 10).

This chance at status and wealth was in no small part due to appointments as village or sub-village chiefs with control over customary land allocation.³ A wife kept strong ties with her own clan and was a pivotal figure in maintaining the support of her kinsmen in the alliance. In particular, her brother took a special interest in her sons and the mother's brother/sister's son relationship could determine the succession, as it was often commoner chiefs who were

³ It is important to note how far the system reached and how much mobility was made possible. Fallers notes that many young boys of commoner clans were sent to act as pages or household servants and some were even warriors. In this way they had access to favour and fortune.

instrumental in deciding on a successor (Fallers 1965, 135-6). In Zimbabwe women were also integral to maintaining internal alliances. In Ndebele society in southern Zimbabwe, daughters and female relatives of the king were used as intelligence gatherers even though their husbands had the formal designation of chief (Kuper 1954, 68). In Shona society rulers often gave sisters and daughters a more public role in order to prevent usurpers (Bhila 1982). Rulers brought sons-in-law into their domains so they could be watched and often kept royal sons at a distance. Titles were bestowed on their sisters and daughters, who could never directly contest succession. Thus, women were often made wardheads (local political divisions of clans) so that no rival would have any base of power. H. H. K. Bhila asserts that,

The advantage of female governorships was obvious in that in no case was secession attempted and the hereditary principle did not arise. People of the provinces would hesitate to follow a woman into rebellion against the king. It seems that in Manyika women governors were probably introduced as a counter-force to the royal sons, to assist the king in maintaining a centralised power structure (1982, 23).⁴

Here we see a particular emphasis on making women the guardians of male political power as they serve in political roles but entirely for the political ends of the male elders. Elizabeth Schmidt argues that the flexible nature of Shona society gave women the opportunity to use strategies to gain influence privately even though they had no public power and this resulted in significant informal influence (1992, 20). While their role always was in support of a male dominated system, it is clear that women's political role in these societies, both as potential mothers of rulers and as wardheads, offered the potential for some political maneuverability.

The production of accountability

⁴ Bhila describes a case where a Manyika king refused to let his daughters formally marry and instead allowed consorts. In this case the children then belonged to him and he had no threats of usurpation from sons-in-law (1982, 23).

The particularly historical sense of accountability that arose in these societies was produced from the political relationships of alliance through marriage discussed above. While the purposes of commoner clans may have differed from those of royal clans - commoner interests focused upon the peasant's holding, the guardianship of widows and orphans, and lineage inheritance while royal lineages singularly focused on succession - the commoner client chiefs, who reached right down to the village level, brought those interests together (Fallers 1965, 141). The material base for rule was the tribute paid in labour and agricultural goods by commoners to the ruler who, by keeping territorial integrity, guaranteed the customary use of land which in every area was controlled through the hierarchy of the clan structure presided over by commoner chiefs. Thus, there was a direct social relationship between commoners and rulers with regard to the means of administration which provided opportunities for demanding accountability.⁵ Rulers had to strike a fine balance between necessary tribute and excess because a very despotic ruler invited attempts by another alliance to unseat him.⁶ Although the hierarchy of power, through alliance, monopolized military, judicial and tribute gathering functions, entirely despotic rule was easily challenged. Brothers and sons and sons-in-law all had alliances with which they might unseat a despotic or incompetent ruler. Lloyd Fallers points out that in Uganda "(T)he type of absolutism which has been possible in other, more technologically advanced, parts of the world was scarcely

⁵ This is referred to by Max Weber when analysing politics of the early 20th century. Just as for Marx the capitalist must own the means of production, Weber asserts that in order to maintain control the political authority must have the means of administration (1994, 315).

⁶ I am not suggesting that alliance was necessarily used in the name of some disembodied and ahistorical social justice. Cohen quotes Yosiya Kasagala, mwise Mugwere of Namooto, Busicka: "The war I have spoken about. We fought with this Lyada. The cause was power" (1986, 247). Nevertheless the effect was a check on excess.

possible for the Soga ruler" (1965, 143). It is significant that this type of 'balancing act' also had to be practiced by local village sub-chiefs who had power over land allocations. In Uganda, for instance, a sub-chief had to balance his administrative duties with duties to his own particular kinsmen and he could do this by bringing non-kinsmen into the village (Cohen 1972, 16,17). This kept the allocations more open and flexible and suggests a fluidity of movement of people within the established parameters of control.⁷ Thus, the organic nature of clan-based kingship gave the system its integrity and accountability.

External alliance

External alliances were also important for rulers. Seen in a positive light, the ability to form alliances and unseat rulers or conquer new territory fostered characteristics of fluidity and adaptability rather than rigidity. Rivalries checked tyrannical behaviour and prevented combined action on the part of the ruling class. Sometimes these rivalries were ended if the claimants were able to move into new territory and establish a new political entity. However, despite the organic unity of the mutually supporting political and economic system, quarrels over succession and outright bids for power resulted in many civil wars. In both Uganda and Zimbabwe internecine fighting resulted in periodic upheavals which smaller kingdoms sought to prevent by paying tribute to larger ones in order to gain allies against potential enemies. The forging of external alliances also expanded relations of trade between kingdoms and guaranteed safe passage outside of the home territory. Thus, considerable tribute relations had

⁷ Again, it is important to note the flexibility of the system. Apart from the opportunity to send young commoner men for careers in a royal household, and thus give them mobility, the whole system itself could adapt and change. With dislocations and movements of people, clans often were reconstructed and reconstituted, or even reinvented, by groups of men in another place. Thus these 'legal fictions' allowed people to adapt to their circumstances (Fallers 1965, 123,135).

evolved in Uganda between Buganda and other smaller kingdoms and similarly in Zimbabwe between the Mashona kingdom and other smaller kingdoms. However, this system of external alliance provided an avenue of influence for colonial powers and they were able to use it to their own advantage in the late 19th century. In both cases, it was largely through alliances offered, and sought by indigenous leaders, that the British were able to penetrate and eventually control their territories (Low, 1965; Fallers 1965; Bhila 1982).

In conclusion, the old localism was an economically and politically integrated system in which were produced conventions of responsibility and accountability. The central institution for obtaining both wealth and political power was marriage and the institution of brideprice. Through this institution evolved a form of political power which controlled people in order to control resources. While elders had direct control over women, their control over younger generations of men was indirect, through the power to control their access to women through marriage. Once in command of a woman and benefited by her productive and reproductive power, a young man was in a firmer economic position and also in the position to eventually become an elder. Thus, the political power of men, both young and old, depended directly on the control and subordination of women and their productive and reproductive power. Women, on the other hand had no formal political power and, thus, no formal positions in public life. Nevertheless, their position in representing potential prestige and bridewealth for their clan at least gave them a political identity and maneuverability, even political office, albeit indirectly and through manipulation of the system. The broader system of internal alliance between royal and commoner clans also meant that most men had at least the prospect of obtaining a more powerful political position within the hierarchy so, in that

sense, there was a social mobility for men. Thus, the interests of commoner clans were directly related to the interests of royal clans through beneficial client relationships and produced the grounds on which accountability was recognized. Political alliance also made it possible to unseat a ruler but it is not evident that there was any attempt to change the system itself (Fallers 1965, 143).⁸ Although there may be some reservations in terming this a civil society, in the modern sense, nevertheless, there seems to have been a governing relationship which extended to the local level and permitted enough flexibility so as to produce accountability in the broader society. However, since the whole power structure depended on subordinating women, at least half of the population had no direct political claims.

II Colonial despotism and the bifurcation of responsibility and accountability

The Transition to colonialism

British authorities gained the upper hand in both Uganda and Zimbabwe through alliances with kingdoms. In Uganda the early introduction of missions (Anglican in 1877, Catholic in 1879) served to add religious differences to the rival factions, putting the kingdom of Buganda in an exceedingly vulnerable position that made alliance with the English even more tempting. Fallers comments that there were,

serious sources of strain and instability, centring upon succession within the royal group. To these traditional potentialities for faction were added the divisive influence of the new religions, and Buganda entered upon a period of intermittent conflict (1965, 40).

⁸ I argue that the durability and usefulness of this system of deciding on rights and responsibility was the reason for its success. As mentioned above, the fact that when dislocations happened, a "legal fiction of a 'clan' formed, not on the basis of patrilineal kinship, but by association of men in the community without regard to kinship ties" and which then took over burial and succession responsibilities is proof of its versatility (Fallers 1965, 123). Thus, the success of the form in accommodating mobility and fluidity of relationships may have precluded structural change, at least at the time.

Thus, through an initial period of alliance and war in the late 1890s, the British were able to gain an upper hand and establish the Protectorate (Low 1965; Fallers 1965; Cohen 1986).⁹ In Zimbabwe, foreign companies (mainly Portuguese and British) which were competing for trading concessions exacerbated the rivalry and competition between kingdoms. The eagerness to make alliances made these kingdoms vulnerable. By striking alliances with certain indigenous leaders, the British South Africa Company was able to defeat the attempts of the Portuguese and another British company to get a foothold. By the late 1890s, the Company was in a position to demand that the indigenous rulers provide them with labour. The rebellion of some Shona and Ndebele leaders in 1896 proved too little too late and by the turn of the century the Company was administering all territories (Bhila 1982, 216-49).

The most abrupt and concrete discontinuity was the loss of the ability to replace a leader. Once established, the Protectorate brought an end to war but it also brought an end to the definitive political action of unseating a leader. In both Uganda and Zimbabwe the power to settle disputes between rival alliances by war was removed, as was the possibility of establishing rule in new territory. Thus the clan-based societies no longer had the means to depose rulers or to expand. In a very real sense their own politics and political skill suffered from stagnation as their interests were subordinated to the imperialist project. Thus, the political relations of indirect rule, although the policy was not yet formally instituted, were an

⁹ Imperialist agents played one kingdom against the other making political betrayal a lasting historical legacy once these matters were settled through British dominance and rigidity had set in. For example, the issue of 'the lost counties' of Bunyoro, a rival kingdom which was handed over to Buganda in 1894, remained a political legacy after independence. A referendum which went against Buganda on the question of taxation of the lost counties broke up the UPC/KP alliance in the first post-independence government leading to eventual conflict (see Mamdani 1976, 242-46). The *mailo* land that the British authorities set aside in other territories for Bugandan chiefs also remains a decidedly difficult political problem as Ugandans try to introduce land reform in the 1990s (see Fallers, 1965).

early concrete reality, furnishing impediments to the development of African politics.

Early attempts for one civil power?

In the early years of colonialism, there may have been an attempt to establish a single civil power. Mamdani argues that, at the turn of the century and until the end of the 1910s, the chiefs' power was waning while British legal authority began to take precedence (1996). In both Uganda and Rhodesia, the authority of chiefs was ostensibly replaced by British legal authority in an attempt to 'civilize' indigenous people. British administrators, District Commissioners (DCs) in Uganda and Native Commissioners (NCs) in Rhodesia, were the sole legal authority.¹⁰ Fallers comments that in Uganda these DCs saw themselves as "administrators-tutors with the task of preparing the indigenous population for economic and political self-determination in the modern world" (1965, 43). In Zimbabwe, too, Diana Jeater argues, "the Administration and the NAD [Native Affairs Department] were of the opinion that Africans needed a programme of moral improvement comparable to that recently seen applied to the working classes in Britain in order to open the path to civilization" (1993, 54).

This initial period also offered more opportunities to indigenous people outside the control of the chiefs. This was quite pronounced in Rhodesia. Although the chiefs or 'big men' had an advantage in accumulation, the changing relations of production and markets gave their clients different opportunities. As white farms gradually started producing and narrowing the markets, as well as usurping the land base, more men accepted the employment option. By 1912 sporadic employment during the slack agricultural season had turned to

¹⁰ In Rhodesia in 1897, after the rebellion of 1896, 'native' administration came under imperial control even as the BSA Company carried on the administration of the colony and this did not change until the settlers voted for and got responsible government in 1923.

increased dependence on wage work so that "proportionally more local men were taking up waged labour... [and] they were more likely to work continually for anything from six to twelve months" (Jeater 1993, 111). White farmers replaced chiefs as patrons as "black agricultural workers were not just employees, but frequently were dependent tenants and subservient clients as well" (Phimister 1988, 84). In addition, the growing European population provided alternative markets for peasants' crops, reducing the traditional network of power that chiefs held over people. Referring to Gwelo, Jeater comments that,

The chiefly monopoly over long-distance trade, particularly important to hunters such as Chief Chiwundura, was shaken by the presence of nearer markets, which many traders could reach, while the chance to raise bridewealth through waged work offered unprecedented independence to junior men, who no longer needed to work for lineage heads (1993, 110).

In Uganda, on the other hand, there were fewer opportunities for peasants to break away from the chiefs' influence since the emphasis was on encouraging peasants to grow cash crops on their (the chiefs') customary holdings.¹¹ Trading and secondary operations, such as cotton ginning, went to Indians who fast became the middlemen between the British and the African peasants, leaving Africans fewer opportunities for branching out (Ehrlich 1965; Mamdani 1976). Nevertheless, the implementation of two levels of administration in the early years - the British DCs and the indigenous administrator chiefs from Buganda who were employed to organize the other districts in Uganda - loosened the authority of chiefs outside of Buganda.

The change in women's behaviour and the anxiety it created among chiefs was an indicator of how significant the change in relations was in these early years. This is because any change in women's behaviour necessarily affected the institution central to political power

¹¹ Early attempts to establish a plantation economy failed and by 1916 the British relied entirely on a policy of encouraging cash crops from peasant holdings.

in the old localism - marriage. Because control over women was pivotal to control over people in general, the changing options of women highlighted the weakening of chiefly rule.

In Rhodesia the new economic conditions combined with indigenous patriarchal control over women's labour created the conditions which encouraged women to seek alternatives to customary marriage. In marriage the husband became the owner of his wife's productive and reproductive labour. Most of the labour - planting, hoeing, weeding and harvesting - was provided by wives and, with increased markets, the woman's work increased. If the husband sought waged labour outside the homestead she would end up with all of the work and, in addition, became responsible for staying on the land and working it in order to keep the customary rights. Women were further distressed by male absences as they were often subject to abuse by the husband's family if he was not there to defend them. Jeater argues that these conditions, combined with the problem of forced marriage, "provided them with incentives to reject lineage control and to seek out other options for themselves" (1993, 119).

Women sought various opportunities, all of which decreased lineage control. They sought employment on the white farms where they were paid less than men but where the responsibility for the workload was considerably less. Some women lived with their husbands whom they accompanied to the urban areas and mining compounds. More often women entered into a series of temporary liaisons with men which could be ended if there was abuse. At the mines and in urban areas where there were large concentrations of migrant labourers, beer brewing was a rewarding occupation since "a woman needed to sell only ten pints of beer per month in order to hire one man to work her fields for the same period of time"

(Schmidt 1992, 60).¹² Prostitution also was an option for living a more independent life.¹³ The most significant political consequence was that these relationships, especially prostitution, made sex an individual affair. Jeater argues that,

In a profound social upheaval, sex was divorced from other social relationships and transformed into a gender specific commodity to be purchased by men of all races (1993, 118).

Moreover, with the importation of labour for the mines and settler farms women entered into arrangements with foreign men over whom the chiefs had no lineage control (Jeater 1993, 95-118). It was very difficult to get compensation for adultery from men who were accountable to lineages. The Native Marriage Ordinance of 1903, in which the British sought to end forced marriage by making the bride's consent necessary, also increased the possibility of escaping lineage controls (Jeater 1993). Another alternative for women was provided by the missions as, "God as well as the Devil offered means of independent survival" (Jeater 1993, 251). Women provided cheap labour for the missions but also were allowed to attend classes. They used the money they earned to pay the brideprice themselves to their own male relatives so that they gained freedom from lineage. Complaints from elders were loud, especially around Umtali, about the fact that the missions, in employing women, were stealing daughters

¹² Women in all parts of Zimbabwe traditionally brewed beer in ceremonies to honour (in the case of her own) or propitiate (in the case of her husband's) ancestors (Kruper 1954, 33, 103; Schmidt 1992, 25). Mine operators encouraged women to come. They attracted male labourers who were then more likely to stay and their cooking and beer brewing made for a healthier workforce. In 1902, the beer's nutritional qualities were recommended by the Pasteur Institute of Rhodesia as an antidote to scurvy in the mining compounds (Jeater 1993, 120).

¹³ It is evident that women were able to survive and even prosper under such circumstances. J. W. Posselt, NC for Marandellas noted that prostitutes used their money to educate their children and, therefore, were much more productive mothers than those still under the conditions of brideprice (Jeater 1993, 246).

(Jeater 1993, 250).¹⁴ Thus, chiefs were losing control over the very institution that was the centre of political power in the old localism.

In Uganda, women had more limited options but their behaviour still warranted a political response from colonial administrators and the chiefs. As already mentioned, the failure to establish a plantation-based economy and the decision to encourage cash crops on peasant holdings presented fewer opportunities to break away from the influence of the chiefs. A reliance on peasant-grown export crops meant there was not a marked absence of husbands. However, the increase of cultivation certainly affected peasant wives who also did a great deal of the farm work, including growing export crops (Obbo, 1988). Although the colonial administration set up administrative centres which eventually became urban centres, there was not much rural/urban migration of women until after the 1920s (Obbo 1980). Nevertheless, women did come under the scrutiny of both colonial and indigenous male authorities during the syphilis scare as women's behaviour was seen as somehow responsible for the situation. In this case, the situation seems to have reinforced the power of the chief through whose authority the colonial government forced the administration of treatment. On the other hand, the introduction of training for widwifery at the same time gave some indigenous women opportunities (Summers 1991). Thus, we can say that often social change brought the behaviour of women under the microscope of both British and traditional authorities, even if the scale of the threat in Uganda was much smaller than that in Rhodesia.

Viewing this evidence we can say that, especially in the case of Rhodesia, there was a great fluidity in the early years which might have resulted in the establishment of a modern

¹⁴ Umtali was the former name of Mutare. It was changed in the early 1990s when the Mugabe government instituted a number of changes to replace colonial names.

government inclusive of Africans. There were indications that old indigenous political relations were breaking down and new social relationships were taking form. On a trip to Uganda in 1925, C. G. Jung discovered how dramatic the effect of early British rule had been in replacing indigenous authority. In an interview with a clan leader Jung reports,

The medicine man then confessed to me that he no longer had any dreams, for they had the District Commissioner now instead. "Since the English are in the country we have no dreams anymore," he said. "The District Commissioner knows everything about war and diseases, about where we have got to live" (1938, 20-1).

Thus, the effect of early British 'civilizing' rule seems to have reached the heart of indigenous beliefs and institutions, emptying them of empowering political content. However, there were factors which precluded the possibility of these new social and political relationships developing into a modern form of government inclusive of Africans.

The use of indigenous political power

British administrators may have intended to prepare Africans for economic and political self determination but, in reality, they relied heavily on the exploitation of the traditional forms of power characteristic of the pre-colonial indigenous civil political power. The need for revenue was paramount as the BSA Company administration in Zimbabwe and the direct British administration in Uganda were characterized by undercapitalization and underinvestment. The official British policy was that a colony should "begin to pay its own way" (Low 1965;). The economic endeavours, of the BSA Company, small miners and the settlers in Rhodesia and British commercial interests in Uganda, were characterized by the same deficiencies (Low 1965; de Kiewiet Hemphill 1963; Ehrlich 1965; Phimister 1988). Both conditions demanded ready cash and cheap, if not 'free', labour.

It is quite clear that the early administrators were intent on using the chiefs' traditional

power over people for procuring both labour and tax. Particularly virulent were early efforts to collect tax both for purposes of revenue and to force Africans onto the labour market. In both Uganda and Rhodesia a hut tax was instituted in the late 1890s. Elizabeth Schmidt comments on the BSA Company in Rhodesia:

Imposed unofficially in Mashonaland in 1893 and officially sanctioned in 1894, company tax needs were met through the arbitrary seizure of crops and livestock, the latter constituting the people's primary source of wealth (1992, 38).

Before the rebellion of 1896, the company employed native police to collect tax. These individuals proved to be so belligerent that people did not "mind the tax so much as the brutal way of collecting it" (Schmidt 1992, 38). Successive rises in the hut tax in Rhodesia eventually forced indigenous men to seek paid labour no matter how abysmal the conditions (see Bhila 1982, 231-249; Phimister 1988, 4-44; Schmidt 1992, 41-70).¹⁵ When the cash hut tax failed to produce workers, the British authorities demanded forced labour, via the chiefs, which they used in the mines and for 'development' work such as roads.¹⁶ The hut tax was also essential for the colonial administration in Uganda and collecting it was a primary

¹⁵ During the period 1904-1922 when restructuring was taking place in the mines (especially in the small mines) a combination of hut tax (doubled in 1904) and a plummeting of agricultural prices had forced many men onto the labour market. The period saw an increase in working hours and a decline in wages and in money for provisions in order to beat the competition. Phimister comments on the conditions:

Pneumonia, as the mining industry well knew, could be prevented by 'clothing, housing and feeding the native suitably', but as it was precisely these requirements which were subordinated to accumulation, the disease was left to cut a wide swathe through the ranks of black workers. Although far fewer people died of scurvy, its widespread incidence in Southern Rhodesian mine compounds epitomized the price paid by black labour for the industry's profitability (1988, 52).

Little provision was made for health facilities and if workers were ill "they were either told that they were shamming and made to work or they were simply dismissed on the spot" (Phimister 1988, 54).

¹⁶ The British were so adamant in their campaign for African labour that in Mashonaland in the late 1890s they killed the king's son-in-law when the king's daughter, who was the ward head, refused to send labourers to the mines (Bhila 1982).

concern of the authorities.¹⁷ However, the institution of a cash hut tax was not enough to coerce people into growing larger quantities of cash crops in Uganda so the chiefs were employed as overseers. "Such was the authority of the chiefs that their 'bare orders' were sufficient to ensure the effective execution of these drastic demands" (Ehrlich 1965, 405).

'Free' labour in the form of tribute (labour traditionally owed to the chief) was also used to build roads in Uganda and when the British were trying to get a plantation economy off the ground (1911-1920) the chiefs were used again to coerce 'free' labour for these British projects (Ehrlich 1965). The purported interest in civilizing indigenous people was always subordinated to the economic interests of the colonizers and in a decidedly 'uncivil' fashion. The use of indigenous political power, through the chiefs, in an exploitative manner severed the grounds on which pre-colonial accountability had been established and established the precedent for the despotic decentralization of formal indirect rule which was instituted later.

¹⁷ Even purported efforts to bring modern hygiene and medicine to colonial populations were thinly disguised attempts to assure adequate labour and tax. Carol Summers argues that the British concern about disease in Uganda, and especially in Buganda, which peaked between 1907 and 1924 and resulted in a concerted effort to eliminate syphilis in particular, was really a concern for their own interests:

A declining population meant a labour shortage capable of threatening the prosperity and viability of the protectorate. It might halt the development of labour intensive export crops such as cotton, which were necessary to rationalize the expenses of the Uganda railroad and the new colonial administration. (1991, 788).

Besides the epidemic of trypanosomiasis to which Ehrlich refers above, syphilis was seen as the prime cause of infant mortality and by 1906 was seen as a crisis. It is interesting to note, for our purposes, that the measures taken for the former involved forced removal of people from tsetse fly areas while legislation for the latter, which was "recognizably coercive", called for forced examinations and treatment, all to be brought about by the power of the chiefs (Summers 1991, 793). Even the concern for epidemics of sickness seemed to be viewed from the point of view of revenue gathering:

A severe sleeping sickness in Busoga in 1908 and the appalling sleeping sickness epidemic which resulted in the death of tens of thousands of *taxpayers*, were also great setbacks to the collection of revenue [my emphasis] (Ehrlich 1965, 402).

Elite set apart

Despite their loss of formal political power, the chiefs' position enabled them to make economic gains during this period, creating another disjuncture in the former relationship with their people and paving the way for the, as yet informal, despotic power of indirect rule. Previously, the payment in tribute and goods did not qualitatively set the leader apart from his subjects and cause him to live differently from them; rather, the chief's household was larger and catered to many more people and their functions (Fallers 1965). During these early transition years a marked change in the differentiation in wealth between ruler and ruled was evident. In Uganda, chiefs were able to take advantage of tribute labour in order to grow export crops and raise cash. In addition they were given a percentage of tax that they raised for the British. As Fallers remarks, "It was the golden age of chieftainship in Busoga when, from their point of view, all the advantages of the traditional and modern political systems were combined" (1965, 149). In Buganda, in particular, lesser chiefs were appeased by the British with large tracts of land from which they could demand traditional tribute.¹⁸ Thus, the chiefs became "a totally parasitical semifeudal landed class, living off rent and chiefly salaries" (Mamdani 1976, 34). In Rhodesia the early years were a boon for indigenous agriculture, since settlers had not yet established viable farms and there was a great demand for local foodstuffs. During this time the chiefs who had more women under their control could produce more agricultural goods which brought in cash payments. In addition, there was a marked increase in the custom of accepting the husband's labour in lieu of lobolo as more labour was demanded in order to increase output. Cattle prices were also high and so

¹⁸These tracts of land were termed *mailo* because the land was measured in square miles, were given to chiefs in order to placate them and get their cooperation.

those with large herds, as a result of lobolo, became wealthy. Jeater comments that,

It became difficult to distinguish bridewealth-related payments from other market exchanges. For those household heads who were swift to benefit from the new markets, their position could be consolidated by using this transformed bridewealth system to accumulate capital (1993, 107).

In both countries chiefs were not only able to take advantage of mission education but also were first in line as administrators for the colonial power. They could afford to purchase new consumer items imported from Europe and to send their children to mission schools. In these ways the chiefly class became more and more dependent on the British administration for their wealth and influence and lost the organic roots connecting them to their own people.

Mamdani comments that in Uganda,

What had been a potentially dynamic precolonial ruling class, increasingly deriving its surplus from trade, was at one stroke converted into a parasitic collaborating class, divorced from trade and production, central only to the process of consumption (1972, 42).

Thus the identification of interests between ruler and ruled was severely reduced as was the need for the accountability that had been produced in the old localism; the new political relations both created and supported this split.

In conclusion, the early years of colonialism in Uganda and Zimbabwe presented a fluid situation. The colonial administrations in their early days held out the promise of a single civil authority and the clan-based political power of the chiefs over people was considerably weakened. The means to avoid, if not escape, the power of the lineages presented themselves to both men and women, especially in Rhodesia. As Phimister comments, it was a time when "modernizing farmers and migrants, Christians and animists, as well as rich and poor, young and old, all contested place and position in the space vacated by the ebbing class power of precolonial rulers" (1988, 148). The former indigenous basis for accountability was breaking down. Politically, the interplay of interests which had previously

given rise to a sense of responsibility and accountability between ruler and ruled was being eroded. Chiefs could no longer be removed by warfare and rivals could not move on to new territory. Their economic interests and means of administration became more dependent on European markets and military might than on the alliance among clans and their own indigenous economy. At the same time, the chiefly class were in a position to accrue economic and educational advantages that further set them apart from their people. However, there was also ominous evidence that the social upheaval would result in something different from a single civil authority. The colonial authorities were anxious to employ the remnants of the old indigenous political authority over people in order to further their own interests; thus, they never totally abandoned the idea of control through the chiefs.

III Localism under colonialism: indirect rule and the bifurcation of power

Reasons for establishing indirect rule

What is evident, in both Rhodesia and Uganda, is that the change to indirect rule was a reaction to the complexity of circumstances and relationships that developed during those early years of great fluidity. As Terence Ranger asserts, "Everyone sought to tidy up and make more comprehensible the infinitely complex situation which they held to be a result of the 'untraditional' chaos of the nineteenth century" (1983, 249). Mamdani argues that by the early 1920s the institution of chiefly authority under indirect rule was, in fact, widespread in colonial Africa, led by the previous colonial experience of the British in Asia, as well as a fear of economic competition from Africans with racial undertones (1996, 50-1). This was certainly true in Uganda and Rhodesia. The fear of competition from modernizing Africans and the fear of losing public order, combined with racist attitudes, contributed to the British

authorities' abandoning the 'civilizing' mission and creating a divided authority.

Economic competition

It was not the failure of Africans to adapt to new ways but the opposite that troubled early administrations. Jeater asserts that in Rhodesia the settlers' dilemma,

was expressed with disarming candour by the Colonial Office Journal in its review of Maurice Evan's pro-segregationist text *Black and White in South-East Africa*. 'The trouble is, in fact, not that it is difficult to educate natives, or that it is necessary to manufacture any distinguishing method for them, but that as fast as they are educated they compete with the whites; in other words, it is not that European education fails, but that it succeeds'. Civilization, clearly, was a double-edged sword (1993, 62).

Moreover, the economic success of Africans under early colonial rule coincided with the disastrously undercapitalized, and often failed, attempts by whites to establish viable enterprises. In Rhodesia there was "a large and expanding constituency of white farmers who lived from hand to mouth" and a combination of poor farming methods, foolish spending on luxuries and the "sundowner habit" exacerbated the situation (Phimister 1988, 128). Small miners also were undercapitalized, often without skills and they faced fierce competition (Phimister 1988; Ranger 1983). In Uganda, early economic endeavours were also very vulnerable. As mentioned above, the attempt to develop plantations was a bitter failure. Even though the administration pursued a policy of peasant-based production as a result of this failure, the colonial authorities reversed early decisions to let Africans gin their own cotton and Ehrlich remarks that "British officials were rarely disposed to favour enterprising Africans", encouraging Asian and British interests instead (1965, 418). As detailed above, in both countries colonial economic pursuits relied on forced labour or ridiculously low wages in order to survive at all. Mamdani notes that the colonial administrators had once seen tribalism as a threat but they "came to see the culturally civilized native as a growing political threat...

[and] to check that threat, the state would try to shore up customary law and tribal chiefs - precisely when changing conditions were fast eroding their role and status" (1996, 92).¹⁹

The need for order

Order was essential to the projects of the colonists and always closely associated with chiefly rule. In both countries, early colonial administrators, with little administrative and armed support, had little grasp, and plenty of fear, of indigenous culture and power so that, whereas they seemed to have the upper hand, they were heavily dependent on the chiefs 'to take care of things'. In Uganda, Ehrlich argues, the British administration was eager to keep the chiefs onside so that order was kept and tax collecting went smoothly:

Inherent in government policy was the conflict between the need to encourage native enterprise and the natural desire for a quiet life and tidy administration (Ehrlich 1965, 418).

As argued above, they were heavily dependent on tax collection in order to build infrastructure to support the European economy. Cranford Pratt argues that one of the primary reasons peculiar to Uganda for pursuing indirect rule was the effectiveness of the Bugandan bureaucracy under the Kabaka which impressed the British with and the order and loyalty it obtained from the people; the Bugandan indigenous system provided one of the most successful examples of indirect rule (Low and Pratt 1960, 178). In Rhodesia the chiefs' interest in reinstating their old political power over people coincided with the desire on the part of the Company and, after 1923, the settler administration, to keep order on the African reserves. The issue of control over women appealed to most African men as they were

¹⁹ Cranford Pratt argues that economic reasons were not primary in the decision to use indirect rule in Uganda, especially after the plantations failed (Low and Pratt 1960, 304-7). Certainly the relations with Buganda, upon which British policy rested, come into play and, once started, indirect rule was difficult to abandon. Nevertheless, indirect rule served British economic interests.

dependent on the productive capacity of their wives (Jeater 1993). Jeater explains that a "cuckolded returning migrant, especially if childless, was back at square one, with no more status than an unmarried man" and thus it was in the interests of both juniors and elders to reinstate lineage control over women (Jeater 1993, 131).²⁰ Jeater argues that the pieces of legislation concerning marriage and adultery, the Natives Adultery Punishment Ordinance (NAPO) of 1916 and the Native Marriages Ordinance (NMO) of 1917, were the beginning of a new thrust in 'native policy' in Rhodesia as they were the first ordinances about customary law and constituted the first separate legislation for Africans (1993, 197-226). In particular, the NMO called for the approval of the local headman in order to register a marriage. "Even urban migrant men with no lineage connections in an area had to seek out and petition local chiefs to witness their marriages if they were to be registered" (Jeater 1993, 214). The numbers of headmen were multiplied as they were appointed to fulfill this function and Jeater concludes that, "(T)he 1917 NMO was suited to the Reserves policy, not to a policy of integration" (1993, 213). Chiefly rule was the convenient vehicle for restoring order.

The effect of racism

If economic competition and the need for order pressed the colonial authorities into action, it was their attitudes towards race which facilitated the process that led to divided rule. The issue of race is highlighted by the Universal Races Congress held in 1911, the sole

²⁰ Rhodesian authorities were alarmed by what they saw as disorder in the mining compounds and in the locations in the urban areas and particularly blamed the women who brewed beer for what they saw as a dangerous level of drunkenness. To correct the disorder, the 'Kaffir' beer laws of 1908, 1911 and 1915 outlawed beer brewing in the mines and the urban locations, thus making illegal indigenous profits from beer and seriously damaging the economic viability of the women (Schmidt 1992, 87). This point of view seems to have changed dramatically when the municipalities later established a monopoly on brewing indigenous beer and built huge beer halls in the African townships.

purpose of which was to provide a counterpoint to the widely held view that races should not mix (see Spiller 1911). The views of even those observers, who were sympathetic to Africans at the time, reveal the deep racism of the time. It was the view of one participant that 'natives' were not ready for a capitalist economy and if they were given free access to land they would not take advantage of modern work methods; rather, they needed compulsion (Oliver 1911). Nor were Africans "suited by temperament or talent for that kind of industrial position as wage-workers under capital into which the proletariats of industrial European countries have come" (Oliver 1911, 301). Concerning the 'black peril', that is, the moral danger black men posed to white women, a participant sympathetic to Africans observed that colonial regimes gave Africans too much freedom from moral constraint:

Fear is the only restraining influence under this new *régime*; [but] fear, tempered by reverence for the chief, was the restraining influence at home in the tribe (Hoggan 1911,365).

The "feeling that one man is as good as another, if not kept within due bounds" lead to this perversion in black men (Hoggan 1911, 366). However, the participant did observe that, "one wonders that so little feeling comparatively is shown when the white man is the aggressor and the victim has a coloured skin" (Hoggan 1911, 364).

Indeed, the 'black peril' was a paramount issue at the time (see Hoggan 1911; Kirkwood 1984; Gartrell 1984; Jeater 1993). The fact that African men worked as domestic servants and were in contact with white women in their intimate lives was seen as the catalyst for this perversity.²¹ Black women were also seen as perverted. This was certainly one of the arguments during the syphilis 'crisis' in Uganda and became the opinion in Rhodesia as more

²¹ In Umtali there were several cases of rape against black men all of which were "very unlikely cases" and by 1912 the problem had become so aggravating to the administrators that they insisted on choosing jurors for cases involving blacks and whites, a measure that was "deeply resented by the settlers" (Jeater 1993, 186, 187).

and more women came to the towns (Summers 1991; Jeater 1993).²² The Rhodesian administration was concerned with legislating against white prostitution in order to prevent white women from having sex with black men but there was no legislation against white men having sex with or raping either black or white women (Jeater 1993, 79). Since the African was of an inferior race he/she became perverse and most efforts to 'civilize' Africans were "seen as attempts to force the 'race' into a position to which it was evolutionarily unsuited" (Jeater 1993, 58). Thus, the generally racist public opinion, whether sympathetic to Africans or not, pointed to the separation of 'natives' from colonizers and a return to the moral authority provided by chiefly rule.

Formal indirect rule and the bifurcation of accountability and responsibility

In the years leading up to the 1920s the policy of the colonizers changed dramatically from the earlier one of bringing European civilization to Africans. In Rhodesia, a series of economic measures, which limited markets for African produce as it opened up markets for white farmers and which saw Africans gradually driven from white-held land onto reserve lands ruled by the chiefs, paved the way for a separate development (Phimister 1988; Ranger 1970). In 1919 the Privy Council made a decision on land in Rhodesia taking away one million acres of good land from Africans and exchanging it for inferior land more suited for native occupation; the rest of the unalienated land was put under the Crown. By these ordinances the local chiefs had a legal basis upon which to issue their own administrative orders and to punish. In the same year, 1919, in Uganda, the British "indirect style of indirect

²² Jeater argues that early paternalistic attitudes of colonists towards black women quickly turned to racist ones in Rhodesia. Early legislation (Native Marriage Ordinance, 1903) was paternalistic and geared to protecting African women against forced marriage while later legislation (Native Adultery Punishment Ordinance, 1916) saw black women as adulterers to be punished.

rule" through administrators from Buganda, was formalized in the Native Authority Ordinance (Burke 1964, 34). The initial fluid period yielded to a more rigid structure of split authority.

African territory was divided into districts. In Uganda these were roughly modelled on Buganda which was already a large kingdom with an indigenous administration. Other smaller kingdoms were adapted quite easily but the administration was imposed on districts in the north and east, which had no such indigenous organization. In Rhodesia the division of land between white settlers and Africans relegated the Africans to Tribal Trust Lands which then were administered by the local ethnic chiefs who were deemed acceptable by British authorities.

Under indirect rule, chiefs and, at the village level, headmen, and their traditional council of elders were allowed to rule by customary law, combining executive, legislative and judicial functions. Since Europeans were ignorant of customary law the interpretation was left to the indigenous chiefs and their elders and yet "these particular constructs of customary law became codified and rigid and unable so readily to reflect change in the future" (Ranger 1983, 251). In addition, some very 'uncustomary' items such as taxes and school fees crept in and were enforced under customary laws which were never concerned with limiting state power, only enforcing it (Mamdani 1996, 123). This rule, backed by colonial authority, was more rigid than the freer flow between commoner and ruling clans in pre-colonial politics. This resulted in more rigid and more powerful clientelistic relationships, with higher stakes, between ruler and ruled as the "black elite compensated for their lack of political and economic leverage by helping to build regional bases of patronage and power" (Phimister 1988, 152). This, in turn, reinforced ethnic differentiation between administrative units which

were based on much more rigid, and sometimes reconstituted, ethnic groupings.²³ An important element of customary powers was the retention of control over the allocation of customary use of land which prevented any change to legal private individual ownership and left peasants open to exploitation by greedy headmen in an informal land market. Women lost their leverage in marriage and were dominated by an inflexible system which gave the males of the husband's family complete power over the marriage home and the children on the occasion of the husband's death. Ranger concludes that,

where the competitive dynamic of the nineteenth century had given many opportunities for young men to establish independent bases of economic, social and political influence, colonialism saw an establishment of control by elders of land allocation, marriage transactions and political office. Small-scale gerontocracies were a defining feature of the twentieth rather than the nineteenth century (1983, 249).

If the form was retained, the substance was something very different from pre-colonial times.

From the point of view of developing a relationship between ruler and ruled that produced responsibility and accountability, the bifurcation of power through indirect rule sounded the death knell for any rekindling of that relationship. The effect of formal indirect rule, was to formalize the removal of a direct social relationship with regard to the means of administration. In Uganda tribute was phased out and chiefs became salaried officials paid by the British out of tax revenue. Gradually, also, the hereditary rule lost out to those chiefs who had more education and could function as modern administrators. Commenting on the *Lukiiko* (governing council) of Buganda, Mamdani asserts that instead of a class of landlords with a

²³ In the case of Busoga, for example, a reading of pre-colonial history that has survived is striking for its description of varieties of groupings, the reinventing of lineages and the fluidity allowed by alliances (see Cohen 1972; 1986) What is so striking in contrast is the rigidity of groupings under colonial designations, a process Fallers describes, concluding that by Ugandan independence a Soga identity had been forged (Fallers 1965: 248-50). As Mamdani points out, it is not a question of the inventing of ethnic groupings but the making of them (1996:184-5). Ranger concludes that "the great invention of tribal traditions... was going on everywhere in the 1920s and 1930s" (1983, 242).

political base "they were an intermediary state bureaucracy, a collaborating class that was dependent on, and identified with, the colonial state" (1976, 127). By the 1950s in Busoga the last of the hereditary chiefs had been dismissed or retired and the British freely appointed and transferred chiefs in what, on the surface, looked like a bureaucracy but which still gave extraordinary power to administrative chiefs locally (Fallers 1965). At the time of independence Burke observed that "Today a chief receives a monthly pay envelope and is concerned with fulfilling his obligations to the bureaucracy rather than to his subjects" (1964, 24). However, in the former kingdoms a tension was created between those who considered themselves 'authentic' hereditary clan rulers and those who had risen through the British administrative hierarchy and, hence, were 'not authentic', although sometimes they were one and the same (Cohen 1972). This tension seemed to create a brake on the degree of despotism that was tolerated in those parts of Uganda, whereas the same was not true in non-kingdom districts in the north. There, even the colonial authorities "were concerned about the autocratic nature and excesses of the Buganda system as it had evolved" (Burke 1964, 37). Yet, even in Buganda, where the British had developed the *mailo* system of land ownership to placate smaller chiefs, the peasants, despite the fact that they had been given security of tenure in 1932, still had to deal with landlords who continued to demand some tribute (Mamdani 1976).²⁴ In Uganda the headmen refused to become civil servants and still continued to collect allotment fees from peasants seeking available land. Once chiefs became transferrable, the headmen were the only people who knew local inhabitants and this gave them a great deal of

²⁴ The 1932 legislation seems to be a case where the colonial administration acted on behalf of the peasant but Mamdani argues that the British took the side of the peasantry only because the demands of the landlords were a counter-incentive to growing cash crops and thus affected European business (1976, 123-5).

power when it came to collecting taxes, apprehending criminals and spreading government information.²⁵

In Rhodesia, too, chiefs became, as Phimister puts it, ranked as constables, and "the tribal system under construction during the 1920s was designed to channel popular hopes and grievances into outlets very largely controlled by the state itself" (1988, 151). Chiefs' salaries were paid out of taxes that they collected for the colonial administration. Their loyalty was to the administration and their duty was to keep order on the increasingly crowded Tribal Trust Lands. An expanding group of salaried administrators were directed by colonial Native Commissioners (NCs). These administrators, messengers, who maintained communication between the NCs and chiefs, and agricultural demonstrators, had strong ties to the chiefly administration. Phimister explains that, "As most demonstrators were sons of chiefs and headmen, or of messengers and mission educated 'advanced natives', alliances of this nature were frequently self-contained and self sustaining" (1988, 143). Thus, there emerged a localism that was an ubiquitous administration, characterized by a proliferating set of rules and a plethora of officials to administer them. Except for the ability to use their position for patronage purposes, their ties of responsibility and accountability accrued to the colonial administration. Not only were they detached from responsibility to their own people but their demand of tribute had now become outright exploitation made possible by their despotic position.

²⁵ Officially, allotment fees were not recognized by customary law but the headmen resented this intrusion on their rights and as a result the peasant could not avoid them. Fallers notes that when the town of Jinja needed to expand its boundaries it paid compensation to the peasants but refused to pay allotment fees to the headmen who complained that the government was trying to steal their land (Fallers 1965, 176-7). The reality for those living under local despotism was not the same as that purported by the colonial authorities.

The bifurcation of power between the colonial government and the customary administration of chiefs created a vacuum for producing responsibility and accountability when it came to policy for Africans. The governing relationship was between the European administration and those whose efforts were directed towards developing the European economy; and the "policy of Government in regard to native races" was indeed secondary as implied by Oliver in the opening quote of this chapter (Oliver 1911, 293). In Uganda the colonial government supported European and Asian interests and Africans were subordinated as peasants and labourers. While Asian interests, too, were subordinated to European interests, Asians were dependent on British international capital, mostly through the Bank of India and "its interests were in harmony with, and subservient to, those of the metropolitan bourgeoisie which dominated the entire colonial system and was the prime beneficiary of the export-import economy" (Mamdani 1976, 108). Only in the 1950s, just before independence, did the colonial government encourage African enterprise in the form of cooperatives, especially in ginning (Mamdani 1976). While the labour and taxes of Africans went to infrastructure to support those interests, very little was spent on local infrastructure or social development. Although there was some money for dispensaries and an attempt to "help support" the mission schools, essentially there was little tax money to care for or educate the population (Fallers 1965, 154).²⁶ This deplorable state is evident in the summary of the Report of the Royal Commission on East Africa which was published in 1955 (Woodruff 1955). According to the report, by the mid-1950s, after half a century of rule, the territories were highly

²⁶ Cranford Pratt argues that in the period between the wars British administrators became much more concerned for the welfare of indigenous people. Nevertheless it was not until Sir Andrew Cohen became governor in 1952 that substantial funds were appropriated for this purpose (Low and Pratt 1960, 303,317).

undercapitalized with an underdeveloped system of communication, few roads and little development of water supply or industry. There was no provision for a living wage as "the minimum wage enforceable by law has been based on the bare needs of a single man" and the provision of health care was so inadequate the commissioners "were constantly made aware of the contribution made by ill-health to other difficulties" (Woodruff 1955,21). Yet, the report noted, "(I)ncome tax and surtax are higher than anywhere else in the world except the United Kingdom and India" (Woodruff 1955, 16). Here, then, is demonstrated in concrete terms the limits of accountability and responsibility under the colonial regime.

The Rhodesian government also shared interests with the colonizers and, from the institution of self-government in 1923, was directly concerned with the settler economy. Government policy, in turns, promoted mining interests, settler farmer interests (whether tobacco, food or cattle) and secondary industry (Phimister 1988). In all cases, "African rural development was specifically subordinated to the needs and fears of white agriculture" (Phimister 1988, 235). Infrastructure was geared to the white markets and Africans were pushed back onto reserve land far from access to that infrastructure and those markets. Any agricultural support was, in reality, support for the reserve policy whereby all Africans who had not acquired farms were to return to the reserves by 1937.²⁷ For example, policies, such as contour ploughing, were implemented through the African administrators because the overcrowding made it impossible to leave land fallow for periods of time. Provisions for health and schools were mainly left to the missions although the wives of white farmers often

²⁷ As the reserve policy was put into effect, force was used to get people onto the Tribal Trust Lands. Phimister reports that, "some 50,000 people expelled from 'white' farmland were shoe-horned into the reserves by these means between 1931 and 1941 [and] twice as many again remained to be accommodated in those areas under the terms of the Land Apportionment Act" (Phimister 1988, 236).

ran rudimentary clinics and white farmers provided the land and building for a school while the government would appoint and pay a teacher; the provisions were inadequate and inferior to those enjoyed by whites (Kirkwood 1984; Kriger 1992, 51-81). Provisions in the towns were even scantier and even when they were improved in the 1940s and 1950s it was always in relation to keeping order among the subject population which provided labour for the white urban population (see below). Thus 'native' policy was always for the purpose of keeping African interests at bay so that the government was free to pursue the interests of, and remain accountable to, the settler economy; and those who imposed that policy, local 'native' administrations, held no responsibility for making it.

Effects of neo-tradition

One must take very seriously the legacy of racism and elitism under colonialism and how it fed the political power relations of bifurcation (Ranger 1983; Gartrell 1984). An extreme cult of elitism, cultivated and maintained by the use of neo-tradition, developed in the colonies for a number of reasons.²⁸ Terence Ranger argues that the graduates of the newly traditional public schools in England in the nineteenth century were frequently forced to look to the colonies in order to establish careers and they "often found themselves engaged in tasks which by definition would have been menial in Britain and which only the glamour of empire building made acceptable" (1983, 215). Thus, part of the mystique was to carry on the

²⁸ In *The Invention of Tradition* Eric Hobsbawm argues that in the nineteenth century certain rituals were invented in Europe, and especially Britain, and seen as tradition even though they were newly invented (Hobsbawm 1983). For

example, the rituals devised in the British public school in the nineteenth century were immediately adopted as traditions even though of recent invention. Terence Ranger argues that, having had practice in Europe and in India, "African empires came so late in the day that they demonstrate the effects rather than the causes of European invented tradition" (Ranger 1983, 211).

'tradition' of gentlemen.²⁹ Beverley Gartrell argues that the style of ruling officials was a "tool of domination... [and the] maintenance of a mystique of European superiority was believed to be essential to the maintenance of domination" (1984, 168). Gaining power was one thing but retaining the mystique of empire and supreme administrator was hard work for colonial officials; tradition had to become a way of life. Thus, wives of British administrators were essential to the administration, no matter what the cost, as they were the "representatives of home, culture and its moral standards" (Gartrell 1984, 169). Wives assisted in the maintenance of dignity by preventing liaisons between administrators and African women and creating a social milieu in which gentlemanly behaviour was required. Gartrell points out that in this role women were much more restricted than they would have been in Britain and that the colonial conception of women was unaffected by great changes taking place in the home country. The designation of gentleman reached other classes of whites in Rhodesia as white labour established itself above black. White farmers always saw themselves as gentlemen farmers rather than peasants, even those who struggled for subsistence.³⁰ Ceremony was the hallmark of prestige and since there was no history of British ceremony in Africa all traditions had to be invented. Every occasion demanded ceremony, protocol and invoking the king's name as father and protector of his subjects in order to impress upon those subjects

²⁹ Ranger comments that, considering the fact that elementary school education had only become more general in Britain after the 1870s, the British were walking on pretty thin ground which needed to be shored up by the neo-tradition of the public schools (1983, 220-222).

³⁰ The existence of different classes of whites proved to be troubling indeed to the British administrators. The Sofers note that in Jinja, with the building of the Owen Falls dam in the 1950s, whites skilled in the trades were evident for the first time in Uganda. British administrators were very careful to keep their distance and when it came to the new workers joining the European club it was agreed that they were "unclubbable". On the other hand, the Sofers argue, Ugandans became more aware that skilled labour was valued when they observed white tradesmen.

how fortunate they were. Ranger notes that when there were royal visits the colonial officials were insistent on full regalia to impress the population and comments that "over-emphasis on the forms had already been created by colonial whites themselves, most of whom were beneficiaries rather than the creators of wealth and power" (1983, 237). Gartrell rightly emphasizes that part of the tradition was for the state to bare the cost of gentlemanly life and, therefore, the administration "was itself a major appropriator of peasant surplus. The life-style of the officials and their families was directly underwritten by this appropriation" (1984, 167). This precedent encouraged the idea that the colonial state was resource rich and there to be exploited (Ekeh 1975).

This insistence on tradition carried over into the making of a ruling class of Africans. Elite schools such as King's College Budo, which was built on top of Coronation Hill in Buganda, prepared the sons of chiefs to be administrators. Administration was treated as a high prestige employment for Africans; even African clerks had great influence, and thus great power, compared to ordinary Africans (Ranger 1983, 228). British neo-tradition served well to elevate the chiefs under indirect rule. Ranger asserts that,

Europeans belonging to one or other of the neo-traditions believed themselves to have respect for the customary. They liked the idea of age-old prescriptive rights and they liked to compare the sort of title which an African chief possessed with the title to gentlemanliness which they laid claim to themselves (1983, 247).

Like those of the British gentlemen, the traditions of customary rule were often invented and inflexible. Thus,

the strength of European invented traditions of governance in colonial Africa helped to produce soldiers and administrators and settlers dedicated to the 'feudal-patriarchal' ethic rather than to the 'capitalist-transformative' one (Ranger 1983, 220).

What is clear is that the politics of bifurcation, characterized by elitism, hierarchy,

inflexibility and form without substance (eg. without the means to produce responsibility and accountability), were strongly reinforced by the use of neo-tradition and provided "ideologies" for legitimation of elite rule (Ekeh 1975).

Neo-tradition also had its effect on the political position of African women. In addition to their reduced political leverage, formal indirect rule placed women under the rigid rules of customary law as interpreted by African males; but there was another side to the coin. It would seem to be of some significance, and maybe no coincidence, that in Uganda at the same time as her husband was getting King's College Budo, "a school for training the sons of chiefs", under way, Mrs. Weatherhead founded, in 1914, the Mothers Union, under the auspices of the Anglican church, in order to teach their wives "mothercraft" (Brown 1988, 5). From the time of the syphilis 'epidemic' the missions had been involved in improving African women as mothers but they also were intent on elevating marriage in the minds of Africans. While ostensibly it was aimed at promoting monogamous Christian marriage, it added to the hierarchy among women, as those with a church wedding and a wedding ring "tended to regard all other women, their husbands' other 'wives', and even unmarried professional women as outsiders. They described them in English as 'prostitutes'" (Brown 1988, 6). The Mothers' Union reinforced this role of elevated wife and motherhood:

Every member had first to spend one or two years on probation, after which she was allowed to fix on her wedding ring a special blue enamel Mothers' Union badge (Brown 1988, 5).

Booklets were given out to explain the meaning of wedding rings. The wedding ring was an invented tradition which symbolized the marginalization of women's political and economic interests by promoting the domestic sphere. The Mothers' Union and offshoots such as Namirembe, the Widows' League and the Uganda Council of Women were part of the efforts

made by colonial wives, as "representatives of throne, culture, and its moral standards", to civilize Africans through their wives. Thus, Ugandan women, who were producers and reproducers were identified with purely domestic roles even if that was not the reality. In Rhodesia, too, part of the reserve policy was to shape African women into Western roles of wife and mother (Kirkwood 1984; Schmidt 1992). This policy was carried out by the wives of the officials of the Native Affairs Department who started homecraft clubs and eventually, in the 1940s, started Womens' Institutes which were dedicated to helping African women through the teaching of homecraft. One Zimbabwean woman speaks of her experience;

in 1960 I joined the Federation of African Women's Clubs: it is an organization which tries to help women. At the time we discussed development, ways of improving our homes, women's responsibilities as wives and mothers, and so on. We were not allowed to discuss politics (Staunton 1990, 175).

The missions were also active in teaching women domesticity. Schmidt asserts that,

In exchange for their privileged social and economic status mission women and girls were forced to accept European values and behavioural codes that circumscribed their options outside the domestic sphere (1992, 123).

Both the clubs and the missions upheld the ideal that good mothers stayed at home with their children and this "corresponded neatly to the needs of the colonial state" (Schmidt 1992, 129).

In both cases, the domestication of wives was another aspect of a concerted effort to handle the 'native question' and control Africans in order to conduct the business of the empire or, in the case of Rhodesia, the settler economy. Thus were European political and economic ambitions wedded to colonial neo-traditional culture to shore up the despotism of indirect rule by limiting women's role to a dependent domestic one.

The limits of accountability and responsibility

The bifurcation of power under indirect rule set the limits of accountability and responsibility in both Uganda and Rhodesia. African leaders, as such, were only paid

administrators who carried out the policies of the colonial administration. Through the neo-traditional cult of elitism these administrators were elevated above the population. Neo-tradition relegated African women to domesticity and precluded them from political life while it elevated male leaders and administrators. The result was the preference for form over substance. The local chiefs were not directly accountable to their populations through their livelihood nor were they accountable for the policies they carried out. On the other hand, British administrators who controlled policy, showed, through the very policies they devised, that they were responsible for, and accountable to, the European population only. Leaving all the responsibility for local affairs to the chiefs, they were removed from the front lines and from the responsibility of coercion practised at the local level.

IV Urban despotism under 'civic' power

The towns of East Africa are the creation of the immigrants, particularly of the Europeans, who at first found East Africa unhealthy and concentrated on laying out areas in which they could obtain their own standards of comfort and sanitation. The African came to the towns as a domestic servant or as a labourer; he was an afterthought, an appendage to the European world, virtually excluded from the life of the town (Woodruff 1955, 23).

We have a lot of taxes; we pay rent at the location, and also go to the Beer Hall; and we will do that until we die. This is a trap made by the Government. If you brew today, and are found in possession of it, you are arrested. It is the same beer as the Government makes in the beer halls.... When I heard the Police were stopping beer outside, I thought the Government were going to do something good instead of giving us a Beer Hall.

James Mhaso, one of the organizers of the first congress of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union, in Bulawayo, 1931, as quoted in Ranger 1970, 154.

Urban areas in colonial Rhodesia and Uganda were European centres and thus not administered by indirect rule as such. In Uganda they were communication centres for the British administrative officers and administered directly by the District Officer and appointed authorities. Thus, in Uganda they were never civic in the democratic sense of elected local authorities. Urban areas in Rhodesia grew up around settler activities and the services they

required and were more or less autonomous civic authorities for Europeans with elected councils and their own sources of revenue. In both countries Africans were considered to be only temporary urban dwellers with their true roots in the rural areas. Therefore, the policy of colonial administrators was always divided between the need for cheap labour in the urban centres and the need to keep Africans under customary tribal control. It is in this population that the two forms of power, civic and native authority, meet; living under the civil authority, but accorded the status of native subjects only, political behaviour was channelled into a paternalistic relationship with the former and a clientelistic one with the latter. For this population political relationships that forged productive responsibility and accountability remained absent.

African townships in Rhodesia

The Africans living in urban areas in Rhodesia may have lived close to a civil authority but had little access to it (Phimister 1988; Passmore 1966; 1972; Gargett 1977). In the early years of colonial occupation, Africans had to locate themselves on the periphery of the European areas and these areas became known as 'locations'. As detailed above, there was little control over these urban locations in the early years and Africans could even purchase land and build dwellings. On the whole, though, these locations lacked sanitation and the amenities of the European town. As indirect rule came formally into practice, bifurcation of space in the urban areas was employed to control the urban population. At first this was in the form of special regulations with the aim of discouraging migration to the urban areas. By the Native Registration Act of 1936, Africans wanting to come to town had to carry a registration certificate as well as either a pass certificate signed by the Native

Commissioner or a letter from their employer stating that they had permission to be in town. Phimister argues that by this act "the state not only intensified its humiliating surveillance of urban blacks, but also considerably improved its capacity to direct the flow of black labour" from urban areas to farms where wages were low (1988, 202). Nevertheless, by 1945 there was a large urban population brought about by a combination of factors: crowding in the Tribal Trust Lands, the new opportunities provided by secondary industries that wanted cheap labour, and the natural growth of the urban population. The bifurcation of space and authority could no longer be contained in the Tribal Trust Lands and appeared in the towns in formal terms with the passing of the Land Apportionment Act of 1941 which required municipal authorities to set up African townships.³¹

By the late 1940s responsibility for urban Africans fell on paternalistic urban authorities. The African (Urban Areas) Accommodation and Registration Act of 1946 (consolidated in 1951) followed and heralded a new series of regulations that extended the despotic side of bifurcation by separating out 'natives' as special cases for control. African traders, artisans and workers who had located themselves outside of the locations and closer to town were removed and professional Africans, such as journalists or teachers who had also lived in 'grey' areas, were forced to seek accommodation within the crowded township along with labourers. While leasehold and freehold accommodation were gradually expanded within

³¹ Municipal authorities were still hesitant to get involved and as late as 1945, municipalities were still reluctant to introduce health clinics. Even appeals to settler self-interest and the spread of disease fell on deaf ears in Bulawayo where the city council would only offer health services that Africans could pay for (Phimister 1988, 261). This would not amount to much since for most Africans living in the locations, wages were below the poverty line and the "margin of survival turned on loans, or theft, or beer brewing and other quasi legal activities" (Phimister, 262). No measures were taken to encourage an urban population that was not wanted, though apparently needed, by the settler government.

the township, the majority of Africans in the urban areas were heavily dependent upon their employers or the municipality for their legal status and for their accommodation.³² The act required municipalities and employers to provide accommodation, and especially married accommodation, but this accommodation came at the price of surveillance. Married couples were raided at night to make sure that they were legally entitled to accommodation and, under the act, municipalities carried out "compulsory identification, vaccinations, medical examination and treatment of Africans falling within their jurisdiction" (Passmore, 1966, 1). Gradually, in the towns, Africans came to live under the despotic rule of the civil authority. There was a 'civil limit', it seems, which stopped at the borders of the African township.

Bifurcation of authority was manifested in the bifurcation of administration. The African Accommodation and Registration Act called for a separate African revenue account "for the receipt of all revenue accruing from African townships... [which] may only be utilized for financing services rendered by the local authority in African townships" (Passmore 1966, 1). The African Beer Act of 1953 consolidated municipalities' monopoly on the brewing of African beer and virtually all services and community development, including housing loans, came from the sale of beer in municipally operated beerhalls which had dominated the township landscape since the 1920s.³³ Between 1961 and 1975 a special

³² The Land Husbandry Act (1951) which established fixed arable plots in Tribal Trust Lands (now only grazing was communal) cut out many urban Africans so that they became doubly dependent on the municipality.

³³ The precedent for this policy was set in Durban, South Africa, which was the first municipality to ban Africans from brewing beer in 1908 (La Hausse 1996). A municipal monopoly on beer brewing, ostensibly for funding African services, was created and this policy gradually became a topic of interest to colonial administrators as far away as Uganda. Paul La Hausse comments that Durban authorities were more likely to spend the money on improving the enterprise than on African services. Likewise, in Bulawayo in 1963, less than one third of the profit was used for community services, including housing loans, while the other two thirds went into the production and expansion of brewing (Passmore 1972). The ubiquitous beerhalls still dominate the social scene in African townships in Zimbabwe; when a new area is opened up the first thing to be developed is a

services levy was also charged to employees for every employee in order to meet the costs of developing African housing but the levy was finally dropped after employer protest. While a municipality might use general funds for shortfalls, the usual policy was to increase rents and charges (Gargett 1977, 11). By the 1960s the townships were administered by a community development officer who worked closely with the white authority but was part of the National Community Development Trust that was centrally organized in Internal Affairs in the Ministry for Local Government and Housing.³⁴ Bifurcation in the urban areas was practiced concretely through the bifurcation of space, as characterised in the creation of African townships, and the bifurcation of administration and provision, as characterised by the African revenue account which took on the characteristics of welfare measures administered by the municipal authority.

Politically, the same municipal government that practised civil authority in the European town exercised despotic rule in the African townships. The issue of African participation in urban areas of Rhodesia "met with shifts and evasions on the part of

beerhall. According to one municipal official in Mutare, the beerhalls were a political tool to keep the Africans drunk and less likely to rise up (Interview, Community Services Official, Mutare, 22/5/95). Indeed, two studies completed in the township of Highfield in Salisbury (now Harare) in the late 1960s and early 1970s would lend credence to this conclusion (May 1973; Reader and May 1971). While May, using the requisite "customary" terminology of indirect rule, hypothesizes that it is a peculiarly African custom to induce "controlled drunkenness... designed to produce moderate drunkenness, in which one becomes tranquil and thus escapes problems", her study concludes that "though it may not appear pathological or deviant in the light of African urban values [it] is none the less excessive by western standards, with ensuing social costs and considerable exposure of a large number of people to alcoholic risk, or at least to problem drinking through addiction" (May 1973, 81). Thus, we see the drinking in beer halls attributed to "African values" with no thought of the impact of exploitative, not to mention paradoxical, revenue for 'community development' by local government.

³⁴ Interview, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transport and Energy, formerly of Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, 3/6/95. This was part of a reorganization around the national policy of community development, which was devised in the 1960s to improve the management of African reserves and more actively pursued in the rural areas.

successive governments over many years" (Gargett 1977, 83). African advisory boards, pioneered in Bulawayo since the 1920s, were required by the African Accommodation Act. While the African component of the boards could not be "less than three persons who are African residents", the council was chaired by a European councillor and the secretary was from the municipal administration; the composition mirrored the boundaries of civil power and the barriers to it (Passmore 1966, 19). During the 1950s and 1960s there were several attempts through the Municipal Association, government commissions and existing African boards to broaden the scope of the boards and even bring them into the municipal council but Bulawayo was the only urban area that gave boards legitimacy by accepting most of their recommendations. Passmore reports that there were only 13 statutory advisory boards and "only two or three were said to be operating effectively" (Passmore 1966, 20). In 1964 members of the Bulawayo boards resigned and the boards ceased functioning. The resigning board members articulated several grievances at that time: they were expected to rubber stamp council decisions; they had to defend these policies to their constituents making them seem ineffectual; they were bitterly criticized by members of the African community who were well educated and better off (and already poised to test the boundaries of civil society); and, they were unable to discuss issues on merit because the priority of members was to break down a system of consultation which they considered to be unsatisfactory (Gargett 1977, 83-104). Passmore concludes that "African townships were units of administration rather than African local government" (1966, 8). But apart from that they were also islands of despotic rule under the guise of a paternal civic authority. The civil authority was only responsible to the European community, for whose benefit it was, in its purpose to keep urban Africans under

control and available for work.

Ugandan urban centres

Except for Kampala, located near Mengo, the seat of the Gandan king, Ugandan urban centres evolved exclusively as the result of European administrative activity. Jinja, located in Busoga which was a smaller kingdom next to Buganda, was such a centre (Sofer 1955; Brandt, Schubert & Gerken 1972). The colonial policy of relegating African peasants to farming for export crops and encouraging Asians to carry on commercial activities resulted in the settling of Asian families and businesses in Jinja and it became a predominantly Asian town. The commercial activities were so divorced from the local African countryside that even most of the produce in the market was imported from Kenya. The addition of an early Indian wood processing industry and the British American Tobacco Company (BAT) brought more African workers but they had to find accommodation outside the town entirely or build cheap structures on the periphery that were removed when there were "land clearances" for the expansion of the town (Sofer 1955, 17). Building specifications assured that Africans were unable to start commercial activity except on the periphery where they were subject to the periodic removals for expansion. Thus, few African families settled in Jinja and most wives and children remained in the rural areas where housing was available and where the wife could carry on farming on customary land.

The boom of the late 1940s and early 1950s, which included the building of the Owen Falls Dam and the addition of new industries, increased the African population but did not change the attitude of colonial administrators. While the construction boom increased the number of jobs it did not present opportunities of advancement for Africans in the hierarchy

of labour.³⁵ Africans performed "the most arduous, worst rewarded and least respected tasks in the economy" (Sofer 1955, 55). Both Europeans and Asians assumed that "customary" habits made the African different and tended "to draw the conclusion that the African is an inferior person, unfit for training or advancement, and disparage him as a primitive of limited intelligence" (Sofer 1955, 55). During this time only 12% of the Africans in Jinja were women. As in Rhodesian townships, women took advantage of temporary liaisons with local men to establish a base in town and, thus, were considered "a class of prostitutes, semi-prostitutes and temporary wives" even though two thirds of the women had waged employment as factory workers, domestics, nurses and hotel workers and some carried on more informal activities such as growing food, selling food and drink or selling crafts (Sofer 1955, 86). Africans had little legitimacy in urban areas.

Although the bifurcation of space was never legislated, as in Rhodesia, it was more formalized in Jinja during this period of expansion. While there was a hierarchy of race and Europeans saw themselves superior to Asians, for the most part both Europeans and Asians lived in the preferred areas of the town in western-style housing. During this period the Walukuba housing estates were built by industrialists providing rental accommodation for African municipal and factory workers in a separate area, creating a dependency pattern that also invited surveillance and control. The police were also accommodated in aluminum

³⁵ Here are the observations of the Sofers at that time:

The new economic institutions have been established by a skilled European and Asian nucleus who have built a relatively unskilled indigenous labour force around themselves... there has arisen an occupational hierarchy in which individuals of each race are limited to narrow ranges of jobs and ranks. Europeans, Africans and Asians have each tended to enter the occupational structure at a given level and to perform functions distinct from those of other races (Sofer 1955, 37).

'biscuit box' structures. These were an alternative to a mud and thatch structure on the periphery of town but were always overcrowded. Located at a distance from the town, they also made transport an extra expense for the African labourer. The small number of Africans with higher education and better salaries were able to locate in better areas. Thus, bifurcation of space was not quite as stark as in Rhodesia but still highly visible and the amenities for Africans were based very much on the same welfare basis, in this case concentrated in the industrial housing estate.

The African was subject to both the 'native' and the municipal administrations but was marginalized by both. The municipal council could hardly be called a civic structure as it was directed by the District Commissioner who was advised by a 20 member council composed of the DC, 5 European officials, the African chief of the sub-county (part of the decentralized district administration) and appointed members of the public - 7 Asians, 5 Europeans and 1 African. The committee was only concerned "with the built-up sector of Jinja, i.e. with the sector that contains the administrative and commercial areas and European and Asian housing" (Sofer 1955, 28). However, the British District Commissioner "controlled... through the township superintendent of African Housing, an increasing number of Africans residing in the African housing estate" (Sofer 1955, 29). Although the African population in Jinja township was considered to be under the authority of the 'native' administration, that administration had no jurisdiction in the township. Moreover, only those males who could claim residency outside of the township (in the case of non-local Africans, resident there for three years) could vote for 'native' councils. "As a result only about half of the male African population of the township is entitled to participate in the election of

councillors who represent them" (Sofer 1955, 33). Nevertheless, they were not out of the reach of customary authorities. Cases involving Africans living in Jinja inevitably ended up in 'native' courts as it was up to the Protectorate police as to which court was involved and "there was a tendency for the Protectorate police to hand to the native court cases involving charges unlikely to be sustained, on the weight of evidence, in a Protectorate court" (Sofer 1955, 34). It is evident also that the tentacles of customary power attempted to stretch into the urban areas to exert power over women. As Jinja boomed in the 1950s and more women took up employment the 'native' District Council debated whether women should even be allowed into urban areas and sent appeals to the DC three years in a row arguing that "urban life meant immorality and hence barrenness or the birth of half-caste children" (Obbo 1980, 10). It is on such precarious footing that women lived in the urban areas with no political representation at all. The bifurcation of authority in urban areas put Africans under the control of two authorities without the possibility of producing accountability from either.

Thus, the plight of Africans in the urban areas of both Uganda and Zimbabwe brought into stark relief the realities of the bifurcated state. Bifurcation was evident in the physical location of Africans in towns in both countries. It was also evident in the administration of their lives. Despite living in an urban area, Africans were subject to customary authority in Rhodesia until 1946. After 1946 bifurcation was visible in the subjection of Africans to despotic rule under the same authority which provided civic and responsible government for the white population. One could not say that there was ever a 'tradition' of civic government in Uganda since there was only an administration, albeit on behalf of the European and Asian populations. While Africans in Uganda lived under two authorities, 'native' and civil, both

used despotic power. Women had a particularly precarious position in the urban areas since they were judged by the customary requirements of women and, thus, any behaviour contrary to that role branded them as prostitutes even when they pursued legitimate economic activities. For Africans in urban settings it was a decidedly uncivil experience.

V Democracy Under Local Despotism

In both Uganda and Rhodesia, before independence, there were attempts to 'democratize' local administrations with directly elected councils (Burke 1964; Fallers 1965; Passmore 1963; 1972; Gargett 1977). However, in Rhodesia there was never the political will to fundamentally change the structure of local despotic rule. The political relationships of bifurcation remained intact since the settler administration retained ultimate control. In Uganda the change was a direct result of the change in the British attitude and policy as independence became a less remote possibility. The system of indirect rule was "out of harmony with" the vision of the modern state that an independent Uganda needed to be (Low and Pratt 1960, 270). Nevertheless, the changes effected in Uganda were a hurried affair and quite limited; nor could they counter the effect of years of indirect rule on political relations.

Community development councils in Rhodesia

In Rhodesia, from the 1950s until the end of the guerrilla war, the settler government had two contradictory policies at the local level (Passmore 1966; 1972). The African Councils Act of 1957 was the beginning of a complete change in direction by the government linking development with what seemed to be a move towards autonomous African local governments. It called for autonomous local councils which would promote active participation in the development of their communities (as mentioned above, the urban version of this policy was

African advisory councils). By 1962 a national community development plan had been devised with the assistance of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Based on self-help and the use of 'local resources', the policy required a reorientation of all ministry activities under the direction of Internal Affairs at the Ministry of Local Government and Housing. On the one hand, it encouraged the formation of grassroots village development boards for self-help projects at the community level. In a development partnership the people would use their own labour and resources while the central government provided guidance in the form of indigenous community development officers and expert advice from ministries. The idea was that these community boards might, in time, form some sort of organic government structure out of community action that would eventually replace traditional authority. At the same time, a contradictory emphasis was put on shoring up the chiefs' administrations by giving them more responsibility for local matters - for example, making budget decisions. Thus, the settler government attempted to "combine the benefits of representative local government with stabilizing elements of the tribal system" (Passmore 1972, 184).

Rukudzo Murapa asserts that there was never serious intent on the part of officials to deviate from the 'tribal system':

The fact is the Native Affairs Department was not fond of Native Councils. They preferred to control the Africans directly through the Native Commissioners and the Chiefs. They only pursued the policy of Native Councils in order to give the Colonial Office the impression that the African was given a structural framework through which to express his interest (1985, 5).

While the change in emphasis released some local energy and produced development of infrastructure, the community boards were highly controlled by chiefs and headmen who approved the composition of the board, the project and the use of land. Although the exercise

did present an opening for some organic political development at the grassroots level, it was very much diminished by the fact that more energy was put into the 'native' councils run by the chiefs. Moreover, it is clear that the programme served another purpose as both government and missions were feeling a strain on their resources and were anxious to lighten their burden. The burden was now shifted to "depend largely on local initiatives, a resource still largely undeveloped" (Passmore 1972, 240). Later developments support the argument that the Rhodesian government never intended to abandon the chiefs. The 1969 Constitution made provision for the Council of Chiefs to nominate the candidates for the ten African positions on the newly created Senate and half of the African representatives in parliament. At any rate, there is no reason to believe that the community development policy was not a new look for an old purpose: to keep the reserves viable so that Africans would stay there. Thus, the attempt at introducing democracy at the local level was an extension of indirect rule with a positive spin on it.

District councils in Uganda

Attempts to introduce democracy in Uganda, especially leading up to independence in 1962, also failed to change the character of bifurcation. After a great deal of political activity and strikes in the late 1940s, the colonial administration introduced several policies to expedite African economic and political participation, none of which could fundamentally change the political relations of bifurcation (Mamdani 1983). Ginneries and coffee factories were bought by the government and transferred to cooperatives and loans were given to traders. However, the cooperatives were highly controlled by British advisors who controlled the books and groomed the leadership as businessmen. At the same time, the 1952 Trade

Union Ordinance weakened workers' ability to make more universal demands by making general unions illegal and, thus, isolating union activity. However, the role of administrative chiefs was strengthened as civil servant jobs were upgraded and Ugandans promoted in an Africanization programme. These measures gave more power to petit bourgeois Ugandans who also took advantage of political reforms to promote themselves as candidates for the district councils which were also introduced.

The institution of these elected councils did not alter the political relations of bifurcation. Although it was the intention of the British administration to foster a more modern and democratic local government, the councils, elected by male adult suffrage at the village, parish, sub-county and district level to 'advise' the district administration, had only very limited powers that were "subject in minute detail to the approval of the central government" (Burke 1964, 40). Mamdani argues that the measures were an intentional policy to depoliticize those who might have been more militant if not for the measures and to keep order and there is some evidence for this (1983, 17-32). There was a short period when councils were given the power to hire and fire administrative chiefs but this was short lived when rivalry between political parties on the councils threatened order. It was the decision of the British administrators that "so long as chiefs were held responsible to the central government for law and order it would be necessary to insulate them as far as possible from local factionalism and party politics" (Burke 1964, 41). Burke comments that "good government was preferable to self-government, (and) local democracy was largely a fiction" (1964, 52). As a result, the councils were dominated by the bureaucratic chiefs who had administrative knowledge and "(I)t took a brave peasant indeed to rise to his feet in such a

council meeting and disagree about the actions of a chief" (Burke 1964, 49). The lower councils lacked resources and authority but found themselves having to defend and explain the actions of the colonial administration, a job that was handed down to them by the District Council which was unwilling to take unpopular stands. Thus, the councils were seen as a tool of both the colonial and the African administration. Fallers notes that neither the councils nor the administrators were happy with the limited degree of autonomy and the lack of public support (Fallers 1965, 186-7). Here we may see that there was not a complete lack of sensitivity on the part of indigenous administrative officials. D. A. Low suggests that the limited powers of African councils even before these reforms shaped the political struggle into one for position and power rather than for substantive issues (Low 1971, 175).³⁶

Decentralized despotism did not mean that there were not contests and struggles within local administrations but it did mean, as demonstrated in the Rhodesian case too, that institutionally "it was a game... in which the dice were loaded" (Mamdani 1996, 22). The experiences of these local councils also reflected the fundamental flaws of bifurcation: political relationships were shaped into clientelistic rival factions based on religion or ethnicity; and there was no basis for producing more universal responsibility and accountability.

VI Nationalism and Local Despotism

Neither in the nationalist period leading from pre-independence to civil war in the 1980s in Uganda, nor in the years leading up to and during the liberation war in Rhodesia

³⁶ It should be noted that the 1953 reforms brought in by Sir Andrew Cohen were particularly aimed at democratizing the *Lukiiko* which, in turn, precipitated the Kabaka's demand for a much more independent Buganda. The Kabaka was deported to Britain by Cohen and a crisis ensued. Although Cohen was successful in warding off threats of separate Bugandan independence the result was the agreement at Namirembe which ensured the continued existence of the traditional kingdom (Low 1971, 101-38).

were politicians able to address the form of power fashioned by the bifurcated state. Colonial authorities were unwilling to change their form of rule and indigenous efforts to organize politically could not escape the parameters of the political relations of bifurcation.

Nationalism in Uganda

In Uganda, the legacy of the inherited impediments of bifurcation were obvious leading up to independence. Composed of one large kingdom, Buganda, several smaller kingdoms and several districts (the labour reserves that suffered the harshest regimes of indirect rule) Uganda was fragmented and only held together by the British Protectorate administration. The rush by colonial authorities to create a constitution and quasi-federation could hardly undo the political relations that 60 years of colonial rule had forged.

Organizations from civil society, such as trade unions, the Uganda Farmer's Union and the Hellenic church that led political action which culminated in strikes in the late 1940s, were put down by the colonial government by a combination of force and the Africanization policies mentioned above. Political parties emerging during indirect rule in Uganda addressed and articulated real issues but within the prescribed 'voices' of power and structures that were the parameters of indirect rule (Mamdani 1976; 1983; Fallers 1965; Low 1971). Thus, the United National Congress (UNC), formed in 1952, and which was strong on local district councils and strongly supported by farmers was deserted by better off Bugandan farmers when they saw their interests better served by forming the Kabaka Yekka (YK) in support of the *Kabaka* and Bugandan independence. The United People's Congress (UPC), supported by Ugandan petty traders and gradually supported by civil servants, was based on aspirations that coincided with the existing bifurcated state. The traders organized politically to take the place

of the Asian commercial monopoly and the civil servants to end discriminatory salaries that differentiated them from the Europeans. It was these constituencies which benefited from the late reforms in the early 1950s. Competition for power also took on religious overtones as the Democratic Party (DP), organized primarily through mission teachers and some traders, sought to gain prominence through the organizing principle of the Catholic church. Anglican mission education continued to be the rallying point for political solidarity among the Bugandan hierarchy, as it had been in the first alliances with the British in the late 1800s. As Catholics tended to be the minority in the power structure constellated around Bugandan secession, religion was a divisive issue in the quest for nationalist political power. At independence Fallers remarked:

If, however, something resembling the Western liberal democratic state for Uganda as a whole is the aim, then we may say that the prerequisite institutions do not yet exist or are as yet only partially institutionalised (1965, 250).

The weapons of the struggle were race, ethnicity and religion and any accountability was a fractured product made up of personal patron/client relations which no promise of independence and development could universalise.

The inherited impediments of the bifurcated state were clearly visible after independence (Burke 1964; Mamdani 1976;1983; Obbo 1980). The alliance between the UPC and the KY in order to secure national power at independence kept religion and ethnicity at the forefront as Catholics were further marginalized by the this Bugandan bid for power.³⁷ The bureaucracy was the most strongly developed institution under indirect rule and "served to place in the hands of chiefs, clerks and officials a powerful weapon" (Burke 1964, 56).

³⁷ This alliance brought the Bugandan hierarchy into national politics and effectively shut out the DP and, consequently, Catholics (see Mamdani 1976, 242-246).

Administrators became the most powerful class for patronage relationships and confounded any political will to the contrary. The nascent organizations of civil society remained under state scrutiny and control. The need to exert control over the population meant leaving the despotism at the local level intact, under the strict control of the central government. Burke points out that, after independence, local government did not change except that "Religious associations and conflict today have greater overall impact on the *selection* of local officials and councillors than does even kinship [my emphasis]" (Burke 1964, 56). In the towns the paternalistic authority of the colonial administration was replaced by clientelistic favouritism and allocations in housing or for positions of responsibility depended on those relationships. Paternalism, however, did not disappear. During this time schools for Africans in Jinja were built and administrated by Asian commercial and industrial interests. Thus, political relations of power remained within the parameters of the bifurcated state and patron/client relations prevailed. The UPC government's growing dependence on force eventually led to the military coup and Mamdani comments that, "the "common man" in whose name the (ruling) class had claimed to rule, long accustomed to watching from the grandstands, applauded the change of the guard" (1976, 294).

The period of military rule in the 1970s compounded the mistrust of leaders and the need for clientelistic solutions. Decentralized districts were run by military governors and their clients. The bureaucracy expanded and its power penetrated both formal and black markets. Civil servants acted out of fear or greed as "the civil service performed only under two conditions: either when it was commanded at gun point, or when it was 'given tea' (i.e., bribed)" (Mamdani 1983, 45). While the expulsion of the Asians may have been seen as a

blow to one of the structures of bifurcation and encouraged the "belief that everyone would become rich", instead, it narrowed economic opportunities, especially in the towns (Mamdani 1983, 39). In Jinja and other urban centres Asian businesses were given to Amin's associates as patronage favours and soon became unproductive, closing out employment opportunities. Asian properties were also taken over by Amin's clients who became slum landlords, dividing up and renting out to urban Ugandans at exorbitant rents. As a result, the urban population multiplied but, more than ever, people were dependent on clientelistic relationships in order to maintain residence in the town. Mismanagement of the economy brought black market activities to unprecedented heights, and depths, as big operators, the top military bosses and civil servants, used the working poor and unemployed, especially in the urban areas as outlets for activities and "(P)eople came to accept a way of life where any means of making money was acceptable provided it was successful" (1983, 54). While Amin championed the urban unemployed and recruited them into the army in large numbers he also turned on the urban informal sector, violently removing hawkers from the streets and blaming them for black market activities originating with his own advisors. One hawker arrested at the time asked, "What was the point of independence?" (Obbo 1980, 26). Political opposition could only take "the form of silent sabotage" as organized political activity was impossible (Mamdani 1983, 105).

The regime brought levels of violence and duplicity to unprecedented heights within civil society. While Idi Amin's rhetoric may have been about 'the people' his methods heightened or, perhaps, caricatured the power constellated by bifurcation. Surveillance increased as the euphemistically named State Research Bureau (SRB) and Public Safety Unit

(PSU) penetrated every aspect of the country's life (Mamdani 1983, 42-58). Amin encouraged all people to be informers and thus any agent could and did use "this power to settle old private scores and to silence, or eliminate, rivals in personal relations, business or government" (Mamdani 1983, 44). In this way decentralized violence closed down any political debate and destroyed any remaining trust within society.

The legacy of indirect rule was also visible in gender politics after independence. No clearer could bifurcation (customary/civil) be than in the attitudes towards women's status in the 1960s and 1970s (Akello 1990; Obbo 1980; Brown 1988; Mamdani 1983). Ugandan women received the vote in 1962 and the three women who won in the *Lukiiko* also were appointed to parliament.³⁸ Leading up to the first election, the Uganda Council of Women had pushed for women to vote by publishing booklets in conjunction with the colonial Ministry of Information, outlining the inequalities that existed and pointing out what women should look for in a candidate. Yet, once in office, the independent government never entertained issues that women put forward. When women lobbied hard for change in marriage laws, the all-male Commission on Marriage, Divorce and the Status of Women in 1965 came down firmly on the side of customary practice.³⁹ There were no women in cabinet to defend women's rights

³⁸ The elections for parliament were indirect in Buganda which refused to accept a power higher than the *Lukiiko*, the traditional council of elders which advised the Kabaka or king. Therefore, their representatives in the national parliament were appointed by the *Lukiiko*.

³⁹ The position of the Council of Women and of the Anglican church had been to fashion a law which guaranteed women the right to divorce (women needed many more reasons than men under customary law) and the right to inherit (non-existent in customary law) and which would bind people to the sort of marriage they chose (eg. polygamous or monogamous). This last recommendation was in reaction to men who married in the church but took other wives by native law and custom. While there was some headway on inheritance (the wife was to get one third until she remarried or share one third with co-wives), it was recommended that while a man could register only one marriage, he could have as many wives as he liked and the children of all marriages had equal inheritance rights. Winnifred Brown comments that the chairman of the commission was Ghanaian and that the law, regardless of the opinion of Ugandan women, was heavily influenced by recent Ghanaian legislation

and those women who sat in parliament soon became apologetic, assuring the members that there was no rebellion against men. Male politicians and their wives often spoke to women's groups telling them that they should modernize and stop being docile and uncritical but they never spoke to men about it (Akello 1990, 11; Obbo 1990, 13). Thus, Grace Akello remarks that,

Women were still sufficiently removed from the power structure not to be taken seriously. They had not moved from 'feudal power' at the time of gaining independence, or since, and the Obote government had certainly not encouraged them to do so (1990, 11).

Nor did women's prospects change under Amin who seemed to honour and denounce women at the same time, especially urban women. Thus he appointed one woman to cabinet and then fired her after accusing her of promiscuity. He banned mini skirts and other 'western excess' in dress, such as long trousers, and ordered all unmarried women out of all towns, branding them all as prostitutes.⁴⁰ Despite the penchant for forcing women into customary 'respectability', Amin's allies more than any other men "treated women as sexual objects, as sexual prey and sexual display" (Mamdani 1983, 54). Moreover, at a time when most political activity was proscribed, exercising control over women gave men a feeling of

(1988, 42). On the question of women having equal access to divorce the commissioners stated:

When is she able to disentangle what is what and to be able to marshal available evidence to obtain a dissolution of marriage?... We are told that in some parts of the world, the insistence of a husband on reading a newspaper at breakfast is enough grounds for a petition for divorce... We strongly feel that there should not be specific grounds for divorce, but that the men of wisdom and experience into whose hands we place the decision as to whether the marriage should end or not, should in our view, be in the position to grant dissolution of the marriage having heard all the available evidence and considered all the factors attendant thereon (Report 1965, 56).

One of those 'men of wisdom', the Minister of Justice, speaking publically in defence of polygamy, asserted that, "We don't want to encourage harlotry here. We don't want our women to roam around the towns. All of them must be married" (Brown 1988, 38).

⁴⁰ This was rescinded immediately but the sentiment was there.

power. Obbo notes that at that time Luo men tried to regain authority by exerting control over women. Thus, any Luo woman found to be a 'disgrace' in the urban area should be "ordered to return home wearing a jute sack with holes in the lower section of the back and front" (Obbo 1980, 110). Adherents to several churches and especially the Legio Mana, a break-away from the Catholic church, extracted public confessions from women every week and especially zeroed in on confessions about independent income or holding back housekeeping money (Obbo 1980, 111). The effect of the Amin years was a complete degradation of women as, "Even unemployed male vagrants in the capital would hurl insults at any woman with impunity, for they were blessed by the law and public sentiment" (Obbo 1980, 11). The complete subordination of women is an intricate part of the relations of political power shaped by the civil/customary split in the bifurcated state.

With no collective political response women were forced to respond within the parameters of those power relations. Women in the urban areas used their position with men in order to survive or to create careers or businesses for themselves (Obbo 1980). The big men in positions of power were interested in single urban women and the women, in turn, saw "children as the trump cards" since a child was proof of the relationship and gave the women bargaining power (Obbo 1980, 103). Thus, by "manipulating motherhood" in the post-independence atmosphere of patronage and privilege, women were able to secure employment, obtain houses and get education for their children through these liaisons (Obbo 1980, 106). Women also played up to men's assumption of power over women:

Deference was the most effective tool women used in manipulating men, and those women seen kneeling in offices and on sidewalks talking to men in low voices were manipulating symbols of the 'obedient woman' (Obbo 1980, 120).

Since urban women were often involved in illegal informal activities such as brewing, distilling or cooking food, they also needed to bribe chiefs who could protect them from the authorities. Another long-practised solution was to find husbands so that they could carry out their activities with less harassment. Women would put up with, even support, an abusive husband just to get protection and the right to live in an urban area (Obbo 1980, 101-21).⁴¹ Thus the lives of women in urban areas were always confined by the customary and their solutions were found in those political responses offered by the bifurcated state rather than by direct demands for responsibility and accountability.

Given such relations within civil society and the impossibility of articulating opposition, the return to 'democracy' after the expulsion of Amin in 1979 could not, in itself, address the political impediments of bifurcation. The period of ongoing civil war, concentrated in the "Luwero Triangle" north and west of Kampala, gave little credence to a government whose army harassed, killed and raped civilians in the countryside, especially where guerrillas were active (Twaddle 1988). Here were the legacies of indirect rule taken to their extremes. However, the leadership of the NRA showed some consciousness of these extremes and set up resistance committees within their controlled areas which provided for some sort of security against abuse by their own army. In this way they set themselves apart and they were eventually able to win a military victory. Nevertheless, the period was marked by extreme violence resulting in the complete disintegration of political society.

⁴¹ In particular, women liked to become attached to the Nubian community since the Nubi was an urban one and demanded respect of women. Thus 'Nubinization' was often the goal of urban women of all ethnic groups (Obbo 1980, 108-9).

Nationalism in Rhodesia

In Rhodesia, nationalism was also not able to address the specific political challenges of the bifurcated state and its particular form of power. Early political groups (the Rhodesian Bantu Voters Association (RBVA), Matabele Home Society (MHS), Rhodesian Native Association (RNA), Gwelo Native Welfare Association (GNWA) came out of urban civil society and were often influenced by organizations from South Africa as well as the churches (Ranger 1970). These groups were particularly concerned with the land issue and with the issue of responsible government or union with South Africa all of which were of concern in the 1920s. However progressive the voices might be, most sought solutions within the parameters of colonial authority. Thus the RBVA and RNA which was dominated by progressive farmers and educated urban blacks who "were thinking in terms of the Native Department" and worked within those parameters (Ranger 1970, 106).⁴² The political debate over the Carter Commission hearings on land allocation leading up to the Land Apportionment Act in 1930 demonstrates the impediments of the bifurcation of power. While progressive organizations such as the RBVA and the nascent Industrial Commercial Workers Union (ICU) pushed for Africans to be allowed to buy land anywhere, more conservative organizations such as the MHS were more interested in getting land for the Ndebele and restoring the monarchy. Shona chiefs were also interested in having customary lands to

⁴² Although these organizations were considered elitist, Martha Ngano, an organizer in the RBVA in the 1920s, was intent on bringing together rural and urban issues and focussed on fair dipping fees for cattle in the rural areas as well as unfair treatment in the African locations. The GNWA also had some rural ties and also linked with the RBVA.

restore their power.⁴³ Perhaps the biggest impediment to the emerging civil movement leading up to land apportionment in the 1930s was the fact that the majority of Africans, already impoverished by the administration's policies, could not afford the land even if it were available. At any rate, African civil society had little impact on the settler government's decision which served settlers interests and its own 'native' policy. John White, a radical missionary intent on promoting African interests commented during the Carter Commission hearings on the land issue that, "It is called responsible government but it represents only one section of the community. The voice of the native people will never be heard" (Ranger 1970, 116).

African civil society was expressed in union organization but these organizations also met with the impediments of bifurcation. Until 1956 all African labour was controlled under the Masters and Servants Act of 1891 but did not stop workers from organizing.⁴⁴ The organization of workers, under the Industrial Commercial Workers Union (ICU) gathered momentum in the 1930s and crossed ethnic lines, but by 1936 had collapsed, unable to unite workers as a viable force. The ICU was opposed by the chiefs who saw their leadership

⁴³ Millenarian movements tended to be the response among the Shona in the north who had lost their markets to Europeans and were crowded on reserves (Ranger 1970, 194-222). The Watch Tower, Zionist and Vapostori movements all had thousands of followers. All three rejected tribal life and the more conservative African Christian clergy and espoused millenarian beliefs that the people would take over the power of the whites. Ranger asserts that these movements described quite accurately, in their own way, a situation in "which only cataclysmic change could bring about African ability to control their own destiny" and helped to create a "climate of nationalism" which would reemerge in the liberation movement (1970, 214, 222). However, they also emphasized the inability of north and south to unite politically because the Shona were suspicious of the more modern political associations which originated from the Matabeleland while the Ndebele saw the Shona as 'backward' in their beliefs.

⁴⁴ Commenting on this legislation which still governed farm workers, domestic servants and many government employees in 1972, P.F. Sithole asserts that, "the basic features of this legislation were originally introduced in the Cape Province of South Africa in 1856, were adopted for Rhodesian use in 1891 and were probably somewhat antiquated even then" (as quoted in Windrich 1975, 156-7).

challenged and by the churches which took a more conservative stance.⁴⁵ However, African labour, was the "main opposition to white rule in the urban areas" in the 1940s when municipal employees led local strikes that led to a general strike in 1948. Nevertheless, strikers were hampered by their leaders who feared repression and were conciliatory towards the government, often providing an indirect rule of their own (Astrow 1983, 20).⁴⁶ The Industrial Conciliation Act of 1959 finally gave African trade unions official status but limited strikes and curtailed union political activities (Astrow 1983, 20-39; Windrich 1975).⁴⁷ While African civil society attempted to address real issues, those issues were shaped by the politics of bifurcation which Africans were unable to surmount politically.

The Rhodesian government considered any African political activity that interfered with indirect rule to be, at the least, vexatious, in most cases, seditious and always illegitimate. Before self-government in 1923, most African organizations had preferred self-government over union with South Africa (because they wanted to become part of that self-

⁴⁵ An earlier labour movement in the mines, the millenarian Watch Tower movement originating in Nyasaland, was active and by the 1920s had members in the thousands. It was brought to Rhodesia from Nyasaland by Elliot Kenan Kamwana who imported the teachings of the American Watch Tower and Tract Society based in Cape Town. Run by better educated clerks, mostly from Nyasaland, it encouraged members to learn skills for white jobs and challenged white control. However, strikes were easily broken up by authorities in the late 1920s and the leaders were deported. (Ranger 1970, 138-150).

⁴⁶ André Astrow asserts that the trade union bureaucracy "policed the working class instead of defending it" (Astrow 1983, 22). By 1965, when Africans were demanding inclusion in democracy, union leaders argued against one man one vote because it would break the trust of the property owners.

⁴⁷ Previous versions of this act (1934,37) had not even included black workers who were all under the Masters and Servants Act which "effectively prevented blacks from competing with whites for skilled jobs" (Phimister 1988, 192). This act allowed separate African unions but prohibited horizontal membership or assistance from the international trade union movement. It also provided for strict surveillance of union leaders (could be detained for not answering a question). A subsequent amendment (No. 79 of 1971) prohibited anyone who had been jailed for political or union activities from seeking leadership for ten years. The Emergency Power (Maintenance of Law and Order) Regulations, 1968, designated virtually all African jobs as essential services and, thus, prohibited Africans from striking (Windrich 1975, 166-70).

government) but they were sorely disappointed. Once in power in 1923, the settler government had little motivation for hearing African political voices since there were few voters (vote was dependent on annual income of £100 and writing 50 words in English) and it was already intent on reserve policies. The government reacted with hostility to African political organizations and claimed that the Native Affairs Department represented 'natives' and they "shouldn't trust themselves to political agitators" but instead come to government officials (Ranger 1970, 103). That African politics was a nuisance was made clear in 1934 as

Ranger notes:

[the] Chief Native Commissioner put up a scheme to Prime Minister Huggins for sending all educated Africans for whom there were no opportunities in an increasingly segregated Rhodesia up to Northern Rhodesia so that the government 'would be freed of the embarrassing necessity to consider native interests' (1970, 185-6).

African publications with diverse political opinions were curtailed by the Sedition act of 1936 which sought to stop the spread of subversive material (Phimister 1988, 199). The government, having the upper hand, was never serious about dismantling indirect rule, and, having tamed the labour movement, successively banned parties in the nationalist movement of the 1950s and 1960s, driving the movement outside the country and into the liberation war (Astrow 1983).

The tactics used by the settler government aimed to divide Africans along the lines of bifurcation and the weapon of choice was compromise. Thus, in 1960, the National Democratic Party, a moderate attempt to organize within the parameters of the Rhodesian government's paranoia, was given representation at the constitutional conference but received only a compromise of 15 African seats, the acceptance of which split the leadership and led to its banning. The reorganization into Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and

Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) was touted as an ethnic split by the settler government even though both parties had Shona and Ndebele adherents. The split between leaders was more to do with the suspicion of compromise with the settler government and the pitfalls of trying to keep political control of the African National Council (ANC) which was organized to deal with compromise proposals in 1971. The ANC had to be very conciliatory to Rhodesian authorities, in order to remain viable within the country, at the same time as it had to satisfy the leaders of the external organizations and their guerrilla armies (Astrow 1983, 30 -56). Throughout the war the carrot of compromise was always held out as Ian Smith's 'not in a 1000 years' led to constitutional negotiations in 1971 which suggested delaying majority rule for 'up to 100 years'. Likewise the 1978 agreement, accepted by the ANC, headed by the discredited Bishop Muzorewa, was one where "The token changes in restrictions on land ownership, health and education merely replaced racial discrimination with the criterion of ability to pay" (Astrow 1983, 113).⁴⁸ Thus, political expression from African civil society was constantly repressed and finally crushed to a core of urban elite who had the choice of being jailed or leaving, or discrediting themselves through compromise.

The political relations of bifurcation were often reinforced during the guerrilla war. Local authorities became the battleground upon which insurgency and counterinsurgency activities were played out during the liberation war in Rhodesia but the target was not the despotic local administrations (Kriger 1992; Ranger 1995; Astrow 1983; Staunton 1990). There is no doubt that the institutions of local despotism, council offices, beerhalls and

⁴⁸ The political struggle and mistrust between African politicians and soldiers within the nationalist movement was exacerbated by the espionage practised by the Rhodesian government, the most notorious instances of which were the Moyo and Chetipo assassinations (see Martin and Johnson 1985, Ellert 1995).

schools, were the targets of the guerrillas and they counselled the population against paying levies to the local authorities. In turn, Native Commissioners moved in to take over the administration of native councils, raising levies in an effort to expand development activities, as a counterinsurgency measure (Murapa 1986, 10-18). The guerrillas were never able to gain enough control over an area to implement improvements and could only offer promises that after the war Africans would enjoy the same amenities as whites. Furthermore, they charged their own levy on the local people in order to finance the war and set up local committees whose purpose was to extract resources from the people. Although many people sympathized, helping in the struggle was very dangerous work and often they were coerced by local youth who were used as messengers by the guerrillas and who might turn them in as sellouts (Kriger 1992, 82-115). Despite the socialist rhetoric, the struggles of the local people, revealed in these events, were more radical (and more aimed at local despotic rule) than the guerrillas' struggle for 'African cultural nationalism' against the white government. The situation presented the opportunity for grievances against local chiefs, as well as generational and class grievances, to be played out as 'legitimate' (in the eyes of the settler government) African authorities were caught in between (Kriger 1992, 170-211).⁴⁹ Kriger argues that, despite their own youth and their employment of youth, the guerrillas never challenged the institution of hereditary offices. In fact, the political struggle within the guerrilla movement was won by more conservative elements led by Robert Mugabe (Astrow 1984; Moore 1995). Thus, local despotism was reinforced rather than challenged by the guerrillas.

⁴⁹ Kriger notes that these 'struggles in the struggle' reveal the differences between individual customary chiefs since some still commanded the loyalty of their people while others faced the wrath of those who felt they had been wronged (1992, 200).

Another indication that there was no fundamental change in political relations of power was the political domination of women by men during the liberation movement (Kriger 1992; Staunton 1990). It is clear that the struggle would not have been successful without local women. However the guerrillas never saw women outside the customary and domesticated role of wife and mother. They constantly reminded women that they were their mothers (in the absence of their own mothers) and many women related to this as their children had 'disappeared' to join the liberation movement. Thus, women organized, cooked and carried food for the guerrillas throughout the war at considerable danger to themselves.⁵⁰ Young unmarried women were exposed to exploitation by the guerrillas for sexual purposes.⁵¹ Some young women hurriedly married to avoid this fate and parents who could afford it sent their daughters to town. The young women who had babies as a result of these unions usually could not identify the family of the father because he went by a guerrilla name. Thus, no compensation could be paid and family support might also be removed. Sometimes the guerrillas did side with women against abusive husbands and some women found that they could avoid beatings by threatening to turn their husbands in as sellouts.⁵² However, the

⁵⁰ Men stayed in the towns if they had employment or commercial activities but also to avoid the danger in the local villages. Women were left to look after fields and, thus, had to deal with the guerrillas. In any case, few men got involved. One woman asserts,

No men got directly involved in the problems of how to get this and do that: things like carrying food on our backs... If our affairs were now to be decided on how each of us had fought, I can tell you that all the homes would now belong to women. Men just went away to live in town and left their wives to suffer alone (Staunton 1990, 81).

⁵¹ To prevent the parents from being sellouts (reporting on guerrilla activities), the guerrillas insisted that children over 12 stay overnight in the camp where they held meetings. However, one parent testifies that "the commander didn't want parents to know that they were having sex with the girls but, of course, they did: there was really nothing that they could do" (Staunton 1990, 49).

⁵² The war did raise consciousness in some women but this seems to have come after the fact, as illustrated by one woman's comment:

guerrillas never opposed the customary practice of paying *lobola* nor did they suggest that women should play a broader political role. No matter how important they were to the success of the war women could never escape the domestic and 'customary' roles that were an intricate part of the relations of power in the bifurcated state.

Moreover, during this period of guerrilla war, despotic authority grew in severity as it was practised by both sides of the conflict. The urban areas were less affected by guerrilla activity and urban populations of the towns grew with the influx of people trying to escape the violence of the countryside. Civic authorities employed paternalistic solutions such as building new African housing during the 1970s but surveillance was also increased in African townships where all political activity was banned. In the countryside the Rhodesian government carried on a programme of forced removals to fortified 'keeps' where residents were kept under surveillance and whole communities were punished for collusion, usually by the burning of villages (Staunton 1990). Parents were duped into offering their children for recruitment into government forces:

Parents were told that their children would be able to do courses. We would then register our children in the hope that they would be given work or sent for further training. Only afterwards we would discover that our children had been called up (Staunton 1990, 68).

Parents of children who left to join the liberation struggle were beaten by government soldiers. For their part, the guerrillas allowed their youthful messengers to act belligerently towards the population. The guerrillas also killed those they deemed 'sellouts' in order to intimidate the population into cooperation. As a result there was considerable breakdown of

Now women have to liberate themselves. We should not accept our husbands as our superiors. We are equal and we should be seen as equal because we did a great job during the struggle (Staunton 1990, 66).

society as no one could trust anyone and no one could afford to speak their mind: "There were so many lies told during the war - so many that it was as if lies had feet and could run, or wings and could fly" (Staunton 1990, 190). While the liberation movement called for great sacrifice and loyalty, it also took despotism to new levels in society .

Bifurcation unresolved

In both Uganda and Zimbabwe, then, the problem of decentralized despotism and the bifurcation of power was not resolved by nationalism or the political struggles leading up to independence in 1980 in Zimbabwe and the end of the civil war in 1986 in Uganda. In both cases political expression was always moulded to the form of power shaped by the bifurcated state. In both cases there was a significant breakdown of African society.

However, there were differences. In the case of Uganda, race, at least for the time being, had been eliminated and the battle was between African political groups. There was a period of disintegration of political society which finally ended with the NRM's military victory. In the case of Zimbabwe, the nationalist struggle against the white government overshadowed other struggles. Although there was a significant breakdown of African civil society, decentralized African authorities and the settler economy and society remained intact, if under duress. Significant also, was the fact that the victory was not a military one but a peace agreement which left political institutions intact. However, in both cases, the legacy of despotic rule at the local level, including the dominance of men over women, remained.

VII Conclusion: analysing the legacy of inherited impediments and the requirements for a new localism

The constellation of power imposed by indirect rule has posed many problems for the issues of responsibility and accountability. I have argued in this chapter that in the old

localism, based on clans, there was an organic connection between rulers and ruled, a relationship from which emerged responsibility and accountability. An internal alliance system, based on marriage, which linked commoner and royal clans provided for common interests and a direct relationship between ruler and ruled in acquiring the means of administration. However, political power was based on control over people, especially women and their productive and reproductive power, in order to control resources. Clientelism worked positively within this system because it permitted a fluidity which gave greater mobility within society, mostly for men but also partially for women. Imbedded as it was in the system of alliances, clientelism also supported the organic links from which emerged responsibility and accountability. The rivalry of alliances among members of the ruling class made it possible to remove leaders who were not in favour and encouraged external alliances which often furthered political and economic opportunities.

In the late 1890s this organic tension was severed with the imposition of colonial rule. The alliance with the British brought an end to the choosing of leaders through the clan hierarchy and to deposing an unsatisfactory one. This rigidity also closed down the possibility of developing further political relationships autonomously. The system of taxation replaced the direct economic relationship in acquiring the means of administration and the paying of chiefs through colonial taxation shifted the relationship of responsibility and accountability from clan alliance to the British administration. These measures considerably weakened the power of the indigenous rulers and in this early period there is much evidence that the clan hierarchy was giving way to new social relations.

The imposition of formal indirect rule resurrected the political power over people and

bestowed it on the chiefs but without the substance of the old localism. The local customary administration that evolved could not be called a government and had none of the flexibility of the old localism. Customary law, reinterpreted, codified and filled with new colonial content, lost its fluidity and gave local leaders despotic control over local populations. Indirect rule benefited only a small class of people related to the administrative chiefs and this class was elevated by colonial authorities through access to education and prestigious careers and jobs in the administration. Women were effectively left out of this class, except as wives and mothers, and their productive role was subsumed by the neo-tradition of Western domesticity which emphasized homemaking and motherhood. Moreover, British neo-traditions fostered an elitism within this ruling administrative class and created an over-emphasis on forms through the invented traditions of state occasions, the revering of monarchy and the use of state resources to support an official life-style. On the other hand the substance, with regard to responsibility and accountability, was missing. Local chiefs had no control over policies and therefore, could not be held accountable. Colonial administrators created policies to support their own objectives which were related to the European economy. Concrete evidence in this lack of substance is evident in the deplorable lack of infrastructure, economic opportunities and social benefits. Clientelism, in this case, worked negatively in that it worked within a severely restricted framework and, thus, only reinforced the rigid power of elite groups and maintained despotic rule. Local administration under the decentralization of indirect rule precluded the emergence of a relationship of responsibility and accountability.

The urban centres present a particularly good picture of bifurcation since the boundary between the civil and the customary was starkly evident in the struggle for African space. In

Rhodesia there was what could be called a civic municipal government in that it was directly elected by the white population. In Uganda the local urban authority still remained purely an administration, albeit with some public input, mostly from the European population. Africans were physically and politically disconnected from the municipal administrations through the bifurcation of space and authority. In both cases, while many urban residents had physical ties to customary land, many had no ties and yet they were under 'native' administrations. On the other hand, most Africans in Uganda and all Africans in Rhodesia were subject to surveillance and control by the municipal administration through the restriction of location within the urban area and through the regulation of housing and economic activities. In other words, the civil authority had despotic authority over Africans. Women, who looked to urban areas for a less burdensome life, were judged doubly by 'customary' rules and Western standards of domesticity which branded all non-compliant behaviour as prostitution. Thus, their struggle for legitimate space in the urban areas involved reliance on their relationship to males who they could manipulate within the male-dominated clientel networks. Since Africans had no direct representation in municipal government there was no direct relation, for men or women, with which to produce responsibility and accountability.

Neither in the nationalist struggle in Zimbabwe nor in the politics of independence and the ensuing armed conflict in Uganda were the inherited impediments of indirect rule addressed. Repression of political organizations in African civil society in favour of 'legitimate' customary rule not only provided a legacy of repressive behaviour towards political opposition but also forced political expression to adhere to the contours of bifurcation. In Zimbabwe leaders struggled for control over the settler state rather than for the

dismantling of its structure. While there was tremendous destabilising of society through violence and treachery, the politics of male domination and despotic rule by force remained intact along with native authorities and the economic and political institutions of the settler population. In Uganda, there was little change in the relationship between ruler and ruled as political parties vied for exclusive control of the state through patronage networks. The imposition of military rule, though ostensibly aimed at the some of the structures of bifurcation (removal of Asian dominance in business), only perpetuated, on a more violent scale, despotic political behaviour and negative clientelism. Political expression was often reduced to power over women and this fact was reflected in the tendency to curtail women's activities especially in the urban areas. Ugandan society, too, was destabilized and brutalized but lost none of the power structures of male dominance and rule by force although there clearly was some consciousness of this situation on behalf of NRM leaders. One of the main differences from the Zimbabwean case, however, was the fact that race was not a factor in the struggle for power in Uganda so that the struggle for political power was laid bare and there was a complete political and economic breakdown. In Zimbabwe, although power struggles among the elite were evident, they were overshadowed by the struggle against white rule and the peace agreement assured that political and economic institutions remained intact.

The inherited impediments

The inherited impediments are both structural and behavioural. It is important to understand that the inherited impediments have evolved and endured over a century and so must be taken seriously in any attempt to analyse the current practices of decentralization in Uganda and Zimbabwe. With this understanding we may posit that the structures and

relationships involved are complex and will take a long time to change. The structural impediments include: the total corruption of traditional customary authority; the lack of a direct relationship between the local administration and the public with regard to the means of administration at the local level; the lack of direct accountability of the local administration to the local community through direct election of councillors; and, the lack of autonomy, on the part of local government, to make, and be accountable for, policy. Also included in the structural impediments is the great gap between the majority of Africans and their leaders. Ostensibly this gap includes education, opportunity and material wealth and power. However, as I argue in this chapter it also includes a lack of interests in common except for the purpose of getting and maintaining political power. Those interests have developed along ethnic or religious lines and are served only through personalized clientelistic means. This precludes universality and is generally unproductive since it is so vulnerable to corruption.

Critical to the problem of responsibility and accountability at the local level is the understanding that the political behaviour and expectations of both the rulers and the ruled, of what constitutes political society, has been shaped by these inherited impediments. Generally, the form of power in the bifurcated state demands dependent and patron-seeking behaviour on the part of most people along the lines of clan or religious groupings, especially at the local level. Integral also to maintaining political dominance is the perpetuation of male dominance over women. Thus, the political behaviour of women has been forced into manipulating customary practices as well as using political patronage networks. Administrators are both revered by the public, through the cult of elitism, and mistrusted, since there is little accountability beyond individual clientelistic relationships. Thus, Ekeh's 'two publics', in

concrete terms, have split expectations, revering the big man who may bring resources derived from a position of power but disdaining the official who demands a bribe or provides no service. Political demand or behaviour outside of these relations is regarded with suspicion by rulers and needs not be tolerated. Thus, surveillance and force are more readily used than public consultation, cooperation and negotiation. These are the inherited impediments in which to locate some specific challenges that might put some content to a new localism.

Requirements of a new localism

In general terms a new localism requires political change in order to address these inherited impediments - both structural and behavioural. The prerequisites for a new localism are: democratic openings at the local level and a reconfiguration of power between levels of government that eliminates bifurcation. From these prerequisites, and based on the findings in this chapter come three more specific requirements. The *first requirement* is the recognition of the political problem by leaders at the centre and locally and some political will for dismantling the structures of bifurcation, most notably decentralized despotism. Thus, decentralization programmes must be examined for their particular intent and methods for acting on that intent to see if they at least aim for some dismantling of decentralized despotism. The *second requirement* is a restructuring of the relationship between the centre and local government with the goal of creating an autonomous and direct relationship between the local government and its local population with relation to the means of administration. This includes a breaking down of decentralized despotism through democratic openings in institutions at the local level that makes policy-makers directly accountable to the majority of the local population. One important indicator for democratic opening at the local level is the

inclusion of women in political institutions since the subordination of women has been so important for maintaining decentralized despotism. The *third requirement* is that local institutions provide enough public participation to develop new public political behaviour from which some common conventions of responsibility and accountability might emerge. This includes public interaction by local government with the population in general and also with local civil associations to create a local public space. An important component of this change is the public participation of women in the development of new political relationships. On the one hand, a new localism requires a fundamental change in the institutional structure to make politicians accountable; on the other hand, it requires a new interface, an interactive process in which there is at least some potential for different political behaviours and relationships to develop within political society. The following chapters present an analysis of the current decentralization practices at the municipal level in light of these requirements.

Chapter 3

Meeting the Requirements of a New Localism: Decentralization in Uganda and Zimbabwe in the 1990s

Introduction

In the previous chapter I drew on historical material in order to better understand the inherited impediments to responsibility and accountability at the local level under the colonial rule of decentralized despotism. In turn, the historical impediments to a relationship between government and governed from which responsibility and accountability might emerge suggest some prerequisites for a new localism; and, therefore put some specific content into the concept of a new localism. The prerequisites are: democratic openings at the local level and a reconfiguration of power between levels of government that leads towards a more autonomous local government and eliminates bifurcation. These prerequisites lead to some more specific requirements. The first requirement is some consciousness of the political problem and the need for democratic openings at the local level and some political will, at the centre and locally, for political change. The second requirement is a restructuring of the relationship between centre and local governments with the goal of moving towards an autonomous and direct relationship between the local government and the local population. Inherent in this measure is the creation of democratic openings at the local level and the breaking down of physical and administrative bifurcation. The third requirement is that local institutions provide an interactive process in which there is at least some potential for different political behaviour and relationships to develop between the population and the local government. This chapter examines the current decentralization policies in Uganda and Zimbabwe within the context of

structural adjustment and in light of the first two requirements. The chapter also examines the specific institutional structures in the municipalities of Jinja, Uganda and Mutare, Zimbabwe in light of the second requirement.

I Comparing Uganda and Zimbabwe in the 1990s

At first glance, the economies of Uganda and Zimbabwe are very different. Although somewhat larger than Uganda in area (391,000 sq. km. to Uganda's 236,000 sq. km.), Zimbabwe's population is 10.7 million compared to Uganda's which is 18 million.¹ Zimbabwe's settler economy provides a much larger formal market base than exists in Uganda resulting in a per capita GNP (US\$ 520) almost three times that of Uganda (US\$ 180).² Zimbabwe has more of manufacturing and industry (30% and 36% of GDP respectively as compared to 5% and 12% in Uganda), while Uganda is much more dependent on agriculture (53% of GDP as compared to 15% in Zimbabwe).³ Uganda is also much more dependent on aid. In 1993 development assistance was 19% of the GDP in Uganda, and 8.1 % in Zimbabwe.⁴ Thus, Zimbabwe has a much more developed formal economy.

Despite this, the legacy of bifurcation has resulted in both countries' having large majorities of low-income earners. Moreover, income distribution, highly unequal in both countries, is much more uneven in Zimbabwe (highest 20% = 62.3% of income; highest 10% = 46.9% of income) than in Uganda (highest 20% = 41.9% of income; highest 10% = 27.2%

¹ World Development Report 1995, World Bank, p. 162.

² Ibid.

³ World Development Report 1995, World Bank, p. 166.

⁴ World Development Report 1995, World Bank, p. 198.

of income).⁵ Labourers in the private sector earn fairly similar wages: a construction worker earns USH 53,040/= (US\$53.00) per month⁶ in Uganda, as compared to Z\$576.90 (US\$82.00) per month⁷ in Zimbabwe; a miner earns US\$62.00 per month in Uganda as compared to US\$80.00 in Zimbabwe; and, in manufacturing a sewing machine operator earns US\$16.00 per month in Uganda as compared to US\$26.00 per month in Zimbabwe. Thus, by international standards, working people are poorly paid in both countries.

However, professionals are paid much better wages in Zimbabwe than in Uganda.⁸ For example, a certified nurse earns US\$209.00⁹ per month in Zimbabwe compared to US\$13.00 per month in Uganda and an elementary teacher earns US\$73,00¹⁰ per month in Zimbabwe as compared to US\$33.60 per month in Uganda.¹¹ Local government employees are also paid what is considered a living wage in Zimbabwe whereas they are not in Uganda.

Although salaries were raised twice in 1993/94 financial year in Jinja, Uganda, the top administrator earns US\$1728.00 per annum while a head of department earns US\$1,042. In the education department in Jinja an accounts clerk earns US\$630.00 per year and a

⁵ World Development Report, World Bank, 1995, p. 220.

⁶ Statistics on Occupational Wages and Hours of Work and on Food Prices, 1995, International Labour Office, Geneva. In 1994/5 USH1000/= were equal to US\$1.00, approximately.

⁷ 1994 Year Book Of Labour Statistics, International Labour Office, Geneva. In 1994/95 Z\$7.00 was equal to US\$1.00, approximately.

⁸ Uganda, 1993 statistics: Statistics on Occupational Wages and Hours of Work and on Food Prices 1995, International Labour Office, Geneva, p.33.; Zimbabwe, 1987 statistics: Bulletin of Labour Statistics 1989, p. 50.

⁹ Records, Mutare City Council, 1995.

¹⁰ Bulletin of Labour Statistics 1989, International Labour Office, Geneva, p. 52. This is a 1987 statistic.

¹¹ Ugandan statistics from: Statistics on Occupational Wages and Hours of Work and on Food Prices, October 1993 and 1994, International Labour Office, Geneva.

messenger US\$309.00 per annum.¹² Only the senior positions are provided with a car, good housing and the prestige such a position brings. Therefore, all other positions are required to seek additional economic activities (also see Amis 1992, 23).

In Zimbabwe, on the other hand, government employees are much better paid. For example, in Mutare, an accounts clerk earns US\$1540.00 per annum. A junior manager earns US\$6610.00 per annum. A labourer for Mutare City Council starts at US\$927.00 per annum. In Zimbabwe local government senior managers are paid less than comparable positions in parastatals or the private sector, though they are given car loans and allowances as perks (Pasteur 1992, 41,42). Unlike Uganda, these higher salaries for professionals and civil servants provide the opportunity to live a middle class life in Zimbabwe.

Structural adjustment

As is generally the case in sub-Saharan Africa, neither country has been able to maintain government viability without the assistance of IMF and World Bank loans provided under structural adjustment plans. Uganda, in economic collapse after the civil strife and the dominance of the black market, *magendo*, economy throughout the late 1970s and most of the 1980s, adopted structural adjustment (SAP) soon after the NRM came to power in 1986. The new government of Zimbabwe, intent on development catch-up for the African population, spent a great deal of money on education, land redistribution and health reform in the early 1980s. Defence policy, partly because of South Africa's attempts to destabilize the new government, also raised spending. This meant deficit financing for much of the 1980s. At the same time there was a decline in domestic investment and the economy stagnated (Stoneman

¹² JMC Estimates for 1994/95.

and Cliffe 1989, 129-34, 168-75; Stoneman 1992; Chisvo and Munro 1994, 1). Thus, in 1990 Zimbabwe too embarked on a structural adjustment programme (ESAP).

Structural adjustment has had mixed reviews in both countries. The main elements of structural adjustment in Uganda include devaluation of currency, removal of tariffs on imports, an emphasis on production for export, privatization of parastatals, a reduction in government employees, establishing a better tax base and reducing public expenditure. While structural adjustment and liberalization has served to undermine the *magendo* economy in Uganda, Mahmood Mamdani (1990) argues that those who made so much profit on the black market are now in a position to profit from the liberalization. On the other hand, he points out that although the Ugandan economy has grown, it is still dependent on one export crop, coffee, and uses foreign instead of domestic inputs in the manufacturing that has been revived.¹³ In Zimbabwe, a country with a much more subsidized and protected formal economy, liberalization has forced local industries to face the competition of imports and many have shut down in what has been referred to as the de-industrializing of Zimbabwe. Two droughts, one in 1992 and another in 1995, have aggravated the effect of the removal of subsidies on agricultural products, especially maize, and caused a food crisis. On the other hand bigger manufacturers, resource industries and large-scale agriculture have benefitted either from the adjustment itself or because the government has stepped in to keep them on-side (Stoneman 1992; Saunders 1996, 1996a). Finally, both countries have become increasingly indebted after the introduction of structural adjustment. Zimbabwe's total external

¹³ For example the Ugandan Dairy Corporation uses European powdered milk instead of local milk to make its dairy products (Mamdani 1990, 447).

debt has almost doubled since 1989¹⁴ and has grown from 41.4% of GNP in 1990 to 64.6% in 1993.¹⁵ Uganda's debt has more than doubled since 1987¹⁶ and has grown from 37.2 % of the GNP in 1990 to 55.7% in 1993.¹⁷ The resulting burden of interest payments is much greater for the Ugandan economy with interest alone amounting to one quarter of exports in 1993. The total value of the external debt was 844.5% of exports in the same year. In Zimbabwe interest payments were 10.5% of exports in 1993 while the total value of the external debt amounted to 172.6% of exports.¹⁸ Thus, while structural adjustment has resulted in a multiplication of debt it has not as yet restructured the economies in that those who were already in a better position before adjustment have benefitted.

It is also clear that the low income majority of both populations has been put at greater risk. In Uganda the *magendo* economy had made the official currency inviable and when the new Uganda shilling was introduced in 1987 the exchange rate was sixty shillings to the dollar (Ochieng 1991, 53-6). By 1995 the shilling was devalued to one thousand shillings per dollar and the impact is clear in the familiar Ugandan saying that Ugandans 'lost three zeros' in the value of their money. Zimbabweans also have seen a devaluation in currency of at least 25% since 1991. At the same time consumer prices have risen (Stoneman,

¹⁴ World Debt Tables 1994-95, Volume I, World Bank, Washington D. C., p. 546. The debt in 1989 was US\$2,791 million and in 1993 US\$4,168 million.

¹⁵ World Development Report 1995, World Bank: Oxford University Press, p. 206.

¹⁶ World Debt Tables 1994-95, Volume I, World Bank, Washington D. C., p. 498. The debt was US\$1,941 million in 1987 and US\$3,056 million in 1993.

¹⁷ World Development Report 1995, World Bank: Oxford University Press, p. 206.

¹⁸ World Development Report 1995, World Bank: Oxford University Press, p. 162.

1992). The consumer price index for Uganda in 1994 for all items was 228 (1990=100) and for Zimbabwe 273.4. For food items alone the index in 1994 in Uganda was 227.7 and in Zimbabwe 336.8.¹⁹ Moreover, adjustment has resulted in retrenchment of both government and private sector workers, adding to the already precarious unemployment picture and sending more people into informal subsistence activities.²⁰ Government spending cutbacks have also entailed the institution of user fees for education and health care adding a further burden to low-income earners. Thus, the burden of adjustment has fallen heavily on those with low incomes.

Local governments, and especially urban local governments, have also borne a heavy burden of adjustment. This has happened for several reasons: first, because they are in the position of trying to service a concentrated and poorer population; secondly, because they have had to take on greater responsibilities; and, thirdly, because central government financial support has dwindled. In Zimbabwe health and education expenditure has declined by 39% and 20% respectively from 1990 to 1995 (Chisvo and Munro 1994). The provision of new primary schools was downloaded to local government in 1987. Subsequently, user fees were introduced in both primary health clinics (1991) and primary schools (1992) to further reduce the central government responsibility. These user fees do not cover costs and thus burden municipalities where larger populations demand more services (see below). The Ugandan government, with a larger population and fewer resources, does not have the ability to give

¹⁹ Yearbook of Labour Statistics 1995, pp. 789, 804.

²⁰ 7500 workers were retrenched in mining and engineering industries in 1992 and that 7000, 6000 and 3000 jobs were lost in sugar, clothing/textile and leather industries, respectively, by November 1992 (Mlambo 1993, 72). By 1995, the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions estimated that 55,000 jobs had been lost and that about 22,000 jobs had been lost in the public sector (Saunders 1996a, 12).

block grants to all of the decentralized local governments and, therefore, concentrates on those with the most need. While, ostensibly, no new responsibilities have been added, Jinja has been excluded from grants because it has a relatively better resource base. By 1995 even the government funding for primary schools had dwindled to US\$1000.00 for 14 primary schools. Municipalities in both Zimbabwe and Uganda face more responsibilities in the 1990s *but there is also a possibility that this 'forced autonomy' may present an opportunity for a more direct accountability between the local government and the population.*

Two urban centres in the 1990s

The physical comparison of Mutare, formerly Umtali, and Jinja is a study in contrasts that reveals some interesting variations on the inherited bifurcation of space. The largest urban centre outside of Kampala, Jinja has a population of 65,169²¹. The town centre has an informal atmosphere, with one- or two-story buildings in varying degrees of deterioration and multi-storied buildings emerging here and there. Fronting multi-roomed dwellings are small services, retailers, wholesalers and craft manufacturers which hover on one side or the other of the formal/informal divide. The most formal section of town is Main Street which leads south to the patch of larger businesses, government buildings, the municipal council among them, and several banks. To the east of the central town and its suburbs is an industrial area and the Walukuba housing estates for low income workers and beyond that Masese where there is a second industrial area and a large fish market on the shore of Lake Victoria. Large scale industries include the current rehabilitation of the Owen Falls dam, a brewery, British

²¹ 1991 Population and Housing Census (Jinja District), Uganda Statistics Department, Ministry of Finance, Entebbe, Uganda, p. 9.

American Tobacco, a textile factory, grain milling and a steel mill that is being regenerated in Masese. Medium sized businesses include fisheries, a leather and tanning factory and a sawmill.²² To the west and south are low density residential areas adjacent to the Victoria Nile and the shores of Lake Victoria. To the north-west is another high density area, Mpumudde, where a second housing estate is located. Thus, there is a mixture of formal and informal activities but the informal tends to predominate.

This is reflected in a blurring of high- and low-density areas. Since the departure of Asians in the 1970s, Jinja has become an African town and the population has grown by 20,000 since 1980.²³ Most people in Jinja are renters.²⁴ The bulk of the population tends to be densely concentrated in the central town and adjacent residential areas (29,622) while the two flanks of Mpumudde/Nalufenya (17,089) and Walukuba/Masese (18,458), although containing high density areas, are less populated.²⁵ This overcrowding is a result of the renting out of departed Asian property to multiple renters by the Departed Asians Property Custodian Board (DAPCB). Although some sections of the low-density areas near Lake Victoria and the Nile River remain single family dwellings, some large houses in the residential area have been rented out room by room as have some buildings originally used for office space. With the

²² Jinja Urban Study, Phase One, John van Nostrand Associates Limited, 1992, p. 57.

²³ Background to the Budget 1994-1995, Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning Kampala, Uganda, p. A54.

²⁴ The 1991 Population and Housing Census shows that of 78,539 urban residents in Jinja District only 6,013 are owners of the dwelling unit. Other urban centres (Bugembe, 6,939; Buwenge, 4,946; Kakira, 3,839) have very small populations compared to Jinja so these rental figure gives a good indication of the ratio of renters to owners in Jinja although they are for the whole district (The 1991 Population and Housing Census (Jinja District), Statistics Department, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Entebbe, Uganda, pp. 8, 24).

²⁵ The 1991 Population and Housing Census, Jinja District, Statistics Department, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Entebbe, Uganda, p.9.

decline of infrastructure, there is now a smaller contrast between the roads in the city centre and low-density suburbs and those in the old African areas. Although the roads in the central district are paved they are in a state of decay, as are the paved sections of roads in the low-density suburbs which, in some places, are almost impassable.²⁶ While overall streetlighting is better in the city centre and low-density suburbs it is not always reliable. Overcrowding is prevalent also in both Walukuba and Mpumudde housing estates since JMC is slow to service new land and building restrictions prevent the erecting of informal housing, although there are some mud and wattle structures in Mpumudde.²⁷ Many people who work in Jinja commute either from Njeru, the town on the west bank of the Victoria Nile river, or Bugembe, just to the north and east, where it is easier to obtain housing. The roads in the high density areas are not paved but the main roads are good. The side roads are navigable but very uneven. In 1995 the DAPCB was winding down since many properties had been reclaimed and the rest were in the process of being sold. While it is not clear what effect this will have on living patterns, for the time being there is a blurring of the bifurcation of space which, although not formally designated as in colonial Rhodesia, separated Africans from other races in colonial Jinja.

Although there is some revival of industries in Jinja, much of the population is involved in small-scale economic activities. The 1991 census of the working population of Jinja district reveals only a fewskilled labourers. The majority of working people perform

²⁶ Hence the often-made comment that only madmen and drunkards drive in a straight line in Uganda!

²⁷ See Jinja Urban Study, Phase One, John Van Nostrand Associates, 1992.

unskilled labour or are engaged in small-scale craft operations or retail and wholesale trade.²⁸ Informal activities are highly visible on the streets of Jinja town (bicycle taxis, shoe cleaners, corn roasters, hawkers) and in several informal markets. It is not easy to gauge income levels.

But many indicators suggest that the large majority of the population of Jinja is of low-income. The average urban household size in Jinja District is 4.1 and the majority of households (64.8%) live in one room while only 19.5% live in more than two rooms.²⁹ Three quarters (74.5%) of urban households use charcoal, and another 15.7% firewood, for cooking. Although much of Jinja has been equipped with running water and waterborne sewerage, only 19% of urban households have water piped into the house while the majority of households buys water by the jerrycan from standpipes. Some 53% of the population use pit latrines for a toilet, the majority of which are shared.³⁰ These indicators tend to suggest that most people in the municipality are not well off and have trouble meeting the expense of modern amenities when they are available.

In contrast, the city centre of Mutare, Zimbabwe's fourth largest city, is a modern western one with modern infrastructure and amenities. The city of 131,367³¹ is the capital of Manicaland province and serves as the commercial and industrial centre for its mostly rural population. Formal business predominates and there are many large department stores,

²⁸ The 1991 Population and Housing Census, Jinja District, Statistics Department, pp. 18,19. Although these statistics are for the whole of Jinja district, the pattern is so skewed towards these occupations that it is applicable to Jinja especially since Jinja accounts for 80% of the urban population in Jinja district (65,169 of a total of 80,893) and many of these occupations tend to be mostly urban activities.

²⁹ The 1991 Population and Housing Census, Jinja District, p. 5.

³⁰ The 1991 Population and Housing Census, Jinja District, p. 22.

³¹ 1992 Population Census, Manicaland Provincial Profile, Central Statistical Office, Harare, 1994.

supermarkets, and service industries. The exception is the gradual proliferation of traders and vegetable sellers on the streets of Mutare that has taken place during the 1990s. The formal business sections still represent pre-independence patterns of white, Asian and Coloured areas leading, in succession, south-west out of the main city in the direction of the old African township of Sakubva. As in Jinja, the industrial area lies adjacent to the housing estates of this former African township. Industries focus on locally produced materials and include paper and timber mills and furniture making. Nearby plantations provide tea and coffee for processing plants and there are also food processing and canning factories. Other industries include automobile assembly and safety glass production as well as textile, tanning and shoe factories and construction companies.³² Hugging the north-east and west of the city centre are low density suburbs. Farther to the west is a new high-density area of Chikanga and past Sakubva, to the south and the west, is another new high-density suburb, Dangamvura. Most African businesses are located either in Sakubva or Dangamvura, although the new shopping centre in Dangamvura is also dominated by a chain supermarket.

There remains a stark difference between high- and low-density areas in Mutare. The city centre and low density suburbs have wide paved roads, good street lighting and are fully serviced with water and electricity. In the low density suburbs there are spacious lots on which stand large houses surrounded by high walls and locked gates. Residential accommodation is sparse in the city centre and tends to be apartment complexes on the higher end of the scale. There are also some apartments above commercial enterprises in the Asian and Coloured business districts. At the end of the working day there are streams of vehicular

³² See Encyclopedia Zimbabwe, Harare: Quest Publishing, 1989, p. 269.

and pedestrian traffic out of the city centre into the suburbs and, unlike Jinja, the city centre is deserted after dark. While Mutare city centre may no longer be exclusively white it certainly is almost exclusively formal.

The high-density areas have small lots with various types of houses from large multi-roomed bungalows to one and two-room concrete blocks. There are also recently constructed four-plex apartment blocks. There is some formal rental accommodation built in the new high-density suburbs but the majority of new housing is home ownership with many people putting up temporary shacks on the foundations while they endeavour to build permanent houses. In Sakubva are the dilapidated buildings of the old housing estate, built in the 1950s, as well as one multi-storied hostel, originally built for accommodating singles. The new high density areas are fully serviced with water and sewerage and electricity as is Sakubva. However, streetlighting is absent in most of the three high-density suburbs and there are few paved roads. The extreme is in the old areas of Sakubva where the road in some places is almost impassable for vehicles. In the old housing estates of Sakubva stand pipes and toilet facilities serve multiple users and electricity is available only 12 hours a day on a bulk supply system which the local government purchases from Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Agency (ZESA). Here also is an abundance of informal traders and vegetable sellers who set up stalls, ranging from temporary to semi-permanent constructions, along the crowded roadways. Proliferating here, as well, are the informal shacks of lodgers who pay rent to the tenants of the old housing estate in order to erect these shelters nearby. Here, also, are informal suppliers of materials and expertise for building shacks. Thus the bifurcation of space, first established during the colonial period, is still quite noticeable in Mutare.

While one may see Mutare as a vastly different urban centre from Jinja, there are many similarities. Mutare has doubled in population since 1982.³³ It also has high rates of poverty. The official unemployment rate was 24.04% in 1992 but there are indications that unemployment is much higher. While formal jobs grew in the 1980s by about 10,000, they have been falling by about 1000 a year since 1992. More importantly the average wage bill for those jobs has declined dramatically since its peak in 1992.³⁴ In the urban areas of Manicaland the highest percentage of workers are in service industries (24.13%), manufacturing (15.60%) and mining or construction (10.18%). Only 16.4% of the urban employed are in the professional or managerial categories.³⁵ The proliferation of hawkers, traders and vegetable sellers in the central business district suggests a growth in informal, low income activities.

Other indicators also suggest a large majority of low-income earners. Although the new high-density suburbs of Dangamvura and Chikanga have provided some opportunities for housing, almost 40% (39.17%) of the population of Mutare consists of lodgers who are tenants of tenants.³⁶ These lodgers either share formal accommodation or inhabit shacks in the high-density suburbs. A city council report estimated that some 12,000 people inhabited

³³ The 1982 figure is 62,621 (Encyclopedia Zimbabwe, Harare: Quest Publishing, 1989, p. 269).

³⁴ From Z\$387.4 million to Z\$107.2 million. This includes benefits such as pensions, health plans, bonuses and commissions. The last figure is listed as 'provisional' (Quarterly Digest of Statistics, Central Statistical Office, Harare, March 1995, p. 8).

³⁵ 1992 Population Census, The Manicaland Profile, Central Statistical Office, 1994, p. 71. Mutare, as Jinja, is by far the largest urban centre constituting three quarters (74.64%) of the urban population of Manicaland Province (Ibid., p.25). Therefore, the figures are relevant for Mutare alone.

³⁶ 1992 Population Census, Manicaland Provincial Profile, Central Statistical Office, Harare, 1994, p. 95.

shacks in Sakubva alone in 1992 and that the majority of them were low-income earners for whom low rental accommodation was not available and who could not afford to buy a stand (plot) and build a house.³⁷ While the vast majority of residents have access to running water, including flush toilets (98.13%), almost two thirds (61.37%) of the residents of Mutare must use outside piped water. A majority (85.52%) of Mutare residents also have electricity but less than one third (30.94 %) use it for cooking. Thus, like Jinja, these indicators suggest that much of the population is not able to afford amenities even if they are available.

In conclusion, on the surface the contrasts between Jinja and Mutare hide a number of similarities. Physically Mutare is a much more developed and modern urban centre with a predominantly formal economy. Jinja, on the other hand, has an infrastructure which has been deteriorating for twenty years and, although there is formal employment, informal economic activities overwhelmingly predominate. The proliferation of rental accommodation throughout the town has blurred the bifurcation of space while the city centre and low density areas of Mutare show a great deal of contrast with the high density areas where the bifurcation of space remains apparent. Nevertheless, the populations of the two urban areas are predominantly low-income earners and unemployment is high. Neither Mutare nor Jinja has been able to accommodate with affordable housing the large influx of population since the early 1980s. Both municipalities continue to administer deteriorating housing estates which are the legacy of the colonial and settler states. Finally, although Mutare definitely has a higher standard of amenities, the majority of the population in both centres is unable to afford

³⁷ Survey of Temporary Structures in Sakubva, Housing and Community Services, Mutare City Council, 1992.

the services of modern municipalities. Thus, both municipalities are challenged with the political and administrative problem of providing services to largely underserved and poor populations.

It is clear that structural adjustment has not greatly altered the economic inequalities characteristic of the bifurcated state in Uganda and Zimbabwe. In many ways these inequalities have been exacerbated. While local governments have had to take on increased responsibilities and financial commitments, they are dealing with a more impoverished population from which they need to secure resources. However, the question remains as to whether the new round of decentralization which started in the 1980s in both countries is adequate enough to overcome the inherited impediments of the bifurcated state and construct a political relationship at the local level which produces accountability.

II Decentralization: How new is the localism in the 1990s?

The legacy of the military struggle

Both the NRA in Uganda and the guerrilla forces of ZANU and ZAPU in Zimbabwe set up committees of civilians during their respective military struggles, in the 1970s for Zimbabwe and the early 1980s for Uganda. In both cases the committees were composed of local inhabitants in each area and, thus, could be called grassroot committees. However, there does seem to be some difference between the two cases and those differences give some insight into later policy.

In the case of Uganda there seems to have been an emphasis on the emancipatory capacity of local committees for a number of reasons (Twaddle 1988, Dodge and Raundalen 1991). First, the NRA was able to gain some control over some areas, most notably in the

Luwero triangle, and some areas were even given the status of a local authority by the UN in its humanitarian efforts during the war (Dodge and Raundalen 1991). Second, the intent of the Obote forces, which had "within a few months deteriorated into a mafia of marauding gangs looting and killing the wider population", presented a precarious security situation for the local population (Twaddle 1988, 315). The youth became committed to the NRA, running errands, cooking and cleaning and carrying weapons, much as in Zimbabwe. However, they were the survivors of the atrocities perpetrated by the Obote forces and were reacting against the ruthless use of force (Dodge 1991, 51-58). Lastly, one might argue that the issue of race had been removed, although not necessarily the issue of ethnicity, and that there was a mistrust of *any* army. There is evidence that the NRA leaders were conscious of this fact and were intent on preventing their own army from taking advantage of defenseless villagers within the territory they controlled. While it is clear that the NRA needed the cooperation of the population in order to proceed with the war, there seems to have been an overriding issue: the creation of a forum through which the local people might criticize the behaviour of the army in their midst. Therefore, they set up popularly chosen resistance committees ostensibly to resist the indiscipline of their own army. This later carried over to the NRM 10-point programme of 1986 and the setting up of local resistance committees all over Uganda which, ostensibly, would "above all be political forums to discuss relevant issues concerning the whole country and act as forums against corruption and misuse of office by the chief government officials" (Twaddle 1988, 317). Michael Twaddle further notes that, although parliamentary democracy and economic opportunities were also part of the 10-point programme, it was local grassroots democracy that remained a priority for the NRM in 1986,

"of the sort that NRA guerrillas themselves established in the Luwero triangle and other areas of core support" (1988, 316).

The committees set up by the guerrillas in Zimbabwe had a different focus for a number of reasons. First, the guerrillas were never able to establish control over any one area because the government forces maintained a controlling presence. Second, because of the pervading authority of the white government, guerrillas were never sure whether they could trust people. Guerrillas or headmen, as the case may be, often appointed people whom they mistrusted to local committees where they were vulnerable, always in danger and less likely to betray the cause (Kriger 1992, 116-69; Staunton 1990, 131). Third, in Zimbabwe it was not a case of questioning *any* authority but of supporting a new authority. Unlike Uganda, race was the overriding issue and this convinced the guerrillas of their high moral ground. It is clear by the evidence presented in the previous chapter that the guerrillas set up committees in order to get support from the population, whether by force or persuasion, and their primary purpose was to obtain provisions rather than establish popular organs of local control. Thus, Colin Stoneman and Lionel Cliffe argue that although the committees "often threw up an alternative leadership to that of local chiefs and local headmen", once the guerrilla presence was removed they broke down (1989, 110). But, more importantly, for the purpose of this argument, even if there was a measure of popular control in the committees, efforts to establish new local government after the war "were top-down initiatives which did not in their terms of reference take the pre-existing popular organs into account" (Stoneman and Cliffe 1989, 111).

There is also a difference in the rhetoric of the two leaders, Robert Mugabe and

Yoweri Museveni. While one must be careful not to take the rhetoric of the struggle at complete face value it is still instructive. For Museveni the emphasis is on the misconduct of leaders and the need to question them. Thus speaking about the committees in the guerrilla held territory, Museveni asserts that,

they will tell me whether the muluka chiefs are thieves, or the hospital personnel are selling drugs, or whether there are soldiers in the area who are misbehaving. They are thus able to act as watch-dogs for the population and guard against the misuse of power (Museveni 1989, 2).

In a 1986 address Museveni focused on the brutal leadership that Ugandans endured commenting that "Ugandans had become so dehumanized that when we took over Kampala, the first thing people did was to thank us that they were no longer being killed, as if being killed was the normal thing" (Museveni 1989, 9). In the swearing in address of January 1986 the emphasis was on creating institutions to check leaders and Museveni reiterated his stand that, "right now I want to emphasize that the first point on our political programme is democracy for the people of Uganda. It is a birthright to which all people of Uganda are entitled" (Museveni 1989, 2).

In contrast, Robert Mugabe's emphasis was on bringing the population under a vanguard leadership. There is no mention of democratic openings in his speeches but an emphasis on the importance of people following the leadership of the vanguard party. Thus, on New Year's 1978 he asserted,

But the organization of the masses must conform to Party directives. The Party line is the only corrective line for the mobilization and organization of the masses. The people must be rallied behind the Party and the armed struggle... [to] transform our struggle in both theory and practice into the *People's Struggle* (Mugabe 1983, 1).

Speaking of the local committees, he commented that the "people are organized to administer themselves under the political guidance of the party" (Mugabe 1983, 21). Addressing the

Indian Council for Cultural Relations in the mid-1980s on war, peace and development

Mugabe maintains that the "successful war of liberation sets the stage for the releasing hitherto oppressed people's boundless energy and creativity for national development", but never once mentions democratic openings (Mugabe 1987, 16).

The view from the centre

The differences described above carry over into the decentralization policies of the central governments in Uganda and Zimbabwe. The following argument suggests that the particular thrusts of the decentralization programmes tend to reflect these earlier actions and pronouncements. Thus, at least on the face of it, decentralization in Uganda carries through the theme of democratization at the local level while in Zimbabwe decentralization is more of a technical exercise under the control of the party.

For Uganda, the intent of decentralization seems to aim at the most central elements of decentralized despotism. First the primary focus has been on a democratic opening at the local level in what Mahmood Mamdani has called "the most serious attempt yet to dismantle the regime of indirect rule in the local state" (1996, 87). When they assumed office in 1986, the NRM saw their initiative as "a process of power decentralization in local governance by promoting and sustaining popular democratic participation" (Museveni 1992, 2).

Democratization at the local level was seen as the first objective, economic development and administrative competence as the second and third. Second, decentralization was intended to reconnect the broken link between taxpayer and government. This was to be done by creating autonomous local governments which could: raise their own revenue and take responsibility for the services they must provide; employ and make accountable their own personnel; and,

subordinate field-based ministries to their administration (Museveni 1992). In 1992, Jaberu Bidanda Ssali, Minister of Local Government urged local authorities to "review your methods of work. You will have to shed elitist, dictatorial tendencies. Work by consultation, open discussion, and democratic dissent where consensus is not forthcoming, should guide your conduct of public affairs" (Ssali 1992, 19). This suggests that the intent of putting the administration under the scrutiny and authority of the population carried through into the decentralization initiative.

The Local Government Resistance Council Statute, 1993, reflects the emphasis on democratic openings.³⁸ It provides for a tiered system of councils with universal suffrage ("all persons of or above the age of eighteen years, residing in a village"³⁹) at the village level and indirect elections through the tiers. Each tier has an executive committee and the council at each tier has the right to recall any member of the executive with a two thirds majority. It sets out the parameters for local autonomy in districts and municipalities, providing for financial autonomy, hiring powers through a District Service Committee⁴⁰, control over

³⁸ It should be noted here that the previous Statute of 1987 gave the central government more control and Ingvild Burkey (1991) argues that in 1987 this was affecting the effectiveness of the RCs. There seems to have been a period, while the NRM was still gaining full control over the country, where there was backtracking. However, the evidence since (including the 1993 Statute) is that there is a new thrust towards local autonomy. This has been reinforced by the new 1995 constitution which devotes a chapter to local government and reaffirms autonomy both for district and for urban authorities (Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995, Chapter 11).

³⁹ LGRC Statute, Part II, 8(1).

⁴⁰ Local Governments (Resistance Councils) Statute, Sections 28 and 29. Although the Public Service Commission is still responsible for chief executive officers (Section 29(2)), the Resistance Council may demand removal by two-thirds majority but only for reasons specified: abuse of office; misuse of public funds and property; insubordination; drunkardness; incompetence; or, inability to perform the function of his office arising from physical or mental capacity (Section 29 [3]).

planning and direct control over line staff from central ministries.⁴¹ There has been a phasing in of financial autonomy, depending on the viability of the local government but by the end of 1995 all were autonomous although there were varying degrees of financial viability⁴². Thus, the legislation reflects the primary focus on democratic openings at the local level where responsibility and accountability might develop.

There is a flexibility in policy-making at the centre in Uganda, which reinforces local autonomy. The central government, through the Decentralization Secretariat has provided trainers and training manuals which concentrate on: a) maintaining democratic procedures; and b) maintaining autonomy of decision-making at the local level.⁴³ Nevertheless, the key to developing policy has been to encourage and monitor. In the words of the Director of the Decentralization Secretariat of the Ministry of Local Government, the monitoring is to see "what home grown practices are being developed so that I can popularize them... we don't

⁴¹ There are some points of contention here. In his original address in 1992 Museveni stressed the need for urban authorities to be subordinate to district authorities especially when it came to planning. Nevertheless, the 1993 statute clearly gives municipalities authority over planning (not so towns) and states that the block grants may go directly to the urban authorities. In another policy document self-accounting urban councils are declared to be "autonomous and independent of the DRC" ("Decentralization in Uganda, The Policy and Its Implications", Decentralization Secretariat, Kampala, 1994, p. 13). However, often block grants go through the district as in the case of primary education in Jinja. There is a problem over how the money is released and how much. In particular, officials in Jinja feel that the municipality loses because the district officials have more commitment to rural schools while authorities in Jinja must contend with a burgeoning school population without proper resources.

⁴² In 1995 most districts were receiving well over 50% of their budgets in block grants. These grants were provided by sector (eg. education, primary health). (Analysis of District Budgets 1994/95, Decentralization Secretariat, Ministry of Local Government, Interview, Assistant Director, Decentralization Secretariat 4/95).

⁴³ See Handbook for Facilitators of Decentralization Sensitization Training, Decentralization Secretariat, Ministry of Local Government, Kampala, 1994; Guidelines to District and Urban Councils for the Management of a Separate Personnel System, Decentralization Secretariat, Ministry of Local Government, Kampala, 1994. The sensitization training includes role playing activities in order to promote more meaningful exchanges between participants and better democratic practices in general.

have a tradition yet so they are pathfinders".⁴⁴ There is an intent, at least, to allow fluidity so that a set of conventions may develop over time. There is no ministry interference, as such, built into the legislation although, as mentioned above, there was a phasing-in period. In financial matters the approach seems to be to let the districts learn the budgeting process as they proceed. Despite the fact that many districts receive more than 50% of their budgets in block grants, the budgets are approved by the District Resistance Council and are in varying forms. Instead of insisting on centralized approval through rigid standards, the Decentralization Secretariat monitors and encourages better budgetary practices as the RCs proceed.⁴⁵ Although there is a Central Government Representative (CGR) in each local authority who "shall take precedence over all officials in the District", the role of the CGR is to monitor and advise, and there is no statutory power to veto RC decisions.⁴⁶ This policy focus emphasizes two matters of importance to a new localism: first, it allows fluidity so that there is space to develop new political practices and relationships; secondly, it puts faith in the local government to develop local solutions and thus take responsibility for their actions.

The government of Zimbabwe, on the other hand, offers a different emphasis and a different policy outlook. There have been two main thrusts to decentralization policy, democratic openings coming in, at most, as a weak third. The first thrust has been a development catch-up for the indigenous African population aimed towards a standard of living similar to that of the white population. A good part of this thrust involves a policy of

⁴⁴ Interview, 13/4/95.

⁴⁵ Analysis of District Budgets 1994/95, Decentralization Secretariat, Ministry of Local Government; Interview, Assistant to Director, Decentralization Secretariat, Ministry of Local Government.

⁴⁶ Local Governments (Resistance Councils) Statute, Section 23.

holding onto the political and economic structures and the developed infrastructure of the former settler government. In a report by Swedish experts, evaluating their government's contribution to the development of local government, the authors note that the "fabric of the local government system is maintained, resulting in the minimization of the disruption to service provision [and]... in most cases local government has been justified as an important developmental and implementational arm of Public Sector Programmes" (Gustafsson, Redmond and Rambanapasi 1990, 11-12). Cde. Chiwewe, Senior Secretary of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development (MLGRUD) has described the policy:

When change is so fast we are sometimes forced to mend our wheel while the car is moving... We don't relinquish our responsibility to what happens at local level (sic!), but we promote the exercise of that power by the people by capacity building programmes. So, we mend our wheel while the car is moving (Hlatshwayo 1995, 23).

Thus, local government is primarily seen as the vehicle for bringing about a catch-up in development.

The second thrust has been to put control of development firmly under the control of the ruling party, ZANU(PF). One of the central keys to party control is the role of Provincial Governor, who is appointed by the central government and is both coordinator of development planning and the representative of ZANU(PF). Lennert Gustafsson, Anthony Redmond and Christopher Rambanapasi describe the office:

The logic of the office was that it would enhance development efforts, because the rank of the Governor is that of Deputy Cabinet Minister. Governors would be accountable to Central Government through the Ministry of Local Government for the co-ordination of development at provincial level. All sector Ministries would report to the Governor's Office, particularly through the Provincial Development Committees (1990, 12).

The fact that ZANU(PF) monopolizes politics makes the appointment a highly partisan one. However, the position of Governor is not a formal party position and the Governor serves

only in an advisory capacity to the central government. Therefore, the Governor is in a vulnerable position and this strengthens the ability of the party to exert control from the centre. K. H. Wekwete and A. Mlalazi comment that,

The powers of the governor at provincial level are superseded by those of the party and members of parliament who have direct access to the centre. The existence of more powerful forces operating at provincial level means that the effectiveness of the Governor will depend on his ability to steer a delicate course to avoid collisions (1990, 81).

Therefore, while development planning has been highly controlled through this office with little regard for input from below, it also is vulnerable to considerable central party and government control (Gasper 1989, 33).⁴⁷ Cde. Chiwewe confirms the prominence of the party:

There is a matter of policy here to begin with: the party leads the government. It leads the government by laying certain policies and programmes that it would like the government to follow. Therefore, at the national level, we have party power or authority enabling government to take a certain direction (Hlatshwayo 1995, 22).

If development is the first priority, it is development controlled from the top by the party.

This priority is reflected in the slow pace of change in institutions at the local level. To be sure, the task to integrate what was a highly segregated system is enormous. To recapitulate, at independence in 1980 the Zimbabwean local government system consisted of: autonomous urban local authorities which were strictly segregated by race and provided no democratic representation for indigenous Africans; Rural Councils elected by European farmers and representing European interests despite the large population of Africans working on farms; and, African Councils on Tribal Trust Lands which had no democratic basis and

⁴⁷ While village and ward development committees (VIDCOs and WARDCOs) have been instituted in the rural areas for the purposes of development planning, the process is so centralized through the province that local concerns have little impact on outcome. Gasper remarks that if "the main criteria were simply attendance and non-dissent then one could conclude that there is participatory decentralization; but not if one thinks that it involves something more" (1989, 19).

were highly controlled from the centre.⁴⁸ The Urban Councils Act was amended in 1980, striking out sections referring to native areas and creating a uniform system of wards for elections. However, the act reserves the right of the Minister (MLGRUD) to intervene in local government areas, the new term for the former townships, and also gives the Minister the power to inquire into council practices and take over functions which are not satisfactorily performed⁴⁹ (also see Gasper 1989, 32). These powers have been used as the Minister has interfered and dissolved councils (Gasper 1989, 31).⁵⁰ Furthermore, lodgers (tenants of tenants) in townships and domestic servants occupying quarters in the formerly European suburbs, were not allowed to vote in local elections until 1995, a full fifteen years after independence. The Rural District Councils (RDC) Act to amalgamate the rural councils came only in 1988 and was still being implemented in 1995. The RDC contains provisions for extensive ministerial control and one quarter of the seats are reserved for government appointment of special interest groups (Manyurureni 1995; Hlatshwayo 1995a). Mine workers and farm workers, who have no vote, are to be represented as these special interests but many of the appointments have gone to the chiefs. The proposed appointments for 1995 favoured the chiefs three to one.⁵¹ Cde. Chiwewe points out the difficulties of the amalgamation when

⁴⁸ The Land Husbandry Act of 1951 freed up some of the African land for African freehold farmers in African Purchase areas. These farmers, About 2% of African producers, were not under the authority of the chiefs but administered directly by the Native Commissioner and Land Development Officer (Kriger 1992, 51-81).

⁴⁹ The Urban Councils Act 1980, Section 5E, 248A, 259, 261, 262.

⁵⁰ This was being slightly revised for cities in 1995 when the government was drafting legislation for an executive mayor. It is proposed that in those local governments with executive mayors the senior officials would be hired and fired by the local government without interference. However, this affects a small percentage of local governments.

⁵¹ Lists proposing proportions of special interest seats in the Rural District Councils, MLGRUD, 1995.

it comes to democratic openings, asserting that, "these workers are on the farm by virtue of the land the farmer owns. They go to an election. They vote the farmer out and become representatives of the farmer's interest. Does that make sense to you?" (Hlatshwayo 1995, 22). Even more directly Cde. Chiwewe makes clear the priority of development over democratic openings:

If democracy, no matter how well practiced does not bring about a material change in the well-being of the people then to hell with it... What can it do in a developing country to foster development? How will it transform the people's lives if we decentralise with no regard to the cultural, literacy, management, equipment levels of the people? (Hlatshwayo 1995, 23).

Prominent in Zimbabwe's decentralization policies is a reliance on the bureaucracy and the party that, at least in intent, allows little room for local democracy. The procedures are prescribed and systematized so that there is little room for the development of new conventions of political behaviour at the local level. Nor is there much trust in the political efficacy of the population. Therefore, there are fewer opportunities for the development of a new localism, at least at the policy level.

The view from the municipalities: local government institutions

The Resistance Council⁵² (RC) system in Jinja, in its structure, demonstrates a high degree of representation and potential for participation. The RC1 consists of "all persons of or above the age of eighteen years, residing in a village" who elect an RC1 committee.⁵³ These RC1 committees come together to as the RC2 (parish council) and elect a committee of nine

⁵² The councils are renamed Local Councils (LCs) by the 1996 constitution. Resistance Council (RC) will be used since that was the term in 1995.

⁵³ All committees have 9 members with the following designations: Chairman; Vice-Chairman/ Secretary for Children's Welfare; General Secretary; Secretary for Youth; Secretary for Women; Secretary for Information and Mass Mobilization; Secretary for Social Services and Education; Secretary for Security; and, Secretary for Finance (Local Governments (Resistance Councils) Statute, Section 17(1)).

for their respective parish. The RC2 committees form the RC3 (sub-county council) and elect a nine-member committee. The RC3 committees come together to form Jinja Municipal Council (RC4) and JMC elects an executive, the chairman of which becomes mayor.⁵⁴ The executive committee of nine⁵⁵ coordinates each level and members who are elected to committees in the next tier are replaced so that "No person shall be a member of more than one Resistance Committee".⁵⁶ The mandate for the executive committee is for three years, the same as the councils. The method of election in 1995 at all levels was queuing which involves open voting by standing behind the candidate of choice. Usually the candidates take turns speaking after which they stand at the front of the meeting while voters line up behind them.

In sheer numbers the representation penetrates deeply into the population. Jinja is divided into 55 villages which means that there are 495 potentially active councillors at the RC1 level. There are 10 parishes and 3 sub-counties in Jinja. On the Jinja municipal council, there are 36 councillors, a committee elected from each of the three sub-counties and an executive committee. Thus, at least in structure, responsibility and accountability is spread over a large number of people, as is the experience of officeholding.

⁵⁴ Local Governments (Resistance Councils) Statute, Sections 8, 9, 17. It is the same for the district elections in the rural areas up to the sub-county. The District Resistance Council has one representative from each sub-county, one representative from each Urban Resistance Council and one representative for women from each County and each Municipal Council (Local Governments [Resistance Councils] Statute, Section 8[7]). In 1995 councillors from the RC3 level up formed an electoral college to elect members to the National Resistance Council. However, the 1996 national election was direct secret ballot election under the new constitution.

⁵⁵ The executive positions are: Chairman, vice-chairman, general secretary, secretary for youth, secretary for women, secretary for information and mass mobilization, secretary for social services and education, secretary for security and secretary for finance (Local Government (Resistance Councils) Statute, Section 17(1)).

⁵⁶ Local Government (Resistance Councils) Statute, Section 17(2).

Moreover, for the first time in Uganda the RC system has provided an genuine opportunity for women participants at the local level.⁵⁷ The mandatory position of secretary for women in each council means that at least 55 women must be elected at the RC1 level. With 10 parishes, 3 sub-counties and the JMC there are 69 women working at all levels of the local government system. The fact that the position is mandatory also creates a climate in which people get accustomed to voting for women, albeit for a special position. Rarely is a woman voted into other positions but it still leaves a critical mass of women representatives.⁵⁸ Moreover, there are women at each level, 4 at the level of the JMC, and, since a woman is required on the executive committee of the JMC, there is also one woman representative on the executive. Thus, in Jinja, there is a broad base of women representatives in the lower tiers and core representation for women at the higher levels.⁵⁹

However, there are factors which must be considered when considering responsibility and accountability. First, no tiers above the RC1 are directly elected; this may be seen to be a lack of direct accountability. With an electoral college (formed by the higher tiers of councillors) there is a smaller number of voters and, thus, the potential for vote buying is greater. Since candidates at the national level do not have to be elected through the tiers they do represent this smaller number of voters only (see footnote 54). However, the system also

⁵⁷ Women were active members of the Constituent Assembly (CA) in 1995 and made sure that The Constitution of Uganda, 1996 guaranteed equality for women. The March 1994 CA elections testify to a considerable change in attitude towards women in politics in Uganda. Apart from the mandatory positions for women (39 to represent the, then, 39 districts) several other women won in hard-fought contests with men. One of those candidates won despite the fact that she was single - a considerable triumph (Katorobo 1995, 122).

⁵⁸ One village in Jinja has three women on the executive.

⁵⁹ Each sub-county sends a representative to the Jinja District Council and one woman from the municipality is also required to be on the District Council. The new constitution calls for one third of every local government council to be women (Section 180).

presents a break in the line of patronage. The national members may indeed use patronage but their clients must face the voters at the local level. Holger Bernt Hansen and Michael

Twaddle assert that there is a marked improvement. About the 1989 election they remark:

At village level, however, there can be little doubt that Ugandans in general considered the February 1989 elections to have constituted a revolutionary change in politics. All observers speak of great enthusiasm amongst voters and a high turn-out. The electoral framework may not have encouraged major discussion of political alternatives, but for once Ugandans had a real chance to decide in whose hands future decisions would be placed, at least at constituency level. Compared with what they had been used to, it was no small change that 14 ministers and deputy ministers were not re-elected and that alternative candidates were actually voted onto the National Resistance Council in their places (1991, 4).

There is a much more direct relationship between the voters and JMC than between the voters and the national representative since one cannot become a municipal councillor without being elected at the RC1 level and must face the same voters in the next election. In my 1995 interviews with councillors, they remarked that in the elections of 1989 and 1992 councillors who had not been active were voted out. Moreover, there was a sense that if you did not win in one election there was always another opportunity next time. The fact that there are so many positions throughout the tiers also gives more opportunity to more people. Executive members who are not performing can be recalled⁶⁰ and this has happened in the lower tiers but is not frequent at the sub-county level. However, in 1993 three RC3 councillors were replaced after allegations of bribes for land allocation.⁶¹ It appears, despite indirect elections,

⁶⁰ Local Governments (Resistance Councils) Statute, Third Schedule, Part II, (5).

⁶¹ Minutes, Executive Committee Meeting, JMC, 9/3/93. In her research in the late 1980s Burkey found also that this was used quite often at the first level but that it became increasingly difficult to use at succeeding levels. Often lower councillors were unwilling to remove the higher councillors they had elected and the RC1 council could only recall their own councillors. Since it is the higher councillors (the RC3s on JMC) which control budgets this can create a block in accountability and Burkey argues that it is a great drawback and especially at the national level (1991, 34-40). The new constitution (1995) provides for universal suffrage for members of the national parliament and at the district level and for chairmen of district councils (Sections 180, 183) and for the right of recall by the electorate (Section 182). Municipalities (Kampala excepted) are considered lower local government units and do not fall under this provision (Section 276). Thus, there is some movement away from electoral colleges at the highest levels.

that not only is there a direct line of accountability at the local level but also the existence of tiers seems to lessen the need to win at all costs. In addition there is a break in the links between central members and their local clients who must go back to the village level on every election.

Second, the voting method of queuing might be seen as providing an insufficient guarantee of preventing coercion of voters. However, Nelson Kasfir (1991) points out that, in a country noted for its corrupt elections it has eliminated several problems. At the village level everyone knows who is a resident and so voting registers, highly corruptible election tools (as can be seen in the Zimbabwean case below), are not necessary and the next tiers are confined to those already elected at the village level (Kasfir 1991, 262-3). Although the potential for intimidation exists, it would seem that, in a very direct way, visible queuing at least brings the issue of clientelism out into the open. Moreover, it surmounts the equally thorny problem of rigging since the number of voters is clearly visible and no one can be in two places at once! Perhaps visible queuing is also a way to keep the elected councillors in the lower RCs accountable for their choice in the upper tiers. It certainly cuts down on voting costs and perhaps provides affordable democratic openings at the local level. Queuing would seem to have some advantages for promoting accountability.

Also criticized has been the prohibition of party affiliation and organization during elections. However, party organizations in Uganda have not escaped the power relations shaped by decentralized despotism and the bifurcated state; in fact, they have reinforced them. Therefore, one might ask the question: How would reintroducing parties so soon enhance the effort to create democratic openings at the local level? Both councillors and administrators in

Jinja report that local politics is much less divisive since the introduction of the RCs and that people are now much more interested in issues that affected them locally rather than the issue of party affiliation. This was confirmed by random questioning of members of the public who unanimously agreed that politics was much less divisive at the local level. Neither indirect elections, queuing or the ban on parties, appears to be preventing the emergence of democratic openings at the municipal level.

The local government in Mutare presents a different picture. In its formal institutions there is less penetration into the population when it comes to representation and potential participation. One councillor is elected in each of the city's 15 wards, 11 of which are in the high density areas, to form Mutare City Council (MCC). In pure majority terms on council, then, the population of the high density areas, where most African inhabitants live, is well represented. There is no provision for women to be elected specifically as in the Ugandan case. All 15 councillors are directly elected by secret ballot by persons of twenty-one years and over who own or rent premises.⁶² On the surface this seems like universal suffrage. However, as specified in the act, domestic workers in low density suburbs and a fairly substantial population⁶³ of illegal lodgers⁶⁴ were unable to vote in local elections until 1995.⁶⁵

⁶² Urban Councils Act 1980, Section 21.

⁶³ All population statistics from Manicaland Census, Central Statistical Office, Harare, 1994.

⁶⁴ Approximately 40% of the population are lodgers who either rent rooms from renters or, as in Sakubva, build a shack beside the rental accommodation and pay the renter rent. These shacks are mostly built on the premises of the old rental stock that was built in the 1940s and 1950s. Sometimes people who have purchased a stand in new high density area of Dangamvura or Chikanga build a foundation for a house and then allow a renter to build a shack and in this way get an instant income (Interview, Superintendent of Housing, 6/6/95).

⁶⁵ "Municipal franchise extended to all", *The Herald*, 19/7/95, p.1. The new legislation introduced in 1995 brought local elections in line with parliamentary elections and, thus, stipulated that all residents, including lodgers and domestic servants, could vote.

Furthermore, owners of formal businesses get a vote, based on the commercial property they own, and, therefore, are able to vote twice.⁶⁶ The 15 councillors elect a mayor and deputy mayor from among themselves annually. Thus, in Mutare there are fewer councillors than in Jinja and there are no institutional provisions for representation or participation below the ward level nor any special provisions for women councillors. Limitations to universal suffrage have been evident until 1995.

Ostensibly there are two ways for extending participation deeper into the population in Mutare: advisory ward committees (WARDCOs) and membership in ZANU(PF). In Mutare there are no existing ward committees⁶⁷ Therefore, only membership in ZANU(PF) provides the possibility for citizen involvement. On the surface, the structure of ZANU(PF) resembles the RC structure. In ZANU(PF) a cell of 100 members forms at the most local level and the members elect an executive of seven people. Five cells (500 members) are grouped to form a branch which has 24 office bearers elected from and by the cell executive members. Ten branches (500 members) make a district and 26 office bearers are elected from among and by the branch level executives. Within the municipal council jurisdiction in Mutare there are seven districts. The district executives come together to form the provincial organization which elects 26 executive office holders who, in turn, join executives of other provinces to form the central committee which advises the politburo (the President and top advisors). Thus

⁶⁶ The Urban Councils Act 1980, Section 21(2).

⁶⁷ Interview, Provincial Administrator, Manicaland Province, 27/6/95; Interview, Acting Town Clerk, City of Mutare, 10/8/95; Interview, Branch Chairman (Nehanda), ZANU(PF), Mutare, 7/8/95; Interview, Councillor, Ward 2, Mutare, 15/6/95; Councillor, Ward 5, Mutare. In the first years the administration had offered premises for meetings and Community Services personnel took minutes. However, this practice stopped and there have not been ward meetings in the last few years. Although the mayor and one councillor talked about ward meetings I could not locate anyone who knew of one that was held in 1995.

this pyramid structure stands along side that of the formal government structure at all levels of government.

There is evidence that this structure diminishes, rather than enhances democratic openings as well as responsibility and accountability in the municipality. First, ZANU(PF)'s selection procedure for candidates limits choices for voters. Those who wish to run are first vetted by the party executives in each ward before they can compete for candidacy within the party through the party primary elections. Until 1995 voting in the primaries was reserved for an electoral college of branch and district executives. District executives sit at the provincial level and on the central committee so there is the distinct possibility of a direct line of patronage from the local party executives to the centre. In Mutare there is tight control over the selection procedure by a small number of party stalwarts who have strong patronage ties to the centre. There is very little opposition to ZANU(PF) candidates in the actual municipal elections and, if there is, they are unlikely to succeed as most people vote ZANU(PF).⁶⁸

Moreover, those who carry out the selection do not represent a grassroots base. When the rules were suddenly changed unilaterally by the politburo in June 1995 to allow all card carrying members to vote in the primaries, the weakness of the grassroots structures was exposed.⁶⁹ Suddenly membership registers became the battleground on which the primaries

⁶⁸ There is some evidence that this is because of intimidation carried out by the youth wing and also by the women's league members of which have been reported to go to opposition candidates' houses to threaten their families and supporters (Interview, Assistant to Provincial Administrator, Manicaland Province, 8/8/95; Interview, Assistant to Provincial Administrator, 9/8/95). J. N. Moyo argues that a culture of fear, brought about by ZANU(PF) violence both in guerrilla camps and in 'liberated areas', has pervaded civil society in Zimbabwe "particularly during elections: the campaign tactics of the ruling party are based on intimidation and death-threats. Democracy cannot exist in an environment where violence and fear dominate the political process" (1993, 13; also see Moyo 1992, 69-70, 153).

⁶⁹ This change was attributed to Mugabe's talks with the World Bank in June 1995 where he was encouraged to make the government in Zimbabwe more democratic.

had to be fought. It was clear that branch and district executives existed without the requisite grassroots cells. A prospective candidate related the experience of attending a ZANU(PF) meeting in Mutare where anyone who showed up was hurriedly offered an executive position so that there would be an existing organization.⁷⁰ Prospective candidates who wanted to make sure that their supporters had membership cards soon found that the party stalwarts, backed up by provincial and central committee members, were not going to give up registration books or allow anyone else to sell memberships. Moreover, the stalwarts kept the names of people who had been signed up hidden from the candidates to prevent them from campaigning.⁷¹ When candidates did sign up members, the party stalwarts arbitrarily disallowed blocks of membership.⁷² The opportunity to accompany a candidate on several foot canvasses in the primaries also revealed that: people did not know how to get a card; people could not afford or were not willing to pay for party membership; and, the party favourites were buying memberships for those who said they would be their supporters. New candidates had little chance against party favourites as the results of the primaries showed. Despite a great deal of public disapproval of the city council, the old councillors were voted back in by a small voter turn-out.⁷³ The primaries were eventually cancelled across the country when

⁷⁰ Interview, Candidate ZANU(PF) primaries for municipal elections, Ward 9, Mutare, 27/7/95.

⁷¹ The author witnessed a literal tug-of-war over a membership register between a candidate wanting to sell new memberships and a party stalwart. The party stalwarts retained control and the candidate was forced to walk away empty handed.

⁷² Interview, Candidate for ZANU(PF) local election primaries, Ward 9, 27/7/95; Interview, Candidate for ZANU(PF) local election primaries, Ward 4, 29/6/95.

⁷³ In Ward 6, for instance, there were 433 ballots cast. Since Mutare has seven districts ZANU(PF) districts there should be 35,000 party members distributed over the 15 wards or an average of 2333 voters per ward.

candidates and voters complained of irregularities in vetting and party membership registers, as well as intimidation.⁷⁴ Even President Robert Mugabe commented that, the "primary elections revealed how confused and, in some cases, unorganized, if not utterly disorganized some of our district organs are".⁷⁵ Thus, it is clear that the process of selecting candidates is a very closed affair and that the grassroots participation upon which it is based is non-existent.

The relations of power within the ZANU(PF) organization are reliant on this closed practice and reinforce it, preventing democratic openings. During the 1995 local government primaries, officials admitted that, "provincial leaders who had been involved in the vetting of candidates had used the exercise to settle personal vendettas".⁷⁶ The political activity of party stalwarts was heightened in 1995 by the impending legislation (still in the drafting stage at that time) to provide for an executive mayor in the major cities. This exercise brought to light once again the suspicion amongst party leaders of democratic openings and the fear of losing political control. The ZANU(PF) position, which was also the government position, was explained by the Senior Secretary MLGRUD.⁷⁷ The Senior Secretary explained that the new legislation, which gave the mayor executive power over the councillors, would be the answer to inferior councillors who were unable to deal with bureaucratic details and were only

⁷⁴ "Allegations mar primary elections", *The Herald* 3/7/95, p.1; "Municipal primary elections nullified", *The Herald*, 14/7/95, p.1.

⁷⁵ "President not happy with structuring of the party" *The Sunday Mail*, 25/6/95, p.1. J. N. Moyo points out that ZANU(PF) does not permit a challenge to the leadership and that the leaders associate this tradition with traditional African leadership. When ZANU(PF) and PF-ZAPU united in 1989 no elections were allowed for the top posts and "any challenger would have been denounced and ostracized as being impolite to elders in the party and, therefore, a disgrace to African tradition" (Moyo 1993, 11). Thus, we may see the hierarchy of ZANU(PF) reinforcing the 'tradition' of decentralized despotism.

⁷⁶ "Municipal primary elections nullified" *The Herald*, 14/7/95, p.1.

⁷⁷ Interview, Senior Secretary, MLGRUD, 15/8/95).

concerned with their own ward instead of the entire city. The executive mayor was to be elected by the entire city and, thus, would have a global outlook. The party would see to it that well qualified candidates were chosen to run in the primaries for executive mayor. Thus, there would be checks and balances between the mayor (who was working for the whole city) and the councillors (who are working for their wards). As for vetting, he remarked that "if you want good councillors, then you must have vetting. If you allow democracy and free choice then you will not get good people".⁷⁸ Another ZANU(PF) official held the view that the candidates should be vetted by the higher party officials because the "grassroots just look for the nice guy".⁷⁹ This 'policy' solution is indicative of the reluctance to allow any real change in the shape of power relations which would automatically be a threat to the party's hold on power through patronage. On the other hand, there is an inability or unwillingness to understand that the party's political behaviour, shaped by those power relations, merely perpetuates the problems that the policy is meant to solve.

This combination of formal local government institutions and the ZANU(PF) party organization reduces the possibility of producing a relationship of responsibility and accountability at the local level. Local councillors are reliant on the party machinery to get elected and so the ultimate accountability must be to constituents in the party rather than the ward. Secondly, the party does not have a grassroots base and is reluctant to allow an opening up of procedures. On the other hand, although the party is directed from the top, the leaders are also reliant on the control of leaders at the local level to keep the party in power through

⁷⁸ Interview, Senior Secretary, MLGRUD, 15//8/95.

⁷⁹ Interview, Chairman of Manicaland ZANU(PF), 14/8/95.

their tactics. Here we can see that the shape of political power is more like a decentralized despotism where local leaders keep autocratic control within a party structure which is highly controlled from the centre but also which forms the central government.

Women have little chance of becoming candidates. Out of the 15 councillors in Mutare in 1995 there were no women. It is not mandatory to have women representatives in Zimbabwe and there is no commitment by ZANU(PF) to have women candidates.⁸⁰ When asked if the government would set aside a quota of seats for women, the President replied that "women are their own worst enemies because they do not elect one another to Parliament" (Getecha and Chipika 1995, 65). Village women agreed with this and told Ciru Getecha and Jesimen Chipika that, "women are the ones oppressing themselves in that they don't want to vote for each other. They prefer to vote for a man" (1995, 64). When asked of the effectiveness of the Women's League to get women candidates, an executive member of the Women's League said that the main purpose of the league was to support men in their candidacy.⁸¹ This same woman, a seasoned party worker and administrator, told of her attempts to become a candidate in the primaries for the local election in Mutare in 1995. She

⁸⁰ The Zimbabwean Constitution does not forbid discrimination on the ground of sex (Section 23) and, therefore, permits gender-based discrimination. The Legal Age of Majority Act (1982) does give women 18 years of age and over legal majority. However, marriages can still be legally contracted from the age of twelve, leaving open the opportunity to remove consent. The Customary and Primary Courts Act provides for a choice between customary and modern law when cases are tried and the Immovable Property Act (1982) eliminates sexual discrimination in relation to immovable property (Stewart et. al. 1990, 165-222). Despite these changes, attitudes in Zimbabwe have not changed and most of these measures are undermined in practice (Batezat, Mwalo and Truscott 1988).

⁸¹ Interview, Secretary for Administration, ZANU(PF) Women's League, Manicaland, 25/5/95. Women in a cooperative in Mutare scoffed when asked about the Women's League and said that it was only for those who wanted to sing and dance and shout slogans. Members of other cooperatives noted that the Women's League had helped in the beginning but that it really gave them no political voice (Interviews: Shanje Cooperative, Takundamatambudziko Cooperative, Munochemeyi Cooperative, Zvirimugwara Cooperative, May, 1995).

maintained that men phoned and visited her at all times of the day and night in order to beg her not to run, protesting that men had still not had their turn. She lost her nerve and caved into the pressure.⁸² The sole woman candidate who did eventually run in the primaries had to battle both provincial and district executives who told supporters that they should not vote for her because they already a woman MP in Manicaland and, besides, she had no property (in fact, she did own property).⁸³ Margaret Dongo, veteran ZANU(PF) MP comments on her experience running in the central election primaries, 1990: "after winning in the primary elections, someone in the Central Committee... informed me that he was going to nullify the results, because someone else had been chosen for the post" (Getecha and Chipika 1995, 68). Out of 58 candidates in the 1995 ZANU(PF) primaries in Mutare, only one was a woman.⁸⁴ In an overview of primaries in the cities and towns of five provinces only 13 women candidates were listed in the primaries.⁸⁵ In Mutare, and Zimbabwe in general, women are effectively marginalized from local politics.

While both JMC and MCC follow the same committee structure at the municipal council level, here, too, Mutare is more reflective of old patterns of bifurcation. In Jinja the committees are as follows: Education; Public Health and Environment; Works, Housing and Transport; Welfare and Sports; General Purposes; Production and Marketing; and, Lands and

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Interview, Candidate, ZANU(PF) local government primaries, Ward 9, 27/7/95. She was told that the provincial executive had already chosen the candidates but that she would be forgiven because she was a woman.

⁸⁴ "60 ZANU(PF) candidates to contest in council elections", *Manica Post*, 2/6/95, p.1. There are actually 58 candidates listed.

⁸⁵ "ZANU(PF) gears for council elections", *The People's Voice*, June 25-July 1, 1995, p. 1.

Development. Each committee deals with matters arising in any part of Jinja and has no specific focus on just one part. In Mutare the committees are: General Purposes; Public Works and Town Lands; Finance; and, Community Services, Housing, Health and Education. In this case there is a definite division in the areas of the city dealt with by committees. The Community Services, Housing , Health and Education Committee covers "such aspects as housing, health and education matters in the high density suburbs. It also deals with alienation of land in the high density areas". This committee also oversees the operation of the beerhalls which are only located in the high density areas. Thus, there is still a bifurcation at the committee level when dealing with the local government areas. On both councils the committees strike sub-committees when the need arises. The chairs for the committees are chosen from among council members. In the case of Jinja, the chairs form an executive committee, headed by the Mayor, which meets to discuss the execution of policy but has no power to carry out decisions other than those voted on by the council. The members of this executive committee do not necessarily coincide with the nine member executive of the RC4, although there is some overlap. In Mutare there is no provision for an executive committee as such and the chairs of the different committees fulfill the responsibilities for their respective committees only. While both councils follow a formal committee structure, Mutare's committee structure demonstrates more of a bifurcation between the old township areas and the main city than does Jinja.

However, the operation of the committee system is a fairly closed affair in both Jinja and Mutare. In both cases committee meetings are scheduled monthly but are not open to the

public.⁸⁶ A public gallery is available in both council chambers for members of the public to attend the monthly council meetings. However, this does little to compensate as far as information is concerned. In both cases the council meetings tend to be a series of routine motions passing minutes of the various committees, copies of which are not available to the public gallery. Thus, there is rarely a discussion of any substantive issue as that discussion has taken place behind closed doors in the respective committee meetings. In both Jinja and Mutare when the rare issue comes up for discussion in the monthly council meeting the usual procedure is for the council to move into a committee-of-the-whole and the public is asked to leave. Thus, there tends to be a complete lack of interest in council meetings among members of the public. Moreover, it is not possible to hear important issues discussed by the councillors. This lack of openness tends to reduce the relationship of responsibility and accountability between the councillors and their constituents. In Jinja this problem is alleviated, but not entirely, by the structures of the lower RCs (see Chapter 4). It presents more of a problem in Mutare where there are no other outlets for discussion, a factor which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Local administrations: overcoming bifurcation

While there are some similarities between the two administrations there are also differences which highlight the lingering impediments of the bifurcated state. In Jinja the administration is divided into the departments of Town Clerk, Engineer, Treasurer, Public Health and Education. There are three assistant town clerks, one for each RC3. Nevertheless, there is little separation either in accounts or in staff with regard to the different parts of Jinja

⁸⁶ As a researcher I was allowed to attend committee meetings.

although repairs to the housing estates are to come out of the rental income for those estates. All of the departments deal with all areas of the city. Thus, bifurcation is not visible in the way that the administration carries out its tasks.

Moreover, in Jinja there is quite a direct relationship with regard to the means of administration. The decline of the industrial base in Jinja has resulted in poor revenue for the town. Rates, rents, ground rents and licenses for formal businesses and residences make up only 48 % of the budget.⁸⁷ Moreover, the block grants from the central government are insignificant, as Philip Amis comments: "The extent to which JMC is financially decentralized from the Ugandan Government could not be clearer; the Central Government's contribution is frankly quite insignificant" (Amis 1992, 44). In 1995 the estimated government contribution was only 1.09 % of the budget.⁸⁸ Thus, JMC has turned to the informal sector to acquire more income. In the 1994/95 estimates, of the \$1.8 million budget approximately 20% of the revenue expected was from market dues and licenses from hawkers and *boda boda* (bicycle taxis) and another 10% from the taxi park. Therefore, the JMC has managed to fund 30% of its budget from the informal sector. The *boda boda* alone (USH31,000,000/= (US\$31,000 or 1.9%) bring in more than the block grant from the central government!⁸⁹ They also bring in

⁸⁷ The biggest debtor to the council in 1995 was the Departed Asians Property Custodian Board (DAPCB), owing USH291,000,000/= (US\$291,000.00). Other debtors included Uganda Railways, Uganda Electricity Board and the Ministry of Works. The DAPCB was closing down in 1995 and approximately 70% of Asian properties had been reclaimed while the rest were being sold. Thus, there was optimism that this would no longer be such a problem (Interview, Town Clerk, 18/1/95; also see Amis 1992, 44-47).

⁸⁸ Preamble to the Budget, 1994-95, JMC. Apart from the block grant there is the 50% (of school fees) government contribution for the 14 primary schools which was to have been USH800,302,600/= (US\$8003.00). However, from October 1994 the distribution was no longer based on school enrollment and the municipality is to receive only USH1,000,000/= (US\$1000.00) from that date on (Internal Auditor's Quarterly Report, February 1995).

⁸⁹ 1994/94 Estimates, JMC.

more than the municipally run abattoir (1.8%). Graduated tax, paid by all men over eighteen whether formally employed or not and all women in formal employment, provides another 11.3 % of the budget. Amis notes the difficulties in assessing income levels for this tax "where formal wage employment has ceased to exist as a meaningful category" but also notes that it remains "economically and politically robust" as a form of taxation (1992, 14, 15). In 1995 the auditor noted that the tax register needed to be updated and that continuing redundancies in the workplace had actually brought the number of those assessed down by one thousand. However, despite problems in collecting arrears, by 1995 all of the 1994 tax had been collected.⁹⁰ Thus, 40% of JMC's budget depends on the cooperation of informal sector and working people, creating a direct relationship with the population with regard to the means of administration and, potentially, more accountability.

In Mutare, on the other hand, there is still a visible division in both accounting and in staff between the local government areas (including the old township area and the new high-density areas) and the rest of the city.⁹¹ The administration is divided into the departments of the Town Clerk, the City Treasurer, Housing and Community Services, the City Engineer and the City Health Department. The Housing and Community Services "department's activities are mainly inclined to the high density suburbs" as are those of the City Health Department.⁹²

⁹⁰ Internal Auditor's Quarterly Report, JMC, February 1995, pp. 1-3.

⁹¹ There has really only been a name-change from 'African townships' to 'local government areas'.

⁹² The City Health Department has little money to deal with environmental issues especially those arising from formal industries. Moreover, it runs a deficit in its clinics because many of Mutare's inhabitants cannot afford to pay the nominal fee of Z\$16 (US\$3) which even if it were paid does not cover costs. The central government has a Social Dimensions Fund, set up to counter some of the affects of ESAP, which pays for up to 20% of the patients in a month (the government estimates that 20% of the population is unable to pay). The reality in Mutare in 1995 is that at least 40-50% of the population is under the Z\$400.00 a month minimum and thus are not able to pay. The city must make up for that shortfall. Thus, in reality, the department deals mainly with high

The Housing and Community Services Department is the only physically separated department, still being located in the old township of Sakubva. There a division of the police and the housing superintendent share the same office. The other departments deal with the city as a whole. Thus, fifteen years after independence we see that the effects of the legacy of bifurcation on the administration have not been overcome.

This separation of the formal city from the local government areas is also found in the city accounts. The high density areas are treated separately in the budget under local government areas and consist of the housing, health and welfare accounts. All of these accounts run a deficit. The Z\$87million (US\$ 12 million) budget for 1995-96 relies heavily on the formal economy and the municipality's own enterprises for revenue.⁹³ Rates, fees for service, especially large refuse removal for commercial and industrial clients, the delivery of water and the income from the council's commercial concerns in beer brewing and hardware are the main source of revenue. All of these depend heavily on income from the formal city except the beer account which derives revenue from customers in the high density areas. In 1995, however, the beer account was running at a deficit. The municipality receives insignificant revenue in the form of grants from the central government.⁹⁴ The informal

density areas (Interview, Medical Officer of Health, Mutare, 14/6/95).

⁹³ City of Mutare City Estimates 1995-96.

⁹⁴ Primary health services have gone from 100% subsidy in 1980 to 20% in 1995. However, this is somewhat misleading as the subsidy per patient Z\$16 (approx. US\$2) does not cover the costs. Fire services, promised a Z\$130,000 (approx. US\$18,000) subsidy, had not received government money in two years. (Interview, City Treasurer, Mutare, 31/5/95). Also blamed was the government excise tax on the beer undertaking which had risen in 1994 and was a bone of contention between municipalities and the central government since the beer revenues are supposed to cover welfare and high density housing. This was resolved in August 1995 when the government said it would reimburse 100% of the excise tax. Also contentious was the unilateral announcement by the central government that the 5% surcharge on electricity bills collected by the municipality would be removed immediately. The municipalities won reinstatement of this levy through the courts. In the late 1980s the

sector is also an insignificant source of revenue; only a few traders are licensed to operate in a central parking lot. On the other hand it is the high density areas which incur the costs of education, health and welfare. While the housing account brings in revenue through rates, this is offset by subsidies on electricity, which is paid in a bulk account in Sakubva, and water. The bulk of the population in Mutare live in the high density suburbs and the largest percentage of those in the old township of Sakubva. Therefore, the bulk of the population is perceived as welfare recipient rather than direct payer for and receiver of services. Therefore, the relationship between the administration and this population with regard to the means of administration is not direct and direct responsibility and accountability is hindered. Thus, although there is some redistribution of resources, there is an indication that there is less opportunity for direct responsibility and accountability in the local government administration in Mutare than in Jinja.

III Conclusion: the movement towards a new localism

An economic comparison of Uganda and Zimbabwe reveals some clear differences but also some similarities. Zimbabwe clearly has a much more formal and integrated economy than Uganda. However, there is also a much more unequal income distribution in Zimbabwe and the majority of the African population in Zimbabwe has a very low income as in Uganda. While professionals and government employees are much better paid in Zimbabwe, the fact

construction and running of new primary schools was also downloaded onto local government without any suggestion as to where the additional revenue would come from. Rather than grants, the municipality receives loan funding for development at 12.5% interest over 15 years. These loans come from the World Bank via the central government to the local governments. The money is used for on-site (individual plots) and off-site (water reservoirs, roads, tower lights) services. The money for individual plots is to be recovered over ten years but the off-site is more complicated since the cost is spread over all of the plots and can only be recovered when they are all developed and sold.

that people are engaged in a mixture of formal and informal economic activities in Uganda makes it much more difficult to determine incomes. Salaried people, and especially low-income people, have been hard-hit by structural adjustment in both countries. While restructuring has undermined the *magendo* economy in Uganda it is not clear that it has changed the inequities that are part of the inherited impediments in either economy.

What *is* clear is that restructuring has affected urban local government in both countries. With or without intention on the part of the central governments, urban local government in both Uganda and Zimbabwe has become, in fact, autonomous. Both Jinja and Mutare have seen a gradual withdrawal of central government support through block grants in the 1990s to the point that the grants are now insignificant to the operation of their budgets. The municipalities have had to take on more responsibility with less revenue. At the same time they are faced with servicing populations with less ability to pay for those services. Thus, both Mutare and Jinja face the problems of restructuring that most local governments face in the West but with far fewer resources and poorer populations. However, this force of circumstances, forced autonomy if you will, also presents the opportunity for a more direct relationship of accountability between local government and community.

While the circumstances of structural adjustment produce similar challenges in both countries, the evidence suggests that, comparatively, Uganda may be meeting the first two requirements of the new localism, as outlined at the beginning of this chapter, somewhat better than Zimbabwe. A brief examination of the practices and rhetoric of the guerrilla struggles waged in Zimbabwe and Uganda demonstrates two different thrusts. In Uganda the actions and rhetoric of the NRM suggest an awareness of the dangers of despotic power and

the need to encourage local institutions that exert democratic control over institutions of authority. On the other hand, the actions and rhetoric of the guerrilla movement in Zimbabwe suggest a preference for exercising power over people in the role of a vanguard party. This demonstrates a considerable difference in outlook.

The decentralization strategies of the two countries also present different prospects for the emergence of a new localism. There seems to be more of a recognition on the part of the Ugandan government that democratic openings at the local level are important for change and there is an emphasis on autonomy so that full responsibility and accountability rest at the local level. There is also some indication of trust on the part of the central government that local people can govern and that conventions of political behaviour will emerge through practice. In Zimbabwe, on the other hand, democratic openings at the local level are not a priority. This has been apparent in the slowness to democratize local institutions and to give autonomy to local governments so that they are directly responsible and accountable to their populations. It is also evident in the lack of trust in democratic openings and in the capabilities of local people. Thus, there is an indication that decentralization policies present fewer opportunities in Zimbabwe for new political practices to develop into a new localism than in Uganda.

A comparison of local institutions gives further evidence that there is more opportunity for new political practices to develop in Uganda than in Zimbabwe. The RC system of local government in Jinja provides for much broader participation within the population and also includes the participation of women. On the other hand, the local political institutions in Mutare provide for much less active political participation among the population and virtually

no participation of women. This presents the opportunity to reproduce a form of decentralized despotism which resists democratic openings, as was witnessed in the 1995 primaries. It also diminishes the opportunity to develop new political practices. At the municipal council level in both municipalities the committee structures tend to close down rather than open up political debate but this may present a more serious problem in Mutare where there are fewer opportunities for political involvement. The local government structures in Jinja offer more opportunities for new political practices to develop into a new localism.

The two municipalities present an interesting contrast, in light of the inherited impediments of the bifurcated state, in other ways. The evidence presented demonstrates a more serious difficulty in overcoming the bifurcation of physical space in Mutare. The preponderance of small-scale activities in Jinja tends to soften the contrast between the better-off and the low-income earners whereas the predominance of the formal economy in Mutare tends to create a starker contrast between the two. The existence of a large population of renters in the business centre of Jinja also gives it a less formal air. The different levels of development also create much more of a contrast between high- and low-density residential areas in Mutare than in Jinja. In addition, the municipal administration in Jinja presents a much more integrated approach whereas in Mutare there are definite divisions between the administration of local government areas and the rest of the city. Finally, in Jinja the means of administration (the source of local government finance) is much more directly connected to the low-income population while in Mutare municipal income is predominantly dependent on the structures of the formal economy. Thus, one might argue that, on the surface at least, the local government in Jinja exhibits more movement towards a new localism than that in

Mutare.

Moving towards a new localism in practice

This chapter has examined decentralization policies and institutions at the local level in light of the first two requirements of a new localism. The next three chapters examine the interaction between local government institutions and the communities they represent in light of the third requirement which is the development of an interactive process in which there is at least some potential for different political behaviour and relationships to develop between the population and the local government. Chapters 4 and 5 examine how effectively local government institutions in Uganda and Zimbabwe, respectively, relate to and represent their communities in practice. Chapter 6 looks at associations in local civil society in Jinja and Mutare, examining their characteristics and how they interact with local government.

Chapter 4

Meeting the Requirements of a New Localism II: Overcoming the politics of bifurcation: Local representation and participation in Uganda

Introduction

This chapter examines the interaction between the municipal government of Jinja and the local community in light of the third requirement of a new localism - the development of an interactive process that might produce different political behaviour and relationships between the population and the local government. In order to gain some sense of how this element is being played out, some examples are given to illustrate how local government institutions relate to and represent their communities in practice.

The last chapter concluded that the policy of decentralization and the institutional structure at the local level in Uganda embraced a new localism more fully than in Zimbabwe. Uganda has given priority to creating democratic openings that might bring about responsibility and accountability at the local level; it has designed local institutions which reach deep into the population and involve a large number of people in the responsibility of governing. Financially, I conclude that the local government in Jinja, having a much smaller formal base to draw on for revenue, has a more direct relationship with its constituents, many of whom are engaged in informal activities which the council has managed to regulate for the purposes of revenue collection.

The relationship of local government to the population in Uganda is affected in another structural way in the 1990s. The majority of the urban population is of low-income

and unemployment is high. At the same time, restructuring has left the municipality with less revenue as central government grants have been cut. User fees have been instituted on top of taxes, rents and rates in order to maintain some level of service. This creates an impasse when it comes to providing services for those who can barely afford them. It is imperative that local governments find a solution to this impasse since the problem involves not a minority but a majority of the population. Structurally, this financial challenge leads to a great chasm between the local government and the majority of the community. On the one hand, the community sees the local government as not providing proper services. On the other hand, the local government must convince the population that their monetary participation is required for services to be maintained. This problem requires local institutions which can absorb this political problem and come up with solutions which engage the population. How the municipality and the community handle this structural impasse can also reveal whether new political behaviour required for a new localism is being developed.

Foundations for representation and participation in Jinja

It is clear that encouraging participation is part of the responsibility of local government in Uganda. Under the Urban Authorities Act 1964 municipal governments in Uganda are to provide several services: roads, development control, solid waste management, primary education and the maintenance of public health. These responsibilities are reiterated in the policy document which clarifies the decentralization programme.¹ However, as pointed out in Chapter 3, the Local Governments (Resistance Councils) Statute 1993 embodies a political thrust to create democratic openings at the local level. In that document Resistance

¹ "Decentralization in Uganda, The Policy and Its Implications", Decentralization Secretariat, Ministry of Local Government, Kampala, p.19.

Committees have added responsibilities that affect participation and representation. First, there are responsibilities designed to give some popular control over police and judicial authority. These are: to assist in the maintenance of law and order, "hear such cases as may be provided for under any written law", hand over to police anyone suspected of an offense and, at "Village and Parish levels, vet and recommend persons in the area who should be recruited into the Armed Forces, Police Force and Prisons Service".² Second, a Tax Assessment Committee is elected at the RC3 level in order to put assessment procedures under popular control. Third, the RCs are to perform a watchdog function and so "generally monitor the administration in its area and report to the appropriate authority any incidents of maladministration, corruption and misuse of Government property".³ Finally, they are to "encourage, support and participate in self-help projects and mobilize people, material and technical assistance" in order to support development at each level.⁴ This has certainly given a pro-active dimension to the role of local councillors and points to the need for interaction with their constituents. The question that needs to be asked is how this is actually functioning in practice.

Representation and participation in the lower RCs

The old housing estate of Walukuba stands as a legacy of the politics of bifurcation. Created in the colonial state, Walukuba remains the battleground upon which the old politics rubs up against a new localism as embodied in the RCs. The legacy is apparent in a number

² Local Governments (Resistance Councils) Statute 1993, Section 18.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

of its consequences for both the residents and JMC. For the residents the nominal rents on these old dilapidated concrete blocks make it possible to earn income through subletting. On the other hand, these housing estates were a one-time affair, initially built by private companies and handed over to the municipality without regard for maintenance. The nominal rents, in one sense, are exorbitant, in that the houses are so badly maintained that some of them have actually been condemned; but, in another sense, they are much too low in that rents do not provide enough revenue for the major repair they need. Tenants try to hand their tenancy onto the younger generation and allocation is highly contentious, not only for the nominal rent but also for the extra income in subletting. Thus, there is a strong legacy of patronage and favouritism on the part of politicians in the past. Subletting, in turn, is widely thought to be responsible for high rate of crime since often subletters are not family members but strangers, at least to the neighbours. The resulting overcrowding has caused numerous problems with water and sewerage. These, along with the issue of allocation make for a number of political issues that the RCs have tried to address. Thus, Walukuba provides the milieu in which we see the resort to patronage behaviour mixed with a new approach within the local RCs.

Within Walukuba there are active RC1, 2 and 3 executive committees but much of interaction between council and community takes place at the RC1 committee level.⁵ This is the committee of nine that has been directly elected at the village level. In the Walukuba

⁵ The following analysis comes from Interviews with RC councillors, men and women at all levels, and attendance at meetings in Jinja between January and April 1995.

housing estate there are fourteen villages.⁶ The village committee is the first point of contact for any matter of concern to the residents. The work is spread among the executive members but the chairman often carries a great deal of the burden.⁷ Matters that cannot be resolved at this level are referred to the RC2 committee which then refers matters to higher tiers. On the other hand, the municipal council depends on the lower tiers to communicate and carry out its decisions. Thus, the tasks are many and varied at this lowest level.

One of the most interactive and time consuming tasks is the hearing of disputes among citizens such as debt settlement, quarrels between families, simple cases of assault and cases of general misbehaviour. Cases that cannot be settled by the committee move up the hierarchy of committees and eventually go to the formal court if they cannot be resolved.⁸ This heralds a change from decisions made by a chief or an administrative official of the council. Apart from the fact that this is a popularly elected committee, and thus has a responsibility to the people whose cases it judges, women now have a representative in the person of the secretary for women.⁹ Often women take cases directly to her and the chairmen are disposed to letting the secretaries for women take the lead in handling cases involving women.

The relationship between the police and the lower RCs is complicated. A case of

⁶ Walukuba/Masese division (RC3) is made up of three parishes (RC2) Masese Parish, Walukuba East Parish and Walukuba West Parish. It is in Walukuba East and Walukuba West that the housing estate is located. Walukuba East contains six villages while Walukuba West contains eight. In Walukuba West houses have communal water and toilet facilities while in Walukuba East houses are seweraged on an individual basis.

⁷ Chairman is the term used in Uganda and indeed there are few women in Uganda who fulfill the role. All of the chairmen in Jinja were men and the term chairman will be used for that reason.

⁸ The formal magistrate's court is known for extreme corruption and thus rewards those who have connections through patronage or the means for bribery. Thus, it is not really regarded as any kind of safeguard (see Burkey 1991, 46-52; Oloka-Onyango 1993).

⁹ Most of the cases involving women are over the drunkenness or abusiveness, or both, of a husband.

defilement handled by an RC1 committee is demonstrative. The case took place in Walukuba housing estate and involved the son of a resident family accused of defiling the three year old daughter of another family. The mother was not at home at the time but the event caused a large gathering of neighbours all of whom accused the boy of the crime. Upon arriving home the mother's father (the girl's grandfather) sought out the RC1 Chairman and Vice Chairman, neither of whom could be found, so he took the boy directly to the police with the little girl's dress as evidence. The police took the boy and gave the grandfather a form to be filled out at the hospital after the girl was examined. When the grandfather went back to the police to find out the results they had released the boy saying that the hospital had found no evidence of harm to the girl. The grandfather testified to the RCs that the police had advised him to go to the family of the boy for compensation. He received USH80,000/= (US\$80) 'fine' from the boy's family (the grandfather had said that all he wanted was transport money and food for the girl). When the RCs followed up the case the police would not reveal the details to them and when the Secretary for Women tried to intervene "her life was threatened by both parties (families)".¹⁰ The police seemed to have the last word and the case was presumably closed.

However, at an RC1 meeting residents demanded that the RC1 committee reopen the case. The residents were adamant that this was the third offense for the boy and that he was a danger. Moreover, they were convinced that both the doctor and the police had been bribed

¹⁰ Minutes of the RC1 Meeting of Police Wing Village, 6/11/94, p. 4. Technically, RCs are not supposed to deal with cases of defilement since it is not mentioned in the Statute and, thus, the case, according to police, would be out of the hands of the RCs. However, these cases are brought to the RCs all the time. One reason is that the courts are so corrupt that people have no faith in them. Another reason, suggested by Jacqueline Asiimwe, is that the RCs provide a good bridge between customary and formal justice ("RCs overstepping the mark", *The New Vision*, 23/2/95, p. 18.). They allow for compensation rather than imprisonment and thus save the face of both parties whose families must continue to live together at close quarters. She notes that caning is sometimes a method of punishment and, thus, fears that RCs "overstep the mark".

by the boy's family and that the grandfather was also only interested in the money he could get since the 'fine' was so large (certainly more than a month's salary for most). Residents commented that this was a serious crime that it must be re-examined. The RC committee was also criticized for not taking a more assertive stance. Clearly, people expected their RC executive committee to take responsibility and they demanded direct accountability.

During the subsequent hearing at a specially called RC1 meeting, the mother stated that she had not examined the daughter but did not see that she had been harmed and left it to the hospital. She knew how much money her father had received but was not given any of it. The RC1 committee decided the following: to forward the case to the Probation Office or FIDA (an acronym for the Women Lawyers' Association); to oust the family of the girl's grandfather from the village; to demand that the boy be examined thoroughly to find out whether he is contagious; and, to take serious action against the grandfather.¹¹ In a subsequent meeting the Chairman was questioned about the case and he said that it had been taken up by legal aid. Questions by residents revealed that they saw this as an example of the intransigence of the bureaucracy. The Chairman advised them to let the case take its course. He also recommended that people try to inform the RC committee before going to the police in such cases.¹²

There are a number of important points to be made about this case. First, the fact that the police made no attempt to contact the Chairman and later refused to speak with him about the details of the case suggests a lack of regard for the popular authority of the RCs (at least

¹¹ Minutes, Special Meeting, RC1, Police Wing Village, 13/11/94, p. 3.

¹² Meeting RC1 Police Wing Village, attended 12/3/95. It should be noted that this RC1 committee has two women executive members besides the secretary for women.

the lower tiers). Moreover, the continued pursuance of the case by the residents through their RC1 committee demonstrates that people are endeavouring to make the system work and that there is still a deep suspicion that authorities are corrupt. Oddly, resolutions made by the RC1 committee seemed to punish the victim's family. But, on the other hand, they clearly indicate an interest in arresting two types of behaviour: 1) the bribing of officials which is indicative of the old method of dealing with unaccountable but powerful authorities; and 2) the acceptance of money for compensation without the agreement of the RCs, in other words, without popular authority as was previously the case.¹³ The fact that the RCs immediately intended to contact FIDA shows that there is an acknowledgement and a universalizing of the importance of the cases of defilement. Moreover, it is highly significant that an organization noted for speaking out for women is considered a working partner at such a local RC level. Finally, the residents are also critical of their local committee and do not hesitate to air their criticisms. In other words, this case reveals that a change in political response and behaviour is surfacing within the public interaction that takes place at the local level.

An attempt is being made to address the relationship between the police and the

¹³ There is not an intention here to be sanguine about the merits of this case or the decisions of the RC committee. Ingvild Burkey in her study of RCs in several districts in the late 1980s found that the court function was one of the most liberating aspects of the RC system simply because the magistrates were so corrupt and anyone could get a case to go their way if they could use patronage networks and bribes. Burkey asserts that with the RC system cases were heard promptly and dealt with through consensus and that people were generally satisfied and there were few appeals. RCs are allowed to charge a nominal fee but she observed that people who could not pay were still heard; sometimes they paid later and sometimes not at all. While there have been cases of vigilante justice, Burkey found that more often RCs act to prevent such happenings. However, wealthier people can overlook the RCs and go straight to the magistrate's court which remains very corrupt. This takes the teeth out of the RC authority when it happens (Burkey 1991, 46-52). J. Oloka-Onyango (1993) argues that this means that the RCs are merely another level of a corrupt court system. Both Burkey and Oloka-Onyango note that the suggestion by the Law Reform Commission (struck in 1990) that magistrates and RCs integrate has had strong protest from the magistrates. What I am focusing on is the interaction and political behaviour at this level and whether it provides some evidence of a new localism.

public, and the residents are participating in this effort through the RCs. The RC1 chairman is called upon to attend any arrest that the police are making in his village and this entails being called upon at any time of the day or night. That this is regarded as a very important safeguard by the community was made clear at the meeting subsequent to the defilement hearing.¹⁴ The new Officer in Command (OC) of police had been invited to speak at the meeting since many of the residents were calling for him to step down. During his talk he asked people to report to him any misbehaviour on the part of the police. However, he also told the residents that they were to blame for harbouring criminals and impressed upon them that they must not put pressure on the RC1 chairman to bribe police in order to prevent a resident from being arrested. Both the OC and the Chairman agreed that the abundance of subletters was a problem and that people must make themselves known to the RC1 Chairman when they became a resident. For their part, several people spoke up informing the commander that the RC1 chairman must be called if a resident was to be arrested. The OC advised the residents that family assaults that were not grievous must go to the RCs and that a woman who came to the police must have a letter from the RC chairman because otherwise it was a "waste of paper" for the police. Upon hearing this, one resident told the Chairman that this seemed like the OC was issuing a license to batter. Whereupon the OC warned the men of the village not to use violence. If one scrutinizes the form without judging the content, at the very least, a dialogue is made possible within the RC structure in which there are suggested changes in behaviour both on the part of the people and the authority (the police in this case). The RC is a public forum that promotes public debate rather than an

¹⁴ Meeting, RC1, Police Wing Village, 12/4/95.

agreement between patron and client or between a subject and a paternal authority.

Lower RCs as advocates

As we have just seen, the lower RC committees in Jinja are acting as advocates for their constituents. But there are limits to the lower RCs' capacity to implement change. In the following analysis I argue that the lower RCs are capable of making a demonstrable effort to act on behalf of their constituents but when they must deal with more formal institutions such as the National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NW&SC) their power is limited.

The case in point is that of the supply of water in the Walukuba housing estate. In 1974 the municipality's water works were taken over by the National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NW&SC) and the legislation designated that the landlord (the JMC in the case of Walukuba) be responsible for paying the charges.¹⁵ Previously the nominal rents covered the cost of water but this became untenable once the NW&SC started charging rates which increased periodically.¹⁶ During the 1970s and 1980s JMC was reluctant to raise rents although there were some nominal raises. At the same time, overcrowding grew as more and more Ugandans took up residence after the expulsion of the Asians and consumption rose exponentially. In fact, increasing insecurity, council incompetence and vandalism of water

¹⁵ There has been much grievance over this on the part of municipal authorities since they were not paid for the assets taken over by the NW&SC. The stipulation that the landlord is responsible is also a great problem for most residents of Jinja, not just the housing estate, since they are mainly renters. Most of the central town and some of the suburbs is under the management of the DAPCB which is notorious for poor management practices. Thus, the water has been disconnected in most households. However, the problem is a little less severe in that there is relatively easy access to standpipes within the main town. The health hazard is considerable, as has been pointed out in Council reports, but the Council seems to have no means to alleviate the problem (Medical Officer of Health Monthly Report to Public Health and Environment Committee, 18/1/95).

¹⁶ These increases continued into the 1990s. The 1993 increases were 60% over the prices which had been increased in 1992 (Statutory Instrument 1993 No. 33 as published in Statutory Instruments Supplement No. 14, 27th August, 1993).

taps during the 1980s made the housing estate a dilapidated and dangerous place in which to live.¹⁷ By 1987, when the RCs took over, the water bill was three quarters of the amount of monthly rent out of which JMC also disbursed payments for salaries and repairs. Subsequent devaluations of currency only added to the unlikelihood that the water bill would, or even could, be paid. Through the RCs the tenants insisted on taking over the payment of water since council was not paying and water was periodically cut off. In July 1987 the JMC came to an agreement with the NW&SC that the Corporation would collect directly from the tenants and the council agreed to pay the arrears which had accumulated. However, the NW&SC backed out of this agreement and council continued to receive water bills.¹⁸ An official sent from JMC to accompany meter readers and verify amounts found meter readers incapable and uncooperative.¹⁹ The problem of water bills posed a serious problem for the Council.

¹⁷ There are a number of reasons for overcrowding and overusage. Council was also in no position to renovate much less build new houses. Also, the opinion was expressed that overcrowding must be accepted as the African way now that Jinja was an African town (Housing Subcommittee Minutes, June 1984). On the other hand, the influx of subletters were not just relatives but people who had come to do informal trading and needed to sublet. It was estimated that a pit latrine which was to handle four families was now handling twice that (Report of Welfare Officer to Housing and Welfare Committee, April 1985). Moreover, it was noted that many people in the housing estate were traders in second-hand clothing and were washing the clothing in preparation for sale using the housing estate facilities. Thus, much of the usage was not domestic. There is no doubt that incompetence on the part of the administration was also a factor both in the crowding and in the lack of payment, either through embezzlement, negligence or simple inability to deal with the problem. The minutes of the Housing Sub-committee from mid- to late-1980s are a litany of demands for reports that never materialized and officials who did not show up for meetings. On the other hand, the circumstances would also have taxed a dedicated and responsive administrator.

¹⁸ Minutes, Works and Housing Committee, JMC, 13/7/88. The NW&SC blamed the council for not keeping pipes repaired and thus causing high water bills. Although this was definitely the case, a bigger problem was that for most of Walukuba East the housing was in blocks with shared water taps which made individual metering impossible. In Walukuba West the majority of houses had individual connections and could be metered individually. To further complicate the situation the council was responsible for the water bills for its own workers and for teachers and these had to be separated out from what other individuals owed.

¹⁹ Minutes, Works and Housing Committee, 18/10/88.

By 1989 NW&SC had disconnected the entire estate and by August 1989 the RCs were seriously involved with negotiations with NW&SC in order to solve the problem. A committee of RCs, the Water Verification Committee, launched an investigation of existing pipes and meters in the housing estate and came up with some astounding information. Apart from the leakages, for which the council was responsible, the investigation revealed numerous irregularities on the part of the NW&SC both in its infrastructure and in its billings.²⁰ The RCs used this information to bring NW&SC into negotiation over the outstanding bills to which reconnection charges had now been added.²¹ NW&SC reconnected the estate while the negotiations were completed and, as an extra precaution, the RCs' Water Verification Committee and JMC insisted on being present when meters were read. However, in November 1990 when the final negotiated figures were announced the Verification Committee had been overlooked and members refused to cooperate until they had approved them.²²

The claims of the Verification Committee were acknowledged by JMC administrators

²⁰ Report to Meeting of JMC Administrators, RCs and NW&SC Administrators, 22, 23/8/89. Apart from leakages, a major problem was faulty meters that did not provide a true reading. Other meters were working but readers had put down arbitrary figures. Where there were no meters sometimes there was no bill and sometimes there was a flat rate charged. A block that had not been receiving water at all had continued to be billed. Where meters were buried sometimes they were double or triple metered so that there were multiple bills for the same supply which, of course was not meter-read but arbitrarily billed.

²¹ The reconnection charge was USH38,280/= (US\$38 approx.) in the 1993 schedule and it had remained the same during several price hikes (Statutory Instruments 1993 No. 33 in Statutory Instruments Supplement No. 14; Interview, Area Manager, NW&SC, 20/4/95).

²² The bills had been negotiated by the JMC auditor and town clerk and administrators from NW&SC. NW&SC officials "aborted" the meeting because "NW&SC was losing time since the period in question had been verified by the JMC auditor and his team and NW&SC. In future, we would be forced to discuss outstanding debts after cutting off consumption" (Meeting, JMC, RCs and NW&SC, 2/11/90, p. 2). It should be noted that during this period the municipal councillors had initiated an investigation of top council officials with the result that in July 1990 a new town clerk and a new treasurer had been hired. The Commission of Inquiry stated that it found the former treasurer "played a major role in the mismanagement of Council's funds" (Special JMC Meeting for Report of the Commission of Inquiry, 13/7/90, p. 2). Thus, the negotiators changed amid negotiations.

and, at a hastily appointed meeting, the figures were finally approved by the committee. JMC agreed to pay all arrears until June 1990 (USH 11,960,364/=) when the tenants were to become responsible. The RCs were responsible for seeing that bills were paid and educating people to pay on time. Nevertheless, the RCs reminded NW&SC administrators that they had not provided new meters where they were required and that the blocks needed to be metered for individual families so as to end disputes; nor had NW&SC repaired the mains where there were leaks even though it had had a year to do so.²³ As it stood, the tenants and the RCs were left to deal with the corporation.

Their relationship with NW&SC remained tenuous because the RCs also kept up their advocacy role. The RCs were responsible for collecting payments although people with individual meters were to pay through bank slips provided by NW&SC.²⁴ By February 1991 NW&SC had cut off Walukuba East once again because of objections by tenants to anomalies and refusal to pay. In addition, the NW&SC had stopped giving bank slips which in particular affected Walukuba East which had the most meters (see footnote 6). The RCs, on behalf of the tenants, asked for standpipes to be installed until JMC was able to do major renovation of pipes since the disputes were not likely to go away. Water was reconnected on 15 May 1991 after the RCs guaranteed a monthly payment.²⁵ However, a dispute soon broke out again as

²³ The Corporation has a great deal of difficulty executing repairs because of a lack of parts, most of which must be imported.

²⁴ Since the late 1980s the NW&SC had put on an aggressive strategy of cost recovery through individual metering and charging 'average consumption' rates instead of a flat rate where there were no meters or multiple users. These were seen as very arbitrary rates by consumers. This change along with the change from a nominal rate charged by the council made people understandably wary. Moreover, given the anomalies of the NW&SC system and the mistrust of 'officials' generally there was a great deal of skepticism over bills.

²⁵ Letter re: Reconnection of Walukuba East Water Supply, 14/5/91. The NW&SC acknowledged a promise by RCs of a monthly remittance of "about USH5,000,000/=" and explained that the Corporation was

the NW&SC instituted a new sewerage charge of USH2,808/= per month per house which was made retroactive for the period of disconnection (total: USH8,276,540/=). Once again, this mostly affected Walukuba East because it has sewers on an individual house basis while Walukuba West has mostly pit latrines.²⁶ Walukuba East was disconnected in August 1991 until payment of the now accumulated debt of USH21,000,000/=. The RCs disputed the amount and, since the Corporation refused to meet with them, the Verification Committee wrote to the President for advice.²⁷ The Corporation continued to refuse to deal with the RCs and it was clear that their authority could not match that of the NW&SC. By this time the water had been off for three major periods. It meant that those who had no means of transport (which was most residents) had to walk long distances to get water by the jerrycan. Many resorted to the adjacent Lake Victoria which had two consequences: the water was contaminated and caused outbreaks of intestinal infections and several children who were sent to the lake to fetch water were drowned in the effort.

The impasse with NW&SC signified the limits of the new political interaction initiated by the RCs and set them again on the slippery slope of patronage politics. The RCs were

"doing this in the spirit of good co-existence and to give you a base to wage your residents to pay to avoid a repetition (sic!) of such disconnections".

²⁶ Report on Water Borne Sanitation on Walukuba Housing Estate, Housing and Welfare Committee meeting, 6/3/84. It was recommended that Walukuba West remain on pit latrines. The water borne system was constantly blocked because of over use and officials also complained of misuse. In Walukuba East overuse has been compounded by constant disconnection and, thus, not enough water going through the system.

²⁷ The letter (28/9/91) requested that: sewerage bills be removed; the charge for half of May be removed because the water was not turned on until the 15th; each tenant be given a meter but in absence of that stand pipes should be put in to be manned by the RCs; the meters should be on top of the taps; and, arbitrary billing of stand pipes (one block had continually charged although there was never any water in that block) should stop. Subsequently, the matter was brought up in the Jinja District Council meeting in Bugembe and reported as follows: "Walukuba Water: This problem was raised in the memorandum to the President when he visited the District, No immediate solution was found but in future each house in Walukuba was to get a water stand tap" (Minutes, Jinja District Council Meeting, 4/10/91, p. 2).

forced to ask the National Resistance Council Member (CM) to speak on their behalf at NW&SC headquarters in Kampala. In due time an agreement was struck that JMC would put in standpipes in Walukuba East and that the RCs would manage the pipes and pay the bills as well as the debt by charging per jerrycan. The corporation would only agree to this if the CM gave his personal guarantee which he did. In 1992 the standpipes were erected and the RCs collected the revenue to pay the bills and pay down the debt.²⁸ The debt at this time was USH32,000,000/=.²⁹ There was embezzlement by some of the collectors and some of the standpipes were closed but, on the whole, tenants felt it was successful.³⁰

Soon the RCs lost their small foothold. There was a period of disconnection in 1993 and the JMC engineer admitted that there was a problem with leaking pipes which was the council's responsibility but the corporation blamed the RCs and the residents of Walukuba. Around this time the CM's local office and staff took over from the RCs ostensibly because the CM was responsible for the surety and was not happy with the RCs handling of it.³¹ In

²⁸ At first USH50/= per can was charged but a compromise was made for 25/= (this was in 1991. In 1995 the price per can was USH8/= based on the NW&SC rates) in order to pay down the debt. The RCs claim that they paid down USH19,000,000/= of the debt before they lost control (Interview, Members Verification Committee, March, 1995). The debt had gone up to USH60,000,000/= at one time because of sewerage charges which were USH4,000,000/= per month for Walakuba East (the committee did not know how this was calculated) but those were discontinued in 1994.

²⁹ Minutes, Works and Housing Committee, 15/1/95.

³⁰ Interview, Church Village RC1 residents, 9/4/95.

³¹ There is a dispute here. The RCs say that they were completely cut out except for being signatory to checks. They maintain that the CM's office chose collectors at the taps and looked after payment as do the tenants interviewed (Interviews, 31/3/95; 9/4/95). The CM maintained that the RCs were still in charge of the taps but that the Water Verification Committee was inactive and did not check. However, payment is handled by one administrator in the CM's office (Interview, 27/3/95). The Corporation does not know who mans the taps but says that the bills go to the RC1s who must take them to the CM's office for payment but maintains that the RC1s are very slow to take the bills into the CM's office (Interview 28/3/95). In 1995 the current RC2 Chairman who co-signed checks testified that the file was removed from the RCs and no records were available to them (Interview, 4/4/94). It should also be noted that the CM was on the board of the NW&SC.

April 1995 the debt had not changed since 1993 and only 11 of 24 original standpipes were open selling water for USH30/= (US\$.03) a jerrycan (as opposed to USH8/= for the same amount if they had their own tap). No bills had been paid since February, 1995.³² It was at this time that the CM informed the NW&SC that he was no longer able to look after the standpipes. By this time NW&SC had started to erect standpipes with meters for anyone who could pay USH150,000/= (US\$150 - this was a figure arrived at by NW&SC administration when they divided up the debt). Tenants reported that they had to pay a USH30,000/= connection fee to officials on top of this. However NW&SC denied that this fee was charged unless it was a completely new connection, in which case USH125,000-164,000/= was charged depending on the size of the pipe.³³ Already several new standpipes had opened up and these individuals were selling water to residents by the jerrycan.

This case shows the complexity of the problem of participation and representation in the RC system. First, there is no doubt that the RC committees, through participatory meetings, listened to tenants' complaints and acted on them in an exemplary manner - both in investigating the anomalies and demanding action from JMC and NW&SC administrators. Their ability to take over the job of guaranteeing payment is much less clear and there is an indication that some people were just against paying. However, there is much more evidence

³² Once again tenants were resorting to the lake and the JMC Medical Officer reported that there were serious health hazards because of the situation (Meeting Public Health and Environment, 18/1/95). As the standpipes disappeared some tenants tried to get one installed at their residence but were told that they had to go through the CM's office which, they claimed, demanded USH200,000/= for the permission. At the same time NW&SC employees who lived in Walukuba were rumoured to have their water free and were selling it. The Area Manager claimed that employees must pay but had not paid and confirmed that one employee was selling water but in Masese. He also confirmed that meter readers sometimes gave arbitrary figures instead of the actual meter readings and there seemed to be no way to control this (Interviews, 28/3/95; 20/4/95).

³³ Interview, Area Manager, NW&SC, 20/4/95.

that the tenants were justified in their mistrust of bills and it must be remembered that much of the action took place during the hard times of high inflation and phenomenal rates of devaluation of currency. Thus, the RCs fulfilled their role as representatives and advocates.

On the other hand, the behaviour of the Corporation shows little respect for the RC system of participation and representation. There is very little evidence of cooperation from the NW&SC which was clearly trying to fulfill its mandate without the proper infrastructure and without proper education of the public.³⁴ There is also very little respect shown for the lower RCs even though they are the part of the statutory local government. There is also the sense from administrators, both JMC and NW&SC, that the people in Walukuba just have to learn to pay. What is clear is that administrators, especially those at NW&SC, had the political structure with which to find solutions but instead tended to display arrogance. The municipal council, in paying the old debt and putting in standpipes, seems to have made the best of a bad situation but it was not willing to support the lower RCs in collection of payments which it felt was the responsibility of NW&SC. In the end poorer people were forced to pay exorbitant prices for water simply because the Corporation and the municipality were unable to fulfill infrastructural and administrative requirements. Not only was there a lack of forethought, on the part of NW&SC, for the very serious threat to the health of the tenants but also for the actual existing circumstances of precarious economic conditions and seriously degenerated infrastructure; worst of all, there was no consideration for the fledgling democratic openings at the local level.

This corporation seems more responsible to its World Bank creditors rather than to the

³⁴ NW&SC comments that in Jinja people are reluctant to have meetings! (Interview, Area Manager 28/3/95).

people it is to serve. It continued to exist as part of a World Bank Project started in 1985 and renewed in 1989. Along with the goal of rehabilitating the water supply the project was to create in the NW&SC a model of an efficient organization based on aggressive cost recovery. In 1995, Phase 2 of the project was going ahead and the Corporation was solely responsible for repaying the loans out of revenue.³⁵ Based on a study of the corporation in relation to his larger study of municipal administration in Uganda, Philip Amis concludes that

significant donor support especially on capital, a self contained financial and project format, a conservative rehabilitation strategy, a high level commitment and by implication political support for an aggressive policy of cost recovery with a very real sanction of disconnection, a systematic training programme, a wages policy with links to attendance to bonuses have all produced one of the most efficient organizations in the Uganda public sector (1992, 75).

Seen from the point of view of Walukuba residents, it is a little less than that.³⁶ Here we can see a disjuncture between formal development policy, as designed and supported by the World Bank and interpreted by Amis, and the reality on the ground. This has a negative effect on the nascent democratic practices in Jinja.

Ultimately, in the case of Walukuba, the attempt to solve the problem in a new way was defeated and old forms of political behaviour were used. The CM was unable to sustain the RCs as they tried to manage the water bills but instead relied on his staff, which also was unable to carry out the service. The fact that the lower RCs were unable to challenge the

³⁵ The Ugandan government had made it clear to management that the Corporation, alone, was responsible for the loans. At the time the corporation was not only constrained by having to use imported parts but also by the expense for the amount of power it took to run the works (Interview, Area Manager, NW&SC, 28/3/95).

³⁶ The physical presence of NS&WB in Jinja is a concrete example of bifurcation of space as well as practice (as demonstrated in this case). It is a new building situated down the road from the Council. It is fully furnished and gleaming. The tarmac on the driveway and carpark is the smoothest, blackest pavement you have ever seen. It takes on a positively surreal character as you come upon it - like a vision conjured up momentarily. You blink to make sure you have really seen it. If you are a resident in Walukuba 'you can't get there from here'.

CM's office, despite the obviously deteriorating situation, suggests that, as clients, they were obliged to go along with whatever transpired. It is also clear that the pervading misuse of position for personal gain that remains within Ugandan society is not about to disappear overnight. Not even at the local village level are the RCs able to prevent this from happening.

Nevertheless, the RC system has brought considerable changes to the housing estate. Despite the difficulties with the NW&SC there has been much less vandalism of equipment since the RCs took over. There is also a great deal more cooperation in paying rents on time. By 1995, most RC1s had provided much better tax registers and were instrumental in encouraging cooperation with authorities. In other words, the participation that they offered was rewarded with better cooperation and less disruption of peoples' daily lives.

As this evidence shows, a great deal of the success of the RC system in Jinja depends on the RC1 level, but this has resulted in an overburdened committee. Officials note that in Jinja there has been a very positive volunteer effort on the part of RC1s and that they have greatly enhanced JMC's ability to communicate with the population. There are inactive RC1 committees but these were in the minority in 1995. Besides the time consuming jobs of dispute settling and security duties,³⁷ RC1s have many other administrative duties. They attend RC2 meetings and are responsible for passing on minutes of meetings, information and demands to this higher tier as well as for receiving information which then is relayed to their

³⁷ These include being involved in any occurrence within their villages. One chairman related how a young boy with no money had arrived from Luwero looking for his missing father. The chairman found him a place to stay, helped him investigate and then finally had to take him to Kampala where police finally got him a bus ticket back to Luwero. All of this was done at the chairman's own expense and yet he explained that it was part of his duty to keep track of people who came into his jurisdiction. Because of the upheaval in Uganda in the late 1970s and 1980s there are many children looking for family members (Interview, RC1 Chairman, Nalufenya B Village, 20/4/95).

constituents. RC1 committees have composed tax registers for their areas and (in the case of council property) are expected to generally chase up people who are behind in rent or tax and keep track of vendors and other informal workers. Thus, RC1 committees have a dual role of administrator and advocate.

Nevertheless, there are also some abuses of office.³⁸ While the RC1 is the perhaps the strongest link in the chain it is also the weakest in resources. There is no budget for RC1 work. Although many of the RC1 committee are people of few resources they must pay for their own transport, communication expenses and stationary. Stationary is very important at this level as most official bureaucratic processes in Uganda start with a letter of recommendation or verification from the RC1 Chairman. While RC1 councillors put in a great deal of time there is no remuneration for the work; allowances for sitting in meetings only start at the RC3 level. Moreover, there is a credibility problem because fees are often charged for services, especially those involving letters of recommendation. This is understandable because of the drain on the resources of individual members but there are cases of abuse of office where the officials only perform duties that bring in some fee. This also carries over to the RC2 level. The few who abuse their office in this way affect the credibility of the RCs in a country where abuse of office has been the norm. On the other hand, people also see this as the way to get what they want. One RC2 member said that he had to continually instruct people not to leave money at his house in his absence.³⁹ In 1995 discussions were being held to remedy the situation by giving UGH100,000/= to each RC1

³⁸ Interviews, RC2 Members, Walukuba East, Walukuba West, 3/3/95, 7/4/95, 22/4/95.

³⁹ Interview, Member RC2, Walukuba East, 7/4/95.

committee for administrative duties but nothing concrete was yet in place.⁴⁰ Here we can see that breaking the old pattern of political behaviour is a complex process that finds structural barriers even in innovative institutions and which also requires a change in attitude from the population as well as from the councillors and administrators.

The higher RCs: Participation and representation on JMC

The legacy of old political behaviour and attitudes dies hard. This is evident in the attitudes towards the municipal councillors at the top of the tier. There is a general feeling at the lower levels (RC1 and 2) that, once on the municipal council, councillors forget the people they represent and instead become concerned with their own importance. Lower RCs also feel that municipal councillors get allowances and are able to use council transport and so forget how difficult it is for councillors at the lower level.⁴¹ Yet, as one RC2 councillor explained, the problem is more complex than that. Even if a councillor is sympathetic with the people he represents at the village level, his effectiveness depends on the influence he has with his colleagues on the municipal council. If he acts as if he is poor and remains with the people his colleagues will "despise" him.⁴² Furthermore, the people themselves admire power and wealth and feel that a member who acts like a big man will perhaps give them something. In her study of sub-counties in Luweero, Mbale and Nebbi districts Ingild

⁴⁰ Interview, Assistant Town Clerk (Walukuba/Masese), 20/4/95; Meeting Walukuba-Masese Division (RC3), 12/2/95. At the meeting the assistant town clerk advised the RC1 executives to devise plans for the UGH/= otherwise it might for other purposes.

⁴¹ The sitting allowance was USH5000/= with overnight allowances running at USH15,000/=. These are really nominal amounts. During the water crises municipal councillors who live in Walukuba were able to use Council transport to bring in jerrycans of water and so seemed to be isolated from the real hardship that people were enduring (Interview, Member RC2 Walukuba West, 22/4/95).

⁴² Interview, Member RC2 Walukuba West, 22/4/95.

Burkey found that, although levels of education were higher in the higher tiers, it was not until the district level that there was some indication that an elite occupied those positions. Although I did not undertake a formal survey, the lower RC councillors interviewed spoke and wrote English well and, on the whole, were very aware of issues and their implications.⁴³ However, none that I spoke to appeared to be well-off. In fact, one RC1 chairman intimated that in certain villages where there were better-off people the RC1 chairman was treated with some contempt because he was not as well educated or well-off as some of the residents.⁴⁴ At the municipal level most of the councillors were relatively well educated and some were of higher income.⁴⁵ Therefore, there would seem to be a tendency to choose more influential individuals for higher tiers. This was confirmed by interviews with administrators during the research period. It is clear that a municipal councillor must tread a fine line trying to maintain credibility both at the council level and at the village level and yet also trying to maintain a sense of purpose.

⁴³ English is used exclusively at the municipal level but Lusoga is spoken at lower levels. However, Jinja is a cosmopolitan town and so often English or Swahili are used even in the lower RCs. All of the minutes are printed in English.

⁴⁴ Interview, RC1 Chairman, Nalufenya B Village, 20/4/95; Assistant Town Clerk, Mpumudde-Nalufenya, 20/4/95. The committee for Nalufenya A is considered inactive and it is thought that this is because the residents are well-off and not very interested. Just as better-off residents may be able to avoid the RC informal justice system they seem to be able to ignore the RC system, at least at the local level. Meetings are much better attended in poorer areas. Since well-off people are in a minority it does not make a huge impact on the whole system.

⁴⁵ A poll of JMC councillors revealed the occupations of 33 out of 36. Twelve councillors were owners of businesses which ranged from small to large retail enterprises to small to large manufacturing plants. There was one owner of a taxi business who also had a cattle ranch, one proprietor of a private nursery school, and one owner of a Forex Bureau. Five councillors were managers in large formal companies and five were professionals (one engineer, one accountant, two teachers and a headmistress). There was one former chief magistrate (who was the fifth woman on JMC but who left to run for the Constituent Assembly during the research period) and two court clerks. There was one councillor taking a diploma in legal practice, five workers in industry, one trader and one unemployed person.

The tier system is also vulnerable to communication gaps between the tiers, which may exacerbate the organizational distance. RC1 committees report to the RC2 (parish) level and rarely communicate directly to RC3 councillors who make up JMC. This system depends very much upon the RC2 to get the information through and upon the RC3 to properly represent these points of view. Even RC2 committee members see the parish level as an extra layer of communication that often does not work even with the best of intentions, especially if the chairman wishes to withhold information in order to enhance his position of power. A chairman can also refuse to call a meeting if he does not want certain people to have access to power. This was made clear by a new RC2 mobilizer who wished to start talking with people about their rights and ways to address their problems. The chairman was delaying calling a meeting to prevent this from happening.⁴⁶ Similarly, there are complaints that secretaries for women also withhold information in order to retain power.⁴⁷ These problems do cause a communication gap which adds to the perception that higher councillors are too far removed.

It may be that some of the negative attitude toward municipal councillors is due to past experience with politicians, since there is much evidence that successive municipal councils under the RC system have made a crucial difference in JMC administration. In the late 1980s when the RCs took office there was considerable effort to gain control over council policy and to demand accountability from officials. The RCs spearheaded a drive to monitor JMC revenue collectors and prevent embezzlement of funds as well as harassment of

⁴⁶ Interview, Member, RC2 Walukuba West, 22/4/95.

⁴⁷ Interviews, various women's groups, January-April 1995; Welfare Officer, JMC, 18/4/95.

the public. As a result of their persistence, they were able to remove both the town clerk and the treasurer in 1990.⁴⁸ The councillors have also been effective in following up complaints from the public about uncooperative administrators and there have been cases of reassignment and removal.⁴⁹ During my four months of field research in 1995 committee and council meetings were held monthly as scheduled and were well attended. Councillors generally received reports and minutes in time before meetings and, thus, were well-informed about matters arising. Administrative reports invited considerable discussion and administrators or their representatives were always present to answer criticisms. This is a great change from the 1980s when administrators avoided or delayed reports and evaded questions but were never called to account. In fact, in 1995 there was an atmosphere of real cooperation between councillors and administrators; this was in large part due to the working relationship that had been forged in the earlier years of the RC system.

As the RC system has evolved in Jinja, there has been remarkably little waste of time with rhetoric and ideological speeches on behalf of the NRM. The address to the JMC by the District Administrator, Jinja District, early in 1990 contained a piece of rhetoric which appears to be the exception that proves the rule since I have come across no other such

⁴⁸ Minutes, JMC Special Meeting, 8/12/89; JMC Meeting, 1/2/90; 27/1/90; 31/5/90. This was a crucial period and an important step as councillors had been complaining that their hands were tied because they could not remove senior staff. A special meeting was called to devise a memorandum to the Minister of Local Government about this matter and asking for consultative process as the RC Statute was being revised. As a result, the councillors were able to have the senior staff removed and the new (1993) Statute gave councils eventual control over senior staff (Minutes, Special Meeting, JMC, 31/7/89).

⁴⁹ One of the most controversial positions has been that of housing officer for the housing estates. One housing officer was removed in 1991 and another in sent on leave in 1993 (Minutes, Works and Housing Committee, JMC, 22/1/1992; 7/6/93).

evidence.⁵⁰ According to the minutes of the meeting he asserted that the

NRM was a revolutionary government and whoever did not conform to the norms of the NRM policies would be crushed by the wheels of the revolution... NRM was the people who were taking care of their destiny... he explained that his job was to guide the masses in fulfillment of their objectives as a nation.⁵¹

This is the only documentation of such rhetoric at JMC meetings since 1989 (and it must be taken into consideration that it is from a district administrator not a municipal one). In fact, when tenants complained that the Housing Officer was trying to rule them by "use of strong language and statements that he had fought a war and that he was from NRM secretariat", the municipal councillors refused to hear the officer's defence but told him to "cultivate a good working relationship" both with the RCs and the tenants.⁵² Neither did I hear, nor is there a record of, such rhetoric at lower RC meetings. Rather, the debate is always about local issues and how to solve them.

Where contradiction and misunderstanding do arise is in the "two coats" that the Jinja municipal councillors must wear.⁵³ The municipal councillors represent the people but they are also responsible for making Council decisions and supporting administrators in carrying out those decisions. Often new regulations are viewed as new ways to manipulate people. For example, allocation of rental houses in Walukuba is a political nightmare because there are so many on the waiting list (11,446 in 1988) and because tenancy is enveloped in such

⁵⁰ Minutes, JMC Meeting, 1/2/90.

⁵¹ Ibid., 5.

⁵² Minutes, Works and Housing Committee, JMC, 21/4/95, p. 5.

⁵³ Minutes, JMC Meeting, 27/2/90. A discussion took place about criticism of councillors because they wore two coats, one as RCs for the people and the other as municipal councillors for the municipality. It was argued by the councillors that the "RC business and that of the council were inseparable as both were good for the municipality"(8).

ambiguous circumstances stretching back to the 1970s. When the RCs took over in the late 1980s they were sympathetic to allowing retirees and widows or orphans to remain in the houses (as had been the de facto policy in the 1970s and 80s) and also were aware of the high demand from self-employed people. However, they also recognized the necessity to prioritize housing for Council workers, teachers and medical workers. A new priority list was made for these latter categories of workers (numbering 226) and the general public was put on an open list (numbering 11,220). Newly vacant houses were to be allocated in a ratio of 2:2:1 (council workers:other workers [industrial, ministries, parastatals]:general population).⁵⁴ Municipal councillors and RCs had to go against the 'convention' of patronage allocation and also establish a rational system of rent payment rather than one based on non-payment or bribe. To complicate matters, those who actually occupy houses, including those voted in as RCs, quite possibly are subletees rather than the original allocatees.⁵⁵ The RCs did not avoid the problem but worked, through the lower RCs, to convince people of the fairness of the new system. However, they did fire two housing officers during this difficult period, ostensibly because they were not handling people delicately enough.

Moreover, the RC system provides an arena in which the gap in understanding can be

⁵⁴ Minutes, Sub-committee on Housing, 26/10/88; 18/1/89; 10/5/89.

⁵⁵ The complexity of the political problem is evident in a case recorded in the minutes of the Works and Housing Committee in 1992 in which the Town Clerk tried to settle, only to be accused of wrong-doing by tenants: "The Town Clerk reported that the house in question was subletted (sic!) by the allocatee to a third party whom the allocatee attempted to throw out in favour of selling the house to another party. The subletee having paid water bills, rent in advance, feeding the lady etc. approached the Town Clerk and explained his problems. The Town Clerk then deemed it unfair on the part of the allocatee. He then as a result allocated the house to the subletee" (Minutes, Works and Housing Committee, 22/1/92, p. 4). This explanation was accepted by the municipal councillors. It illustrates the ambiguous circumstances in which politics takes place at the local level. The Town Clerk's act undermines the informal system of allocation: the allocatee 'sells' the house to the highest bidder who then takes over the payment of rent but the allocatee still retains the power because it is his/her name on the Council's register.

debated publicly. One of the most volatile situations arose in 1992 when there were evictions in Walukuba East (already a very sensitive area because of the water problem) and two municipal councillors (who fell under the criteria) had been allocated a house. At the RC1 meeting people accused the councillors of conflict of interest. The evictions were suspended until the Executive Committee of JMC was able to convince the residents that the councillors in question had not made the decision (they had not been present at the allocation meeting although one was a member of the Works and Housing Committee).⁵⁶ What is clear from this evidence is that the RC system has provided a forum in which these disputes can be discussed and, even in such ambiguous circumstances, in which new norms of political behaviour can evolve.

There is a perception among lower RCs and their constituents that the decisions made at Council are a top-down affair. The fact that the Council committee meetings are not open to the public and that the Council meetings themselves, which *are* public, are usually just a formality of approving committee reports reinforces this perception. Information *does* move efficiently from the RC3 to the RC1 level because it mostly involves implementing policy and the administrators of the council see that it gets to the RC1 representatives. However, in presenting the following example I suggest that even in an admittedly top-down situation the RC system has made a difference even at the level of the municipal councillors.

The example concerns the problem of pit latrines in Walukuba. The housing estate is built on a high water table and latrines cannot be dug deep. The emptying of latrines or the

⁵⁶ Minutes, Works and Housing Committee, 30/10/92; 23/11/92; 27/11/92. In 1995 the councillor who was a member of the Works and Housing Committee (and was a worker at British American Tobacco) was living in the house and she was not subletting to others which was previously the practice of allocatees before the RCs took over.

digging of new ones has been a chronic problem (and demand) since the 1970s when overcrowding began. JMC has never had the means to meet the cost of adequate provision and the problem was alleviated only slightly when the World Bank built some latrines in the late 1980s. In the early 1990s the RCs moved to obtain a cesspool emptier but the problem remained that JMC could not afford the cost of emptying the latrines which filled up very quickly with overuse. In 1995 the Works and Housing Committee devised a plan to charge a levy on residents to pay for the cost of emptying existing latrines and digging new ones. The matter was then taken to a meeting of the RC3 Walukuba-Masese council (attended by RC1 and RC2 executives and members of the public) and throughout the next month was taken to each RC1 meeting.

At the RC meetings it was explained to residents that the nominal rents could not possibly cover the expenses of improving the latrine system and an alternative had to be found. At the sub-county meeting and a subsequent RC1 meeting, both of which I attended, residents charged that this decision had already been taken at JMC level and that it was a typical top-down measure. There was a hot debate over how the fund was to be monitored since people did not have faith in the Council which had let the Walukuba water bills run into debt. There was also a renegotiation of the amount and the residents settled on USH500/= (US\$0.50) per month (Council had recommended USH750/=). It was agreed that the RCs would form a watchdog committee and the Council administrators promised that the books on the fund would be open for inspection. At the RC1 meeting residents voiced the concern that even an RC watchdog committee would be ineffective because the Water Verification Committee had been "tricked" by the NW&SC. However, people agreed to the plan and felt

that this was the best that could be done. People were advised to attend the next sub-county meeting in order to get a report of the outcome and to see that their concerns had been addressed.⁵⁷

This example shows that there is a top-down tendency in which the lower RCs are used to implement policy that originated from the municipal council level; but, it is top-down process with a difference. First, the sub-county meeting was attended by all levels of RCs including municipal councillors who had to answer to the complaints. Also present was the assistant town clerk for the sub-county. Since the sub-county meetings are open, residents were able to hear first hand the discussion between the RC executives. Thus, all of the accountable people were willing to face a public meeting in which they knew they would have to have good arguments. Secondly, the matter was taken for discussion at the RC1 level, so it was possible for people to speak out in a forum where they were more comfortable. Third, there was negotiation, albeit limited, over the measures. Fourth, at no time during the sub-county meeting did the municipal councillors back away from taking responsibility for the suggestion of charging a levy, nor did they make promises that they could not keep. Fifth, people were informed of the next sub-county meeting in their RC1 meetings so that they could follow up on the issue if they wished.

Moreover, this example illustrates how the conduct of business at the municipal council level reinforces the whole RC system. It must be recognized that, whether top-down or not, discussion of council policy not only integrates the tiers but also keeps the lower RCs active in relevant day-to-day business of the Council and thereby encourages vitality at the

⁵⁷ Meeting, Walukuba-Masese RC3, 12/2/95; Police Wing Village RC1, 12/3/95.

RC1 level. It should be noted that the most vocal municipal councillor at the sub-county meeting was a woman, there were three women on the executive of the RC1 meeting, and women spoke up at both meetings. It must also be noted that at both meetings people did not hesitate to speak out and to criticize administrators and RCs. Here we may see that there is a transparent and direct process and that JMC councillors are willing to take responsibility for unpopular measures. On the other hand, we also see that the legacy of mistrust dies hard and that it will take a long time for people to have confidence in local government. Nevertheless, the RC system allows the residents to voice that mistrust and, thus, take some responsibility for seeing that the system works.

Keeping the RCs vital

The ability to keep the RCs vital, especially at the lower level where participation is greatest, cannot be overemphasized. Through its actions, the central government, seems to recognize this important element. In 1995 the central government had not lost its enthusiasm to employ the RC system in its programmes. For example, the Entandikwe programme, introduced in 1995, intends to make full use of the RC machinery.⁵⁸ A committee of RCs was to be set up to administer the fund in the municipality and to recommend an intermediary agency (NGO) with which they might work to identify viable projects. While the NGO would recommend the most viable applications, the RC committee would have final approval. People who applied would be recommended by local RCs only and would also have to obtain a

⁵⁸ *Entandikwe* (which means push or start in Luganda) is a revolving loan fund which was meant to extend lending facilities to the rural and urban poor who are unable to borrow otherwise. The purpose of the programme is to teach people that the government does not give handouts and that people must be responsible for their own financing and that they must learn to "save by sacrifice" (Address to JMC by Minister of State, Finance and Economic Planning, 10/2/95).

guarantor (not liable for payment) as character reference; that guarantor could not be anyone higher than a municipal councillor.⁵⁹ Thus, in administering this programme, there was a concerted effort to remove patronage opportunities from CMs (Members of the National Resistance Council) even though it was a central government project. During my research period there was a series of meetings throughout the tiers in order to inform people about this programme and there was great interest from the population. The point that must be made here is that this programme activated the RC system and forced people to participate and organize in order to make it successful. While it was a central government programme, it has the potential to give credit and credibility (or discredit in the case of incompetence) to every level of the RC system. This example perhaps is one of the best indications that decentralization in Uganda privileges democratic participation at the local level.⁶⁰

Despite these great strides made towards a new localism, the constraints on JMC (very limited resources, poorly paid staff) tend to put the vitality of the RC system at risk. While there are visible signs of activity (in 1995 roads were being repaired, garbage was being collected, houses in Walukuba were receiving some repair, classrooms were being built in the primary schools) there is no money to satisfactorily perform the required tasks. The lack of

⁵⁹ Address to JMC, Minister of State, Finance and Economic Planning, 10/2/95.

⁶⁰ This is not an attempt to evaluate the Entandikwe programme. At the time there were various reports that people showed up at meetings with bags to take home the money. Some RCs reportedly told people that the Minister would give out money when he came to speak ("Kabale worried over entandikwe", *The New Vision*, 7/3/95, p. 10.; "RCs mislead residents over Kisamba's visit", *The New Vision*, 30/3/95, p. 9.). Thus, there was a great deal of ignorance about the programme and yet the central government did persist in going through RCs. There is also the problem of the amount available. One letter to the editor estimated that, with USH30,000,000/= per district, each parish in the district would have USH1,000,000/= (US\$1000) to lend out, thus, greatly reducing the number of people who could be accommodated (*The New Vision*, 7/4/95, p. 5.). Also, recent reports from Mbarara District cite a 70% default rate in paying back loans (Editorial, *The New Vision*, 30/7/97). Since it is a revolving fund, this means that few more will benefit. However, the argument still holds that there was a concerted effort not to make this a patronage affair.

resources prevents the councillors from acting on long-term projects and policies and, thus, limits their role. It also encourages patronage behaviour. Councillors want people to see *visible* results and so they want projects to give proof of their effectiveness. The fact that projects cannot be carried out immediately gives people the impression that their demands have not been raised at the municipal level. This puts a great deal of pressure on councillors and in turn they put pressure on administrators. Conflict with management comes when councillors try to obtain funds which they can manage directly. This enhances their personal influence.⁶¹ On the other hand, the execution arm is weak since staff members do not earn a living wage and must pursue other time-consuming economic activities. While managers are at a disadvantage because they have few subordinates, they retain tremendous personal power because there is little delegation of authority. Many people in Jinja think that the administrators *are* the local government. These constraints create participation fatigue in the population. RC1 councillors report that it is very hard to get people out to meetings if there are no benefits to report.⁶² After a while people will only come to a meeting if they are reporting on something beneficial that will take place. For example, attendance was very good at meetings in the first few months of 1995 in great part because people were very keen to hear how they might take advantage of the Entandikwe programme.

The lack of funds for projects affects the credibility of secretaries for women as well. The introduction of statutory women's councils⁶³ in 1994 exacerbated the situation as there

⁶¹ Interview, Welfare Officer, JMC, 18/4/95.

⁶² Interviews, 20/4/95, RC1 Chairman, Ripon Falls Village; RC1 Chairman, Nalufenya Village.

⁶³ The National Women's Council Statute, 1993. The legislation was passed in 1993 and the councils established in 1994. The councils are established in a tiered system exactly the same as the RC system with each

has been somewhat of a turf war between the councils and the RC secretaries for women for prominence. Women's councils are supposed to be the development arm for women while the RCs are the political arm. This is a particularly sensitive issue because, like all politicians, the women RCs want to be seen 'delivering' development. The argument has been settled, at least in the minds of the RCs, by the mayor of Jinja who established that the women's councils should work under the RCs. Since neither have direct funding, they both lose credibility.⁶⁴ The municipality, however, has allowed the District Women's Council to use its facilities and has also helped start a flower growing project.⁶⁵ Lack of funding and rivalry with women's councils does affect credibility but on the whole women are a vital force in Jinja municipality (see chapter 5).

Development without patronage

Despite the lack of resources, there is evidence that there has been a movement away from patronage projects and towards entering into partnership with the community for the desired ends. Administrators in Jinja have found that their work has been much facilitated by the RCs. They are able to organize the transmission of information and mobilize the

district electing a representative to the national council. Also on the national council are two representatives of NGOs and two representatives of female students. The statute also provides for a secretariat in Kampala. The objectives of the council are to organize women nationally and "engage the women in activities that are of benefit to them and the nation" (Section 4 (1)(b)). The national council is to promote communication between women, encourage women to take a major role in public life, establish a network through which economic and social services may be channeled and to promote relations with international women's organizations (Section 4 (2)).

⁶⁴ Interview Welfare Officer, JMC, 18/4/95; RC3 Secretary for Women, Jinja Central, 11/4/95; Secretary for Women, JMC Executive Committee, District Chairperson, District Women's Council, 31/3/95; RC1 Secretary for Women, Police Wing Village, 11/4/95.

⁶⁵ Interview, Secretary for Women, JMC Executive Committee, District Chairperson, District Women's Council, 31/3/95. This was confirmed by the chairperson of the District Women's Council who is also secretary for women for JMC. She has been able to combine her roles and the municipality is sympathetic. However, this has caused a great deal of friction with the district women RCs.

population very quickly. One example of a project that moved from a patronage solution to one that activated the RCs and their constituents is the rehabilitation of Walukuba Community Centre. In 1989 the RCs saw the rehabilitation of the dilapidated centre, which had been repeatedly vandalized during the 1980s, as a very popular project that would bring them credibility. However, there were no funds to complete the project and councillors fell back upon old solutions by recommending that the Council approach the CM and offer the centre for his use free of charge, provided he "carries out sufficient renovations".⁶⁶ While this solution did not materialize, another one was found, through a municipal partnership taken up with the city of Guelph, Ontario, that was much more in keeping with new political behaviour.⁶⁷ With materials provided by the Guelph partners, engineering expertise from JMC, voluntary labour from the community and the co-ordination of a committee struck by the RCs, the community centre was completely transformed. The project, including underground infrastructure, was finished on time and within budget. The committee continues to run the centre, charging nominal fees for events and using the money for minor repairs.⁶⁸ Here we may see how the RC system can be activated, bringing responsibility, accountability and credit to all levels of RCs, as well as to the residents who participated. This example also shows how international project work can complement political openings at the local level.

⁶⁶ Minutes, JMC Meeting, 24/8/89, p. 5.

⁶⁷ This partnership was established in 1992 through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' International Office and funded by the CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) Africa 2000 programme.

⁶⁸ Interview, Chairman, Walukuba Community Centre Committee, Public Relations Officer, JMC, 31/1/95.

Conclusion

The evidence presented in this chapter demonstrates that in Jinja there is movement towards meeting the third requirement for a new localism. Clearly, the institutional setting has provided the opportunity to move away from political practices and behaviour that constitute the political relations of power in the bifurcated state. In practice the tiered RC system provides for an interactive process that has already produced different political behaviour and relationships between the population and the local government. Lower RCs have demonstrated responsibility and accountability and, moreover, have acted as advocates for their constituents. The lower RC councils provide many opportunities for participation from the populace and there is evidence that people take these opportunities seriously, both in their attendance at meetings and in their demand for accountability. Municipal councillors have also demonstrated that they take responsibility for their decisions and hold the administrators accountable. Finally, rather than acting as mere onlookers or supporters of men, women are participants along with men and hold decision-making positions within the political structure.

The RC system has shown a tendency to move away from political solutions based on patronage. This is clear in the accounts of political interaction over water and housing problems in Walukuba. It is also evident in the creative local solution that was found to rehabilitate the Walukuba Community Centre. This has shown that the organizational structure of the RC system lends itself to accomplishing many tasks with the participation of the local population.

While one might argue that the RC system is somewhat top down in nature, evidence in this chapter shows that the very importance of lower RCs to the functioning of JMC, and

central government programmes keeps them vital. They are an integral part of the local government and are involved in the day-to-day operations of the Council. Evidence shows that they also provide a forum in which constituents may show their disapproval of, and even modify, municipal policy. Thus, new political behaviour develops even when policy is top-down.

Clearly there are limits to the effectiveness of RCs. It is evident that the lower RCs are not taken seriously by parastatals such as NW&SC and patronage solutions continue to win out under some circumstances. A serious lack of resources also affects the legitimacy of all levels of RCs. The need to appear legitimate sometimes leads to patronage behaviour on the part of RCs. There is also some evidence of misuse of office and a tendency to hold power exclusively. In addition, there are class differences evident in the ability of the better-off residents to bypass the RC system. All of these factors weaken the legitimacy of RCs.

Nevertheless, the evidence presented in this chapter illustrates that local government institutions in Jinja, to a considerable degree, fulfill in practice what they promised in principle. Therefore, in practice, they are moving towards a new localism.

Chapter 5

Meeting the Requirements of a New Localism III: Replicating the politics of bifurcation: Local representation and participation in practice in Mutare, Zimbabwe

Introduction

In this chapter I examine the interaction between government and community at the municipal level in Mutare in light of the third requirement for a new localism - the development of an interactive process that might produce new political behaviour and relationships between the population and the local government. The examples given in this chapter explore how the government relates to the community in practice.

Chapter 3 demonstrated that, at least on the surface, Mutare showed less movement towards a new localism than did Jinja. This conclusion was drawn from the Zimbabwean decentralization policy, which shows little regard for the importance of democratic openings at the local level, as well as from the structural components of the local institutions in Mutare which severely limit the number of people involved, both in the choice of candidate and in the number of people involved in governing. In addition, Mutare relies on a more extensive formal economy than does Jinja and tends to continue the legacy of bifurcation by separating out accounts for high density areas. Although general revenues are used to supplement education, health and welfare responsibilities, this gives the sense that the high density areas are draining resources while the formal areas pay their way. Therefore, there is a less direct relationship in Mutare than in Jinja between the local government and the majority of the population with regard to revenues and spending.

As I argued in the last chapter, the relationship of local government to the population is affected in another way. As in Jinja, the majority of the population of Mutare is poor and unemployment is high. On the other hand, restructuring has left the municipality with more responsibilities and less revenue in the form of grants from central government. Therefore, user fees have been instituted. This creates an impasse when it comes to providing services to those who are not able to afford them, producing a rift between the local government and the majority of the community. On the one hand, the community sees the local government as not providing services. On the other hand, the local government must convince the population that their monetary participation is required for services to be maintained. It is imperative that the local government find a solution to this impasse since the problem involves not a minority but a majority of the population. It requires local institutions which engage the population. Thus, how the municipality and the community handle this impasse can reveal whether the new political behaviour required for a new localism is being developed.

The evidence from Mutare presents quite a contrast with Jinja. In this chapter I will argue that the structure of institutions and politics at the local level in Zimbabwe leaves little room for the development of an interactive process that might produce different political behaviour and relationships between the population and the local government. Rather, the old politics of patronage, indicative of bifurcation, are reinforced leaving little opportunity for adequate representation or participation.

Public Participation

There is no provision for public participation in the mandate of Mutare City Council (MCC). The Urban Councils Act 1980, Chapter 214 outlines the responsibilities undertaken

by municipal councils and their right to set rates and rents. Broadly speaking, and taking into consideration that Mutare is a much more formally developed and run city than is Jinja, these responsibilities are very similar to those of Jinja except that Mutare manages its own waterworks and also manages several commercial undertakings such as beerhalls, commercial waste removal and building stores. Nowhere in the Act or in other statutes is the Council required to encourage public participation. Thus, there is no emphasis on political development at the local level between community and council and no statutory requirement for it.

As I pointed out in Chapter 2, in Mutare there are no structures below or at the level of city council that involve the participation of the population. Although there was a plan for ward committees (WARDCOs) these have never functioned and, as mentioned above, are not a statutory requirement.¹ In the 1980s the council administration, through Community Services, provided hall space for councillors to hold ward meetings but this service is no longer available and, in 1995, ward meetings had not been held for several years.² The structures of ZANU(PF) are the designated locus for grassroots participation but, as argued in Chapter 3, the party has never developed grassroots structures beyond core stalwarts who

¹ Interview, Provincial Administrator, 27/6/95.

² One councillor spoke of holding a *dare remusha* (the council of advisors to the chief in pre-colonial days) in his ward while he was mayor in the mid-1980s. Through this process the community in Sakubva raised money to build a bridge for easy access to the cemetery, the access road to which went miles out of the way, so that funerals could be conducted with less hardship on the families involved. MCC continued to say that there was no money for the project. After the money was raised, the community contracted the MCC to do the work and also donated their labour and the bridge was built. A council official commented that the *dare* was very effective and that it seemed to be replacing the council as decisions were made there and then passed at council. People were very motivated. This process ended with a change of mayor. This was the only example of participatory action that anyone could remember in Mutare and certainly demonstrates the emancipatory possibility in customary practices (Interview, Ward Councillor, 11/8/95; Council Official, 25/7/95).

mobilize people at elections. Thus, beyond elections, neither local government institutions nor party structures provide, in practice, for effective participation. The only time when the Council and the public have formal meetings is at the budget meetings, required by the MLGRUD, in July when the estimates are out. These meetings are ostensibly for consultation about the estimates but they take place only in the local government areas and are usually the occasion for the announcement and justification of increased rents and rates. These meetings will be discussed below. Thus, there are no institutional means of participation by the wider population.

MCC councillors and representation and accountability

There is clearly a problem of representation and accountability at the local level in Mutare. The majority of councillors on MCC are ZANU(PF). They have come to power through the power structures of the party which, as argued in Chapter 3, are based on exclusive power cliques linked to the upper hierarchy of the party through its patronage networks. Previously, I argued that the democratization of choosing candidates in June 1995 (by opening up the primary elections to party members) did little to alter this state of affairs. While councillors may, in good faith, wish to represent their constituents, it is the local party stalwarts which guarantee their re-election. Thus, there is less likelihood of accountability to constituents.

There is ample evidence that councillors in Mutare avoid contact with public which might demand a statement of accountability. Public meetings are seen as ordeals to evade. One councillor put the blame for this on the party for not working at the grassroots to educate people about local government. Therefore, "when you hold meetings the people can turn

against you so councillors are reluctant to do so".³ The only community-based organization which challenges the local government, Mutare Citizens and Ratepayers Organization (MCRO), is regarded with fear by politicians and most administrators alike because it is able to mobilize people to protest.⁴ When officials are invited to MCRO meetings few accept but one official who has attended comments that he first received assurances from the chairperson that she would "protect" him and that during the meeting she exerted great control over the crowd and indeed did protect him.⁵ This is indicative of two things: first, leaders of most groups are considered to be exploiters of the people for their own political gains; and, secondly, the 'people' are regarded as ignorant and inherently vulnerable to such leaders. This attitude is in great part due to the tactics of ZANU(PF) itself. While ZANU(PF) stalwarts may not educate people about local government, they mobilize people against the local government largely through demonstrations. Party structures are the most active in Sakubva and, therefore, able to mobilize effectively. One official remarks that "when talking about the politics of Mutare you are talking about the politics of Sakubva. Whoever controls Sakubva controls Mutare".⁶ Within this political culture of ZANU(PF) the pattern of participation that has emerged in Mutare is one of participation by demonstration which usually involves marching on the Civic Centre or on Community Services which is located in Sakubva or joining in shouting matches at meetings. As I argue below, no one is immune to such action

³ Interview, Ward Councillor, MCC, 15/6/95.

⁴ This organization originates from the low-density suburbs and has evolved from a former white ratepayers group to a new organization (restructured in 1992) that is more inclusive in membership. See Chapter 5 for an analysis of its relationship to MCC.

⁵ Interview, Manager, MCC, 14/7/95.

⁶ Interview, Manager, MCC, 22/5/95.

since there is factionalism within the party. Thus, councillors practice avoidance when it comes to public accountability.

The three mandatory meetings to discuss the estimates held in Sakubva, Dangamvura and Chikanga in the last week of July, 1995, demonstrate this avoidance. Many councillors did not show up because the primaries were about to be run and they did not want to be associated with such unpopular measures as raising rates.⁷ Although the meetings were about the budget and the rise in rents and rates, there were no representatives from the offices of the Treasurer or the Town Clerk to answer questions. The only administrators present were from Community Services, including the Housing Superintendent - a fact which reinforces the argument that the structures of bifurcation remain in Mutare and the high density areas (where most Africans live) are the purview of Community Services. The ZANU(PF) councillors who were there, including the mayor, dissociated themselves from the budget, for which they had voted, saying that now the people could offer their suggestions which Council would take to the Minister after which it would be up to the Ministry (MLGRUD) to decide.⁸ Only one councillor from the opposition ZANU(Ndonga) party took responsibility for the rise in rates.⁹

⁷ This was discussed at a special budget meeting of MCC (3/7/95). The councillors managed to postpone the announcement of the budget at an earlier meeting (29/6/95), from which the press was barred) by threatening to walk out but when the primaries were postponed (because the President had announced that card carrying members could vote) they were forced to pass the budget and hold the three consultation meetings ("Press barred", *The Manica Post*, 30/6/95, p. 1). The rates had been raised between 20 and 30 percent (some rates as high as 40% in 1994) every year that these councillors had been in power since 1991 (see *The Manica Post*, 5/7/91; 2/11/91; 25/9/92; 4/6/93; 8/7/94). Considering that these years span the ESAP hardships and two major droughts, the councillors were right to be concerned about public opinion.

⁸ At this point in the meeting someone pointed out that notices about changes in rates had already been published in the local newspaper!

⁹ ZANU(Ndonga) is a Christian party which enjoys the most popularity in Chipinge (just south of Mutare). Over a third of the local councillors in Chipinge Rural District are ZANU(Ndonga) while only 8 of 34 councillors are ZANU(PF) ("Zanu(Ndonga) candidate wins", *The Manica Post*, 30/6/95, p. 17.). The split within Manicaland goes back to controversy over the Chitepo assassination which the Rhodesian Front secret service set

This councillor was shouted down by the crowd because he was not ZANU(PF). When criticisms from the public mounted (about no street lighting, poor security, poor roads and absence of councillors) the mayor adopted a confrontational attitude, shouting them down and then resorting to party slogans to which people responded, if apathetically. At one meeting a group of young men parodied the slogans in an echo and that meeting ended with the crowd walking out while the mayor was speaking.¹⁰ At another meeting a member of the public asserted that it must be that the councillors who were attending the meeting were responsible for making the decision to raise rates and those who were absent were not. These reactions perhaps demonstrate the capricious state of accountability in Mutare and the fact some people have had little experience as to what accountability might mean.

The most commonly cited reason for poor performance of MCC councillors is the poor "calibre" of the councillors and this poor "calibre", in turn, is most often blamed on the poor choice of the common voter. We may get a sense of what poor "calibre" means from the words of the Deputy Minister for Environment and Tourism and MP for Mutare North, Cde. Oppah Rushesha. In an interview conducted while she was campaigning for the 1995 general election the Minister blamed residents for voting back in councillors who did not consult with them but she also commented that the

calibre of some of our councillors leaves a lot to be desired. When the Town Clerk and his officials prepare documents for discussion, they use their jargon, and some councillors, because of their calibre, do not understand what is being said. They end up approving things they don't know.¹¹

up to look like ethnic rivalry (see Martin and Johnson 1985).

¹⁰ This was in Chikanga where the councillor, and executive in the private sector, had been transferred to Harare and was not a resident. The community had not seen the councillor for over a year.

¹¹ "Rushesha assures businessmen", *Manica Post* 24/3/95, p.7.

We may surmise from this quote that poor "calibre" means poor education or less intelligent.

The Governor of Manicaland Province, at his reappointment in 1995, remarked that the "calibre" of councillors was a headache for the government and that councillors

should be of a high calibre as they also act as MPs in a mini-situation and as such, they should be well versed with the issues that affect the people. They should be people capable of interpreting Government policy and explain it to the people.¹²

As pointed out in Chapter 3, both the Senior Secretary, MLGRUD and the Chairman ZANU(PF) Manicaland Province voiced the concern that the 'people' were not capable of picking the right candidates. Others suggest that poorly educated candidates are chosen because it was poor people who organized for the guerrillas and, thus, attained leadership positions in ZANU(PF) after independence.¹³ It is suggested that better educated people are not interested in being involved in ZANU(PF) politics because it involves attending meetings and shouting slogans; and that the majority of people vote for candidates to whom they can relate and so pick poorly educated people anyway.¹⁴ It is a widely held belief that inferior councillors picked by inferior voters are responsible for lack of accountability on local councils in general and, specifically, on MCC.

There are a number of reasons why the argument about poor calibre councillors is less than satisfactory. Compared with JMC councillors, there is a higher proportion of labourers

¹² "Council saga worries Governor", The Manica Post, 21/4/95, p. 2.

¹³ One municipal councillor remarked that in ZANU(PF) "no one will climb the tree from the top" meaning that the educated elite must start with the local ZANU(PF) organization and be accepted by them if they wish to get elected (Interview, August, 1995).

¹⁴ Interviews, Permanent Secretary, Transport and Energy, 3/6/95; Councillors, MCC, August, 1995.

who have limited formal education on MCC - about one third.¹⁵ These represent almost half of the twelve ZANU(PF) councillors.¹⁶ These councillors *do* have a harder time with council minutes and often need extra explanations during committee meetings. The administration of MCC is more complex and sophisticated than that in Jinja and this may set more distance between councillors and administrators who clearly hold an advantage over councillors in their expertise. Nevertheless, the top administrators in Jinja are certainly of a similar professional standard to those in Mutare.¹⁷ Moreover, the majority of councillors, both ZANU(PF) and independent or opposition, are better educated and better-off people and it is these councillors who are committee chairmen and who have also held the position of mayor intermittently although, indeed, not in 1995.¹⁸ Lack of calibre is a less than adequate explanation for the poor performance of MCC.

Moreover, the second argument, that the common people choose councillors of poor "calibre", has hardly been tested. As I argued in Chapter 3, a very small clique of ZANU(PF) controls the selection of candidates. In addition, voter turnout is low in Mutare, reaching only

¹⁵ The occupations of MCC councillors are as follows: two retired former managers, two owners of large businesses, three owners of smaller formal businesses, one manager in the private sector, one minister, one teacher at the tertiary level, five labourers (three in manufacturing, one builder [construction worker] and one railway employee).

¹⁶ In 1995 there were two independent councillors who had got the nod of ZANU(PF) to represent their areas (one the industrial area and one a low density suburb) and one ZANU (Ndonga) councillor, also in a low density suburb. The ZANU (Ndonga) councillor had been elected in a by-election.

¹⁷ I attended many committee meetings and full Council meetings between April and August, 1995. Sometimes the contempt for councillors is quite palpable during these meetings although this was never verbalized during meetings. There was indeed frustration when the advice of administrators was ignored or the vote so split that no action could be taken. However, as I argue below, this tense atmosphere was less to do with calibre of councillors than with the constellation of political power relations in ZANU(PF).

¹⁸ The mayor in 1995 was one of the labourers and was a compromise since he candidates for mayor who are better educated but are from two different factions in ZANU(PF) and had been accused by rivals of various misdeeds from time to time (see below).

20% in 1991.¹⁹ Finally, there is evidence of intimidation within the party and towards opposition candidates and their supporters which limits candidates and probably discourages a good turnout on election day. During the 1991 election, candidates from the opposition Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) party were disqualified because they owed Council money. However, ZANU(PF) candidates who owed money for commercial stands were allowed to run. During the 1991 primaries there was intimidation by some party members and some people complained that they were not allowed to vote.²⁰ ZANU(PF) candidates who felt they were cheated during the primaries and ran as independents were punished by the party.²¹ People were told that if they voted for opposition people in general they would lose out on development and opposition candidates and their families were threatened. For example, the ZUM candidate who was planning to run for Ward 7 withdrew because his family could not withstand the pressure. The Manica Post reported that "his wife approached this newspaper pleading that it should not publish the fact that... (he) would be contesting the seat on behalf

¹⁹ "Old Councillors voted back", The Manica Post, 9/8/91, p. 1. This also extends to the national elections. Although the common voters role includes everyone, even lodgers, for national voting, the same ZANU(PF) selection process obtains. In addition, by constitutional right the President may appoint 20 members (8 provincial governors and 12 members) directly and ten traditional leaders (chiefs) to parliament (Constitutional Amendment No. 9 1989). Commenting on the 1995 national elections Richard Saunders asserts that,

the better indicator of the parlous (sic!) state of Zimbabwean democracy was ZANU PF's unprecedented winning of 55 seats by acclamation. In reality , during theses "national" elections less than 45% of Zimbabwe's 4.8 million eligible voters living in 65 contested constituencies were able to vote - and typically in a choice between the ruling party nominee and one opposition party or independent candidate (1995, 4).

²⁰ The Manica Post, 21/6/91, p. 11.

²¹ "Independents must quit ZANU(PF)", The Manica Post, 9/8/91. After the election they were threatened with expulsion but finally they were just prevented from holding office for four years (The Manica Post 1/11/91, p. 7.). Oppah Rushesha, MP for Mutare North asserted that independent candidates were dangerous (The Manica Post, 2/8/91, p. 4.).

of Cde. Edgar Tekere's party".²² The threat of denied development is made clear in another episode. Daniel Sithole ZUM MP for Mutare Central in 1990 election complained that ZANU(PF) wanted him to cross the floor and that MCC councillors would not speak to him. The Governor of Manicaland Province asserted that,

In the final analysis, it is the people who voted them in who lose out. We control the Government expenditure and if he does not approach us there will be very little development in their constituencies.²³

In the 1991 elections, although every ward except one had either independents or opposition candidates running, none were elected. Thus, the lack of accountability has little to do with the calibre of councillors and even less to do with the choice of the 'people' and much more to do with the intention of ZANU(PF) cadres to dominate politics.

Bifurcation and the politics of power

I have argued in Chapter 3 that the propensity of the central government to maintain the existing structures of the settler government has meant the retention of the bifurcation of both space and administrative function at the local level. It is clear that the administration in Mutare has stayed remarkably intact. Business has gone on as usual despite the employment of African administrators and the African majority on Council. As I argued in Chapter 3, the local government areas are merely a name change from the former townships. As in the days of the settler government they are administered rather than governed. The housing superintendent is still the arbiter of neighbourhood disputes within the local government areas

²² The Manica Post, 15/2/91, p. 1.

²³ "Quit ZUM MP told", The Manica Post, 8/2/95, p. 1.

and the director of Housing and Community Services does all the planning.²⁴ The local government areas are to pay for themselves out of the housing account and the beer account. While home ownership has opened up (see below), the amenities are few and when health and education are supplemented by the general revenue this is seen as welfare. Moreover, there is no councillor, let alone community, input into the budget process. Heads of departments make budget priorities and consider *requests* of councillors which are viewed as minor in nature. The technical master plan is prepared by Engineering and Treasury and these minor requests of councillors are often not met because of constraints.²⁵ In the local government areas the administration concentrates on primary health and education from which central government has withdrawn grants. Moreover, the administration concentrates on its own business enterprises (such as beerhalls, building stores, construction and commercial waste removal) including a large expansion of the waterworks which involves central government grants and cost recovery schemes. Thus the business of Council has changed little since the days of the settler government and councillors have little direct input.

The attempt by ZANU(PF) to dominate politics at the local level within the old structures of the settler government has resulted in a struggle for power which reduces rather than enhances the possibility of responsibility and accountability. In Mutare in the early 1980s it was soon clear that the election of ZANU(PF) councillors could not bring the changes that local party stalwarts wanted. The ability to exert pressure on such a structure came to rest in

²⁴ Interviews: Housing Superintendent, MCC, 15/5/95; Director of Community Services, MCC, 22, 24, 26 /5/95. Various meetings of Community Service, Housing, Health and Education Committee, April - August 1995.

²⁵ An example of these minor requests would be the road and bridge to the cemetery in Sakubva described in footnote 2. Other minor requests are better roads and street lighting in the local government areas.

the tactics of ZANU(PF) to mobilize people against the administration rather than on a concerted effort to make political change.²⁶ While party stalwarts vied for control over who was put on council, they also vied for influence over administrators which tended to take the form of councillors giving protection to administrators (from the other faction) in return for favours. This has had a negative effect on the ability of administrators to act or give advice freely and on the ability of councillors to keep administrators accountable in the running of the municipality.

The connection to the provincial hierarchy of the party through patronage networks and factional party politics within ZANU(PF) also impedes the ability of councillors to perform effectively for their constituents.²⁷ The provincial hierarchy has immediate influence

²⁶ The politics of mobilization and demonstration was used by ZANU(PF) to remove the first post-independence council in Mutare in 1983 when ZANU(PF) women from Sakubva marched on MCC. The first council had several councillors of European descent and ZANU(PF) councillors who had been handpicked by the Central Committee and who were better educated and better-off than local cadres who saw this council as acting out of their control. The central hierarchy of the party wanted councillors in place who were able to handle the management of the sophisticated operation of MCC, the administration of which was dominated by Zimbabweans of European descent. By the end of the first year of that first post-independence council's mandate, every top administrator had resigned and there was a scramble to replace them which resulted in a vulnerable and unproven administration (Interview, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transport and Energy, formerly with MLGRUD, 3/6/95). It would appear that in such a situation the administration was particularly vulnerable to the power relations of ZANU(PF) politics.

²⁷ This is not merely elite conflict but factional politics. Naomi Chazan et. al. maintain that a faction is "organized by elites, [but] nevertheless reaches out to a variety of social groups and down to the local level" and provides for a broad participation (1988, 187). Jonathan Barker, in his analysis of factions at the local level in Senegal, describes the centre/local relations in a faction: "Authority in arenas below the national level is dependent upon support from above and from below; it is the authority of the intermediary. A local leader is useful to his followers to the extent that he wields influence in higher-level arenas where allocative power really lies. He is useful to his superiors to the extent that he can guarantee local support" (1973, 290). As Chazan et. al. point out, factions can facilitate the redistribution of resources and authority among different networks and may also be used to gain control to bring about change (1988, 187-191). Certainly, Barker viewed the factions in Senegal, which were fairly fluid, as vehicles to express opposition to policies or leaders at the local level and to bring about change. He asserted that, although there were many reasons for factions, factional politics, at least in the Senegalese context, could lead to progressive politics. However he noted that "(T)he danger is that political leaders at each level are so preoccupied with the exigencies of maintaining their own positions in a shifting and intricate political environment that purposeful and consistent action is as rare as it is difficult" (301). He also notes that power within factions is skewed towards the highly placed elites who have control over resources.

on local politics in Mutare because it is the capital of Manicaland Province and thus the headquarters for the provincial party hierarchy. As explained in Chapter 3, the provincial party leaders are on the central committee at the national level so there is a direct connection to the central power of the party. One important way for the central party hierarchy to exert its influence is its control over where money for large development projects might go. This is amply demonstrated in the politics of Chipinge (just south of Mutare) where people have voted for opposition candidates [ZANU(Ndonga)] in national elections and, therefore, have given Manicaland the reputation of voting for the opposition.²⁸ In the run-up to the national election in April, 1995, the ZANU(PF) candidate in Chipinge South warned the people that if they voted for the incumbent they would get no development.²⁹ While opposition candidates won in both constituencies, by July the MP for Chipinge South (a long-serving MP and the only opposition member in the previous parliament) had crossed over to ZANU(PF) "in the interest of unity and development".³⁰ The ZANU(PF) Manicaland provincial chairman commented that now people "would be able to concentrate on development which was needed in the province".³¹ As I argued above, this development is also used as a threat in local

Chazan et. al. also recognize the negative consequences of factions, such as violence and repression, as well as the fact that they are "consistently skewed in favor of segments of the elite" (191). In this chapter I argue that the factions in ZANU(PF), as demonstrated in the Mutare case, prevent accountability and paralyse the local administration. Moreover, they close down participation and perpetuate patronage political behaviour, offering no openings for alternative political behaviours to evolve.

²⁸ In 1995 ZANU(PF) won 118 of 120 seats that were up for election and those two opposition seats were Chipinge North and South - it is a sore point for ZANU(PF).

²⁹ The Manica Post, 10/2/95, p. 5.

³⁰ "Former Ndonga MP joins ZANU(PF)", Manica Post, 14/7/95, p. 2.

³¹ "Kangai Welcomes Sithole's defection", Sunday Mail, 9/7/95, p. 1.

elections. Perhaps the most telling evidence of influence at the local level is a remark made, again, by the provincial chairman of ZANU(PF). When he was denounced for meddling in MCC affairs, he replied that there was no way that the party leadership could clash with the council since the council was "merely a baby of the party".³²

In the national elections in 1995 the patronage and power networks affecting Mutare burst into view. The ZANU(PF) primaries for Mutare Central and Mutare South were particularly bitter fights both of which were won by candidates ostensibly supported by the provincial chairman of ZANU(PF) (the candidate for Mutare Central was his deputy) against candidates supported by the ZANU(PF) provincial secretary for administration.³³ During the primaries the candidate for Mutare South accused the ZANU(PF) provincial secretary for administration of collaborating with the national director of ZANU(PF) primary elections to disqualify him.³⁴ The winning candidates in the primaries also won the April election and right after the election the party suspended three municipal councillors, including the deputy mayor, for "decampaigning" the ZANU(PF) candidates and supporting an opposition candidate.³⁵ The suspensions appeared to be another episode in the disagreements between the secretary for administration and the chairman and were reportedly supported by the chairman

³² "Kangai denies allegation", *Manica Post*, 2/9/94, p. 1.

³³ Both the ZANU(PF) Manicaland provincial chairman and the administrative secretary had been MPS and cabinet members and won again in the 1995 elections.

³⁴ "Nzarayebani accuses top Zanu(PF) officials of trying to eject him", *The Manica Post*, 24/2/95, p. 1. Allegedly they had accused him of giving a party for his supporters.

³⁵ "Twenty suspended in ZANU(PF) witch-hunt", *The Manica Post*, 7/5/95, p. 5. This was an exceedingly threatening gesture since the primaries for local elections were to take place in June. If the suspensions were upheld it would mean losing their seats on Council.

who said he agreed with them but "denied endorsing them".³⁶ Those who had been suspended blamed the same provincial party officials for intrigue against the town clerk in Mutare.³⁷

Indeed, at a meeting during the election campaign the MP for Mutare Central had encouraged municipal workers to strike in order to remove the town clerk. At this meeting the MP said he had a "council in waiting carefully selected among party cadres carrying the interests of the people of Mutare at heart".³⁸ Here, then we can get a glimpse of the influence exerted by national politicians at the local level.

The politicization of the administration through ZANU(PF) factionalism has seriously affected the ability of the Council to take responsibility and demand accountability. In the early 1990s the politicized struggle distilled into a conflict between the town clerk and the treasurer. Each was supported by a faction of the party hierarchy at the provincial level which reached down to local councillors and this produced what became the famous '7/8 split' on Mutare City Council. Issues facing the Council became intertwined with intrigue of one faction or another. Thus, whenever a decision was taken, the vote was 7/8 corresponding with support for the treasurer's or the town clerk's position respectively. Since the choice for mayor rested among councillors until 1995, the same split occurred at the political level and thus the councillors are never united behind a specific programme or commitment to collective accountability.³⁹ The history of the 1990s has been a rash of suspensions, of both mayors and

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ "Mvenge calls for employee strike", *The Manica Post*, 31/3/95, p. 1.

³⁹ Interviews with various local and a national officials conducted April- August 1995. Also see *The Manica Post*, "Split in Council over audit", 29/1/93, p. 1; "Something must be done about split", 19/3/93, p. 1.

administrators based on pressure from one faction or another, but the result has not improved accountability. While some of the accusations have been upheld in court, many are decided in council with the result that both administrators and politicians tend to rise again like the proverbial phoenix when their faction gains the upper hand.

A good example of this occurred in 1992 during the time when ESAP was having its first serious economic effects but also when Zimbabwe was suffering from a serious drought and when municipal management of water was a highly sensitive issue. When serious allegations of irregularities were raised against some council officials, both councillors and administrators used other issues, in this case the very serious issue of water shortage, in order to out-manoeuvre the rival faction. In May 1992 the treasurer was allegedly inquiring into "some questionable payments and the alleged irregularities by the council including the sale of stands".⁴⁰ Some councillors had already been calling for the suspension of the director of Community Services over these irregularities. Clearly this was a situation that required serious investigation and concerted action from the councillors.

Instead of uniting as a council to investigate the irregularities the councillors broke into the customary 7/8 factions. The faction supporting the town clerk seized an opportunity provided by the water crisis to retaliate. Although the councillors had been warned by

⁴⁰ The dispute centred around the fact that although the town clerk, as principal officer, has authority over department heads provided his authority does not "derogate from the personal responsibility of a head of department for the efficient management of his department" (Urban Councils Act 1980 Chapter 214, Section 89 (4)), the internal auditor reports to the treasurer. It is reported that the town clerk, as principal officer, preferred the report to go to his office or else to an audit committee of the council. Once the town clerk made this proposal the treasurer brought up the subject of irregularities in the town clerk's office (Interview, Acting Town Clerk, MCC, 10/8/95). Some informants expressed the view that the treasurer knew that the town clerk would keep the auditor's reports under wraps in his office and wanted to prevent that from happening. The subsequent detouring of the independent auditor's report to the town clerk's office instead of submitting it to the council tends to reduce the credibility of that department. However, the internal auditor's reporting to the treasurer instead of an auditing committee remained a problem in the administration in 1995 (see discussion below).

administrators for some time that the water was low and a crisis was in the making, the councillors were reluctant to call public meetings in the wards to warn people about restricting the use of water.⁴¹ Nor did they wish to implement a surcharge which would reduce consumption as they knew that this would result in demonstrations. No one was willing to be the one to take a decision. Thus, water levels became so low that a crisis was upon them and they were compelled to impose a punitive surcharge in order to reduce consumption quickly.⁴² The treasurer's department did not institute the surcharge immediately upon the council's decision and the eight councillors who supported the town clerk successfully voted for the suspension of the treasurer.⁴³ The suspension was for not implementing the special surcharge on water bills but also, incidentally, for releasing classified information about council irregularities.⁴⁴ Thus, instead of following up on the alleged irregularities, the council (the 8 of the 7/8 split) chose to 'shoot the messenger' in suspending the treasurer. Accountability was not grounded in facts, nor in negotiated political solutions but in the ability of one faction to out-maneuver the other.

While the focus was on the suspension of the treasurer, the mismanagement of the

⁴¹ This procrastination was played out again during the equally serious drought of 1995 at the time of my research period. Again the councillors ignored the engineering department until a crisis was looming. This time it was because of the approaching local primaries. Nor is this behaviour peculiar to Mutare. There was also considerable concern in Harare where measures were put off despite the advice of administrators ("Councillors reject advice to impose water rationing", *The Herald*, 10/5/95, p. 1.).

⁴² The fact that public education and meetings was not an option speaks volumes for the local politics in Mutare.

⁴³ It is not clear why the surcharge was not implemented except that perhaps it had to do with billing procedures which were quite slow in Mutare in 1995. The treasurer was also aware of the volatility of reaction from the population over such measures and perhaps wished to delay the measure or show disapproval by delaying it. On the other hand, the delay could have been quite short and seized upon quite unfairly.

⁴⁴ *The Manica Post*: "City Treasurer suspended", 29/5/92, p. 1; "Why city Treasurer was suspended", 5/6/92, p. 14.

water crisis went unchecked. Residents in the local government areas threatened to demonstrate if the surcharge was imposed.⁴⁵ To make matters worse, the water had to be temporarily cut off by engineering because of very low pressure and, as a consequence, 'air spinning' caused the meters to soar.⁴⁶ Subsequent rationing of water by supplying it on alternate days compounded the 'air spinning' in the meters and also caused a number of breaks in the system which was not geared to withstand the constant fluctuation in pressure. Although engineering was aware of this, the bills were allowed to go out with the new surcharge on them. The treasurer was reinstated by the seven of the 7/8 split (of the eight, two were absent and one abstained) and immediately faced charges by the mayor and the town clerk of delaying the preparation of the budget while he was under suspension.⁴⁷ In August, when June's bills were received with the inflated readings and the surcharge, a demonstration of women from Sakubva "stormed the civic centre" having received bills of up to Z\$2000.00.⁴⁸ The people were told by the treasurer's department to leave their bills with engineering from which department the "problem emanates".⁴⁹ The charges were subsequently dropped and continuous water supply restored.⁵⁰ However, within a week the rationing was

⁴⁵ "Demo threat over new surcharges", Manica Post, 31/6/92, p. 2.

⁴⁶ When the water is cut off, the meters air in the pipes apparently makes the meters spin. This was a common occurrence according to the council engineer. At the time, the mayor explained through the press that the water had been cut off because of over consumption which was in turn caused by administrative inefficiency in implementing the surcharge to curb over-consumption. Thus he blamed the people and the administration for the crisis (Manica Post 22/5/92, p. 23).

⁴⁷ "City Treasurer back at work", Manica Post, 12/6/92, p.1.

⁴⁸ "Women in demo over high water bills", The Manica Post, 7/8/92, p. 2.

⁴⁹ "More water bills thrown back at council", Manica Post, 21/8/92, p. 1.

⁵⁰ "Water charges dropped", Manica Post, 9/10/92, p. 1.

reinstated with no warning to the public and when objections were raised the mayor denied responsibility saying that the decision was taken "by my staff".⁵¹ Thus no political responsibility was admitted nor were administrators made accountable even though they were blamed.

Even the evidence in an independent auditor's report was not enough to unite councillors in a demand for accountability on behalf of their constituents.⁵² There was an uproar in September 1992 when a draft copy of the forthcoming independent auditor's report was sidetracked to the town clerk's office and leaked to councillors. When the report was finally presented to council the auditor cited laxities such as no advertising for land sales and the setting of prices by the office of the town clerk instead of the appropriate officials in engineering or treasury. The auditor also reported that council's financial situation was "worsened by a number of factors including a communication breakdown between departments, animosity and undue influence, interdepartmental conflicts of a destructive nature and a gross misrepresentation to some extent".⁵³ Again the council fell into the 7/8 split, either rallying behind the treasurer, who supported the auditor, or the town clerk, who did not. As a result of the report, the town clerk, the assistant town clerk and the legal officer were charged with the illegal sale of stands and suspended with pay. However, they were reinstated in August even though the case was still in court and councillors commented that

⁵¹ "Council flops over water", The Manica Post, 16/10/92, p. 1.

⁵² The independent audit is a statutory requirement (The Urban Councils Act 1980, Sections 251, 252, 253).

⁵³ Interviews various MCC officials between April and August 1995; "Council budget now ready", The Manica Post, 4/9/92, p.3.; "Council finances in a mess, says report", The Manica Post, 11/9/92, p. 1.

those who wanted them back were probably benefiting from the illegal activities.⁵⁴ During this time the treasurer was again suspended for delaying the 1992-93 budget (he had been suspended at the time) and then reinstated just before the 1993-94 estimates were due in June 1993.⁵⁵ Subsequently, the treasurer was removed by the MLGRUD and permanently replaced by his deputy in May 1994. However, in August of that year the battle was renewed in a council meeting when the ZANU(PF) provincial chairman insisted on the reinstatement of one councillor, who had been convicted and fined for conflict of interest, and the conferring of the title of alderman on another councillor (both members of the group of 7). The town clerk (and, thus, his group of 8) vehemently opposed this suggestion and there was a renewed call for the removal of the town clerk. The Minister of local government, for his part, reportedly said he was not aware of the council squabbles since no one had notified him officially and he had received no reports of maladministration and, moreover, that those interfering were making a big fuss about nothing.⁵⁶ One must question the criteria by which the ministry chooses to have a hands-off policy or not. Clearly, accountability is long lost among the intrigues of power politics.

The factional politics of ZANU(PF) and the lack of accountability it has generated have literally paralysed the administration at MCC. Administrators cite political pressure ranging from getting jobs for councillors' constituents to the delaying of important decisions

⁵⁴ "No going back", The Manica Post, 27/8/93, p. 1.

⁵⁵ At this time most of the top officers were on suspension and the city engineer assumed the office of principal officer.

⁵⁶ The Manica Post: "Msika not aware of council squabbles", 16/9/94, p. 19; "I won't fire Mutare Town Clerk - Msika", 21/10/94, p. 1.

which eventually leads to crisis and results in charges of incompetency.⁵⁷ On the other hand, political process in place provides ample opportunity for administrators to misuse their position and Council funds.⁵⁸ In the lower levels of the administration labour relations are caught in the vortex of power. In April and October of 1995 there were three strikes of council employees and each time successfully demanded the suspension of the town clerk.⁵⁹ The first strike was encouraged by the MP for Mutare Centre with the purpose of removing the town clerk. However, employees were reacting to a new categorization of employees and a new salary scale which saw a 20% raise for the high categories and a negotiated 12.5% increase for lower categories. What they objected to was that the former was enacted by the town clerk while the latter was deferred.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, the focus was not on the political problem of how this happened and what remedies there were but on firing the town clerk. Strikers were joined by MCRO, the members of which opposed the town clerk's administrative style, and the MP for Mutare Centre, who accused the town clerk of

⁵⁷ It is a regular occurrence for administration to supply incumbent councillors to be with application forms for casual labour while they are campaigning in ZANU(PF) primaries Interview, Official, Engineering, MCC, 14/7/95). During foot canvases for the ZANU(PF) primaries with a novice candidate I observed that residents regularly asked if the prospective councillor had application forms for them.

⁵⁸ The internal auditor continues to report to the treasurer's department rather than a council committee and reports seem to stop there rather than going to council (one wonders if it would make a difference given the constellation of power at the local level). The accounting of projects undertaken by council are also not very transparent especially when it comes to contracting out (Interview, Official, Internal Auditing, MCC, 27/7/95). Pasteur notes that in Zimbabwe in "some councils, including Mutare, professionals such as engineers are allowed to spend a portion of their time on private work. Most of these measures are designed to retain staff in local government in the face of more attractive private sector opportunities" (1992, 42). Given the lack of accountability on MCC one wonders what license is taken.

⁵⁹ The Manica Post: "Striking workers demand removal of Town Clerk", 7/4/95, p. 1; "Council Workers end six day strike", 6/10/95, p. 1.

⁶⁰ A subsequent enquiry found that the town clerk had instituted the salary increases for management even though the council had adopted the new categories in principle and had deferred the question of salaries ("Matamisa must go, council insists", The Manica Post, 14/6/95, p. 1).

victimizing employees who were active in ZANU(PF). It was reported that employees felt that they were in the middle of politics and that their grievances were "now playing second fiddle".⁶¹ Clearly, no part of the administration escapes the constellation of political power relations.

Participation by Demonstration

I have argued that participation by demonstration is the only avenue open to the majority of people in Mutare and this type of participation, far from achieving accountability and more responsible political behaviour both in the population and the politicians, is shaped according to the constellation of power relations. Precisely because there are no mechanisms for explaining council policy, let alone encouraging participation through discussion, all issues turn into a crisis before there is any interaction. Politicians avoid taking decisions on important matters because they know they will be unpopular and they fear the reaction. On the other hand, their power is grounded in the ability to mobilize people against their political opponents and so they encourage the very behaviour that they fear. The manipulation of demonstrations has also been used by politicians at the national level in order to promote their own popularity. This behaviour patronizes local people and local issues and permits little political dialogue or opportunity for creative, effective and long-term political solutions.

An issue that has crystallized this kind of behaviour is housing. Like the housing estates in Jinja the old housing estates in Sakubva prove to be a political legacy that requires

⁶¹ The Manica Post: "Striking Workers demand removal of Town Clerk", 7/4/95, p. 1; "Mvenge calls for employee strike", 31/3/95, p. 1. A council electrician who was involved in the strike commented to the researcher that if the town clerk should return he would make employees pay. An uncertain atmosphere was palpable during the research period of April-August 1995 when people feared that their telephone conversations were being monitored and always made sure that doors were shut tight during meetings.

a comprehensive political solution. As in Jinja, tenants tend to 'inherit' houses from generation to generation. And as in Jinja, the waiting list is long for affordable housing (15,792 in June 1995).⁶² Also, tenancy can provide an income and there is an informal market in lodgers. However, whereas in Jinja the problem is temporarily alleviated by rental of former Asian properties or by exporting the problem to adjacent jurisdictions, the high density areas in Mutare are the only possibility for those seeking low-income housing. Of those areas, Sakubva is the most affected because it is the most accessible to the city centre. In addition to the long waiting list, high unemployment and inflation means that even the so-called affordable houses (a combination of shellhouses and serviced stands) are beyond the reach of many.⁶³ The informal housing market in Sakubva consists of shacks built on the premises of Council rental units. In some cases shacks are built to accommodate family members but the majority of tenants who allow the building of shacks do so as a lucrative business.⁶⁴ In

⁶² Housing Officer's Report on Housing in Mutare, 27/6/95.

⁶³ Shell houses are concrete boxes of one, two or three rooms plus toilet and washing facilities and are purchased ready-made but can be added to by the owner. Services stands are plots that can be purchased which are linked to electrical and sewerage services and the owner constructs the building according to municipal standards. In his review of the World Bank's project completion report for the "Urban I" development project Patrick Bond notes that the income parameters (houses were to go to those who made between Z\$200-400 a month) were far below what was required for the \$100 per room cost. He argues that with "four rooms per house, a family earning the maximum allowed (\$400) was expected to shell out 100 percent of its monthly income (or in the case of the majority for whom a \$200 monthly income was anticipated, twice its monthly income)" ("World Bank's mixed record in urban Zimbabwe", *Financial Gazette*, 3/8/95, p. 4.). New homeowners thus must look to renting out the rooms in order to make payments and Bond points out that this is a common practice in Chikanga in Mutare. He comments that "to afford the monthly payments, in other words, at least three families renting rooms from the recipient would have to squeeze in, in order to bring the housing payment ratio from 100 percent down to something more reasonable" (Ibid.). The results of these 'inconsistencies' are compounded by high unemployment and inflation and thus repossession has become a common occurrence in every urban centre. See also *The Herald*: "Council threatens to repossess idle stands", 4/6/95, p. 6; "Nkomo urges ban on auction of defaulters' homes", 5/6/95, p. 1; "100 defaulters' houses, stands auctioned off" 18/5/95, p. 1 (*Business Herald*); "Houses up for auction increasing", 3/7/95, p. 1.

⁶⁴ Survey of Unauthorized Temporary Structures in Sakubva, 1992, Housing Office, MCC. The most common number is four shacks per rental unit although there are often six and one Council tenant had allowed 17 shacks to be built and was receiving Z\$850.00 per month (Z\$50 per structure was the usual charge in 1995).

addition, a whole informal economy has grown up around the building of shacks including the selling of materials, plans and building expertise.⁶⁵ Apart from the problem of overcrowding and insecurity, overuse of toilets and washing facilities causes frequent breakdowns. Lodgers use water and electricity both of which are subsidized by the Council since the rents charged do not nearly cover the overconsumption in the affected houses.⁶⁶ On the other hand, when rents and charges are raised (as they are yearly) the amount is simply passed on to the lodger who until 1995 had no vote. They also have to be met by renters who do not carry on illegal renting but in their own way subsidize those who do.

By 1991, administrators in housing had come up with a comprehensive plan to alleviate this situation. This plan required a considerable amount of political cooperation. Although the plan recommended the gradual destruction of shacks, that operation was to be in conjunction with a variety of housing options which included: increasing the availability of stands in high density areas; reducing the size and costs of stands in those areas; allowing

The rent charged by Council was approximately Z\$120 per month. The survey found that only 6% of the lodgers were illegal immigrants from Mozambique but commented that probably people were reluctant to state their status. Being on the Mozambique border, Mutare (and former Umtali) has a history of blaming overcrowding on illegal immigrants from Mozambique. Of the 35 Council houses provided for municipal policemen, 18 were occupied by lodgers instead of the employee they were supposed to house. Thus many people have a considerable and varied stake in this business. I am concentrating on shacks in Sakubva because that is where the problem is the most acute and where the constellation of political power is most felt. However, in order to create breathing space for owners of new stands in Chikanga and Dangamvura the Council has allowed temporary structures to be built on top of properly laid out foundations. Often people rent these structures out to lodgers in order to meet payments for the stands. This has a considerable effect on the primary schools which become overcrowded with children who do not belong to the recorded owner. Since money for building schools depends on the population of children *on paper* it means that the population is under-represented in official tallies. This is one of the reason that overcrowding becomes a major problem for schools (see Chapter 5). Therefore, the complexity of the problem of the informal housing market.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*; Interview, Housing Superintendent, MCC, 15/5/95. A tour of the area reveals signs advertising for the businesses. Also see *The Manica Post*, "Informal sector projects spring up in Sakubva", 22/11/91, p. 4.

⁶⁶ The Housing Officer, MCC, estimated that utilities were subsidized up to 80% in 1995 (Interview, 6/7/95). Also see *The Manica Post*, "Crisis in Sakubva", 1/11/91, p. 5.

temporary structures on the stands; and, providing some 'clusters' of two roomed houses for rent or purchase. The report pointed out that it was equally important to summon political will by informing all levels of the party "so that when some of the shacks-dwellers are removed and their shacks demolished, we do not expect members of the Party hierarchy scurrying into Municipal Offices to seek to stop action as so often happens when operations begin".⁶⁷ Also important, according to the report, was a comprehensive response from the MLGRUD and other ministries so that those who needed subsidies would get them.

It is indicative of the ineffectiveness of the ZANU(PF) political network in creating constructive political solutions that no comprehensive solution could be forged through political cooperation. In 1991 the Council tried to impose a solution by scheduling shacks it deemed engaged in criminal activities (often prostitution) or housing illegal immigrants for destruction and in 1992 tried to recover costs by charging a Z\$50.00 fee for erecting a shack. The enumeration of 'criminal' shacks was met with a threat to boycott the local elections (scheduled for that year) and since lodgers were unable to vote we can assume that this threat came from the tenant 'landlords' who could.⁶⁸ After the election (which returned the old councillors), when the Council resumed plans for weeding out shacks with criminal activities, the Deputy Minister for Political Affairs (MP Mutare North) led women from Sakubva in a demonstration and "stormed into the office of the director of housing and community

⁶⁷ Report of the Survey of Unauthorized Structures in Sakubva, MCC Housing Office, 1991, p. 10. 'Landlords' are very reluctant to give up having payments from shack-dwellers and so vehemently object to a structure being removed even after the tenant has been relocated (Interview, Housing Superintendent, MCC, 15/5/95).

⁶⁸ The Manica Post: "Sakubva residents threaten to boycott polls", 5/7/91, p. 1; "Not all shacks will go - council" 12/7/91, p. 1.; "Residents say no to \$50.00 charge", 20/11/92, p. 1. Since councillors were engaged in identifying the shacks with criminal activities we can assume that those choices might have political overtones.

services" demanding to know why shacks were being demolished.⁶⁹ In 1992 President Mugabe made a tour of Sakubva after which he expressed his shock because he "had never seen such squalor" and promptly arranged for a central government allocation of Z\$5 million and the erection of two-story blocks of flats in Sakubva.⁷⁰ In January 1993 Sakubva women demonstrated again against the Council's attempt to charge a Z\$50.00 levy for backyard shacks and the Deputy Minister for Political affairs again supported the women and asked for a meeting. By 1995, some clusters had been built, stand sizes had been reduced and people were now allowed to pay deposits and to build temporary structures on their stands.⁷¹ However, as soon as people had been resettled and their shacks were demolished, new shacks appeared. Administrators remarked that the political will to stop 'landlords' from encouraging shacks could not be found and that even when councillors approved policy there was grave danger of political fallout for administrators since political figures could always count on raising their popularity through the support of demonstrations.⁷² This example is indicative of the fact that the ZANU(PF) network is unable to coordinate levels of government for cooperation. At no time is a political effort made to engage all parties in constructive political solutions but rather patronage politics continues to fuel participation by demonstration.

Women and the politics of participation by demonstration

The role of women in the political culture of participation by demonstration, far from

⁶⁹ "Minister in Sakubva demo", *The Manica Post*, 13/3/92, p. 19.

⁷⁰ *The Manica Post*: "Sakubva housing crisis", 11/12/92, p. 16; "\$5m for Sakubva facelift", 31/12/92, p. 1.

⁷¹ Review of the Activities of the Housing Section, MCC, 17/6/95.

⁷² Various interviews of officials in Housing and Community Service between April and August, 1995.

encouraging active participation and discussion and demand for accountability on council, reinforces their role as supporters of men and reinforces the politics of patronage. In virtually all demonstrations in Mutare women have been at the forefront, chanting party slogans and singing songs. As I have argued previously they have also been at the forefront of intimidation against opposition candidates and their families. Party women also have a substantial showing at meetings and voting in primaries, mostly in support of male candidates. In return for this support ZANU(PF) women enjoy patronage favours which can take different forms. For example, sixty-two women were given 'voluntary' jobs by MCC.⁷³ When they were dismissed after five years in 1994 there was an uproar and the local paper commented that officials,

try to cultivate political muscle using women, who, as most people know, are a very powerful voice in Zimbabwe. It is very likely that all the 62 women in question are members of the ruling party's Women's League.⁷⁴

ZANU(PF) also supported local women's cooperatives among Women's League members in the 1980s.⁷⁵ Other rewards for their loyalty reportedly include business and shopping expeditions by bus to Mozambique which the ZANU(PF) secretary for administration, Manicaland, arranges every other week.⁷⁶ Thus women's activities in the party are an integral

⁷³ "Fired women vow to sit in", *The Manica Post*, 27/5/94, p. 1. These jobs as "health advisors and security officers" involved receiving a uniform, bars of soap and a token payment of Z\$720 (approx. US\$100) a year.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ There are four such cooperatives in Mutare which also have received help from MCC. See Chapter 6 for an analysis of these women's groups.

⁷⁶ *The Manica Post*, "Town Talk", 10/2/95, p. 12. In February 1995 ZANU(PF) women from Masvingo were left stranded in Mutare after the trip to take them to Mozambique to visit the graves of fallen freedom fighters was cancelled (*The Financial Gazette*, 9/2/95, p. 1).

part of the patronage network.

However, the participation of women has not led to formal political participation at the local level nor to an opportunity for changing political behaviour. As I have pointed out in Chapter 3, there were no women councillors serving on MCC in 1995. Moreover, there is little interest among women in Women's League activity unless there are political favours involved. At a provincial meeting in Mutare in 1991, the Deputy Minister for Political Affairs, a woman, lamented that, with such a poor turn-out, the Women's League in Manicaland was dead. She reminded women that the party depended on their strength and support. The women who did arrive complained that the party was not getting them self-help projects and MPs were especially unhelpful. The Deputy Minister replied that women should not wait around for donors.⁷⁷ The MP for Mutare North and a deputy minister also addressed women in Mutare in 1993 telling them that they had been used by the local councillors and that if they had time to demonstrate in the streets they were not being productive (the same deputy minister led women in the shack demonstrations in 1991). At another meeting in Mutare in 1994, a speaker for the Women's League suggested that the party was using women who were unemployed but was doing nothing for them in return. When she suggested that they form a women's forum the women objected saying that they were tired of organizing, at which point the provincial secretary for information promised that donor money was coming soon.⁷⁸ Thus women are castigated for expecting patronage behaviour by the same people who gain power through the patronage system and the concomitant participation by demonstration

⁷⁷ "ZANU(PF) Women's League is dead", *The Manica Post*, 15/3/91. p. 4.

⁷⁸ "Party league exploited - city woman alleges", *The Manica Post*, 8/7/94, p. 12.

performed by women. However, there is little hint that women are prepared to change their behaviour in an organized fashion nor is there any suggestion that party organization should be different or that women should participate on MCC.

Executive mayors and political change

In 1995 new legislation was brought in ostensibly to remedy the problem of poor 'calibre' councillors, as defined by government and party officials, on municipal councils.⁷⁹ There is a consensus that the problem of poor 'calibre' councillors is a general one in the larger urban centres and, hence, the legislation.⁸⁰ Thus, we may conclude that Mutare is not a special case but that the political arrangement for local urban governments in Zimbabwe has generally spawned ineffective councils. Through the legislation the Zimbabwe government proposes that an executive mayor of good 'calibre' with a universal outlook provides the solution. Under the legislation the executive mayor is elected by the whole city. The Zimbabwe government was reluctant to outline qualifications for executive mayor in the new legislation for fear of being undemocratic and restrictive⁸¹ and specifies only that the candidate must be at least forty years of age and proficient in English.⁸² In this section I argue that the legislation treats a symptom (ineffective councils), not the problem and, therefore, does not sufficiently address the underlying political relations of decentralized

⁷⁹ This was widely reported in the newspapers and confirmed in interviews conducted from April to August, 1995 with several national politicians including the Minister for Local Government.

⁸⁰ The urban centres for which the executive mayor legislation was written are: Bulawayo, Chitungwiza, Gweru, Harare, Kwekwe, Masvingo, and Mutare.

⁸¹ Interview, Official, Office of the Minister, MLGRUD, 1/6/95.

⁸² Statutory Instrument 148A of 1995, Presidential Powers (Temporary Measures) (Urban Councils) Regulations, 1995, Section 7 (2). This was the temporary legislation which allowed for elections in October 1995 (which had been delayed from August 1995) while the final legislation was being passed.

despotism within ZANU(PF).

With an executive mayor municipalities have more autonomy in decision-making. The new executive mayor becomes responsible for seeing that council resolutions are carried out. The executive mayor heads an executive committee, made up of committee chairs. In order to fulfill these duties the executive mayor becomes full-time at a salary of about Z\$10,000 (approx. US\$ 1400) per month plus expenses and requires a support staff of 2 or 3 people.⁸³ While the executive committee cannot implement measures that have not been endorsed by council, councillors may delegate powers to the executive committee. The town clerk plays an advisory role to the executive committee and the new position of chamber secretary (situated in the town clerk's office) is secretary of the executive committee. The town clerk has authority over all other department heads and can dismiss department heads although there will be an appeal to a new national municipal employment board. In addition, the legislation also calls for an audit committee which will consider internal and external reports and make recommendations to council. Under the legislation the councils are also able to set rates without gazetting by the MLGRUD.

Apart from the fact that this new legislation adds a new level of expenses to local governments which cannot cope with the needs of their populations, one must ask if the new legislation will resolve the conflicts that Mutare has faced and alter political behaviour. First, one must accept the idea that poor 'calibre' councillors are the problem. I have argued that this is not the main problem but that it is the political culture that has formed within

⁸³ "Who will foot the bill?", The Manica Post, 20/10/95, p. 1. Expenses include an "executive" house (between Z\$800,000 to 1,000,000 in Mutare according to the article), a Mercedes Benz, free water and electricity, a telephone allowance and servants.

ZANU(PF) which very much resembles a decentralized despotism (local party stalwarts) directed and supported by patronage networks from the centre. One of the arguments is that the mayor is no longer elected by the councillors but by the people so he will be directly accountable to the people. However, the candidates for executive mayor go through the vetting process of the party. As I have argued above, it is the political patronage and infighting in the party which has been a big part of the problem at the local level in Mutare. Since the executive mayor is picked by the party hierarchy, there is no reason to believe that he/she will be more accountable to the population than to the party hierarchy. Thus, there is still the problem of indirect accountability. On the other hand, should an independent or opposition candidate win the position, is the party hierarchy going to be content to allow someone with so much power to carry on without interference? What will stop the party hierarchy from withdrawing cooperation and support for development plans? ZANU(PF) local stalwarts are reluctant to give up power and still control the selection process for councillors but they can only control council through the councillors they deliver and who may now have less power over decision-making under the new legislation. Will the battle to control the council administration take place between those who do and do not have favour with the executive mayor? It is not clear whether a new audit committee, or the executive committee for that matter, will not play into the hands of the political culture that has already been established. Given the power relations of ZANU(PF), the opportunity presents itself for the executive mayor to create his/her own power centre (especially if councillors delegate powers to his executive committee) which is not necessarily attentive to accountability to the population. In this case we move even further away from popular participation and

accountability. Thus, it is not clear at all whether this legislation will create more accountability unless there is also some breakdown or openings created in the power relations within ZANU(PF).

Political openings at the local level

There is some evidence of openings occurring which might change politics at the local level in Zimbabwe. While there were opposition parties in Zimbabwe's 1995 election, including ZANU(Ndonga), Edward Tekere's Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM), Bishop Muzorewa's United Parties, Enoch Dumbutshena's Forum Party and a small Democratic Party, some boycotted the elections at the last minute and all suffered from lack of resources to mount a campaign against ZANU(PF).⁸⁴ Several of the parties have suffered from internal divisions and all have endured ZANU(PF) intimidation tactics. However, opposition seems to be emerging from the ranks of ZANU(PF). Richard Saunders notes that in the local elections there was "an unprecedented number of independent candidates [and]...(T)en out of fifteen independents were cast-offs or deserters from the ruling party" (1996, 11). Eventually Harare, Bulawayo and Masvingo had to rerun executive mayor elections because of "gross irregularities" found by the High Court.⁸⁵ At the centre, most recently, Margaret Dongo, former MP for Harare South, reran as an independent after mounting a successful court challenge over election rigging in the April 1995 national election.⁸⁶ Formed around her case

⁸⁴ Political Parties Finance Bill 1992. To qualify for Z\$32,000,000 in grant a party must have registered and have a minimum of 15 seats in the 120 seat parliament. Since the amalgamation of PF-ZAPU and ZANU(PF) under ZANU(PF) in April 1988, ZANU(PF) has been the only party eligible for this funding. Also see Saunders, 1995.

⁸⁵ "Mayoral elections nullified", *The Manica Post*, 10/5/96, p. 1. The case was brought before the court by the Forum Party of Zimbabwe against ZANU(PF) selected mayors.

⁸⁶ "Court nullifies Harare South election result". *The Herald*, 11/8/95, p. 1.

is what Sara Rich has termed a "loosely organized" Movement of Independent Candidates (MIC) which has thrown support to candidates who lost through irregularities in the October 1995 municipal elections (1997a, 24).⁸⁷ In October 1995, Mutare elected as mayor a candidate who had been overlooked by the ZANU(PF) hierarchy in their vetting for executive mayor. Two other 'independents', one of which was a woman from Sakubva, also won council seats.⁸⁸ Perhaps this is the beginning of change and it certainly calls to account questionable political behaviour practised within ZANU(PF). However, it is not clear whether factionalism has just moved outside of the party and, thus, will still be played out on local councils or whether there is a more fundamental change afoot.

The local elections in Mutare certainly point to an upheaval in ZANU(PF) politics and some openings at the local level. The new executive mayor (a member of the former group of seven and a former mayor and a member of the ZANU(PF) Central Committee) was not endorsed by the party and lost the ZANU(PF) primary. He and five other 'independents' were expelled from the party when they declared their candidacy after the primaries were held and ZANU(PF) also suspended 37 district executive members in Mutare saying "those suspended violated the party's rules and regulations for Local Government and Central Government elections by identifying and campaigning against nominated party candidates".⁸⁹ The election

⁸⁷ MIC has been successful in getting court decisions in favour of independents. Rich notes that 'independent' candidates have paid for this either through violent attack or attempts by ZANU(PF) to sway the court. She asserts that although the judicial system has remained independent from ZANU(PF) until now, recent political appointments to the bench have ties to ZANU(PF) and "there is increasing concern around the impartiality of the judicial system" (1997a, 26).

⁸⁸ "... as Mudehwe is elected mayor", *The Manica Post*, 3/10/95, p. 1. The chairwoman of the Mutare Citizens and Ratepayers Organization who ran independent of any party also won a seat in a low density ward.

⁸⁹ "Zanu(PF) expels five, suspends 37 members", *The Manica Post*, 26/10/95, p. 1.

revealed once again the split in the ZANU(PF) hierarchy. The directive against the offending members came from the provincial secretary for administration who in a letter to the 'independent' mayoral candidate, stated that the "chairman of Manicaland Province of Zanu(PF) *has been informed of your expulsion and has been instructed to withdraw all support for you now and during the election*" (my emphasis).⁹⁰ It also revealed the threat to the party stalwarts who, until the October 1995 local elections, had managed to keep a powerful hold on the selection process. Five of the seven district chairmen eventually accused the provincial chairman and the MP for Mutare Central of fanning factionalism and, consequently, causing "the mushrooming of the most independent conditions in the country as a province at the expense of the party".⁹¹ After the election results were made known, participation by demonstration was employed as ZANU(PF) women from Sakubva marched on the MCC, objecting to independents and accusing the administration of irregularities on the voters' roll.⁹² However, the ZANU(PF) hierarchy clearly wished to defuse the situation and could not afford to carry through top-level expulsions. Neither the party hierarchy nor a High Court challenge by the ZANU(PF) mayoral candidate has been successful in changing

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ "Kangai accused of fuelling factionalism", *The Manica Post*, 5/7/96, p. 8. I was able to interview one district chairman (not one of these five) in Mutare after the annulment of the first local primaries in July 1995 (Interview, ZANU(PF) District Chairman, Nehanda, Mutare, 7/8/95). He asserted that people did not come to meetings because of lack of interest since councillors seemed to "feeding" themselves and forgetting where they came from. When asked why councillors are returned he replied that there are "old syndicates - old ones who have made deals". He also noted that people were getting fed up and that old councillors had lost in the primaries this time "because they are feeding... [but] the G7s are still in".

⁹² "Zanu(PF) women demonstrate", *The Manica Post*, 3/11/95, p. 1. This is an interesting reaction considering that for the first time a woman from Sakubva had been elected to MCC. It clearly demonstrates once again the importance of women in the supporting role of patronage politics.

the results of the Mutare election.⁹³ Thus, one may conclude that changes have taken place in Mutare which may signal a break in constellation of power and a chance to bring about some accountability.

The question remains as to whether this slackening of the local ZANU(PF)'s stranglehold on local politics will make a difference for MCC. The concern remains as to whether Mutare will be punished for turning its back on the party. One lawyer commented:

Any chance of development has gone out the window... Mutare will be left out of national planning.⁹⁴

Another Mutarean asserted that,

In practical life we are worse off than before but politically we are better off.⁹⁵

Apart from the usual punishment by lack of development, there is also a concern about how factions in the party will be played out on council and whether there will be room for increased public participation that might develop new behaviour. Four councillors survived the sweeping change and retained their seats on council. Three were part of the group of seven and the fourth (the former mayor) seems to have tread between the two groups.⁹⁶ As mentioned above, the newly elected executive mayor was a major figure in the former group of seven. At least one of the 'independents' won over a member of the former group of eight. Five other councillors were elected on the ZANU(PF) ticket but are new to the council. There are now two women on the council, one an 'independent' from Sakubva and one, the former

⁹³ "Mahachi defuses demo", The Manica Post, 10/11/95, p. 1; "Mvundura challenges mayoral result". 5/1/96, p. 1. It is interesting to note that the High Court *did* find gross irregularities in Harare, Bulawayo and Masvingo where the winners were handpicked by ZANU(PF).

⁹⁴ "Mudehwe elected Mayor, The Manica Post, 3/11/95, p. 2.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ For example, the seven were able to reinstall the treasurer in 1992 with the help of his abstention.

chairwoman of MCRO, completely independent and from a low density suburb. After another strike by council employees and a new commission of enquiry, the newly elected councillors were able to unite on the dismissal of the town clerk. We might take this as an indication that the councillors will be able to act in concert since two of the new ZANU(PF) councillors as well as two independents were on the commission of enquiry and remained united in their recommendation.⁹⁷ After a High Court challenge by the town clerk, the Court found in favour of the Council and declared that the enquiry had been unbiased.⁹⁸ Finally, on the element of participation there seems to have been little movement. When the new MCC presented their first budget at the end of July 1996, MCRO complained that although the preamble of the budget stated that the budget had been drawn up after extensive consultation, "not even a single councillor in Sakubva held a meeting with the residents concerning the budget" even though the rates had been put up by 30%.⁹⁹ Although there are some signs of change, it is not yet apparent what direction this change will take.

Conclusion

The evidence presented in this chapter shows that local government in Mutare does not meet the third requirement of a new localism. There is no institutional means of participation by the population either through ward committees or through the structures of ZANU(PF). Thus, apart from elections, there are no institutions by which the members of the

⁹⁷ "Matamisa must go council insists", The Manica Post, 14/6/96, p. 1.

⁹⁸ "Matamisa loses legal battle", The Manica Post, 9/8/96, p. 1. It is indicative of the change that almost a year earlier (September 1995) a second commission of enquiry conducted by the old council resulted in a 4/2 split in the committee over the recommendation which was in favour of reinstating the town clerk and an 8/6 split on the council in voting in favour of the recommendation ("Matamisa's return sparks row", The Manica Post, 29/9/95, p. 1).

⁹⁹ "Residents object to council budget", The Manica Post, 2/8/96, p. 11.

public may call councillors to be accountable. Moreover, in practice, councillors have actively avoided contact with the public and have shunned taking public responsibility for collective decision-making on MCC.

The lack of responsibility and accountability on the part of councillors does not primarily stem from the poor calibre of councillors, nor from the poor choice of voters in general. It stems, rather, from the constellation of power relations that have formed as ZANU(PF) has tried to gain power over an administration which has remained intact and retained the structures of bifurcation erected by settler governments. What has resulted is a party based on a decentralized despotism very similar in its relationship to Mamdani's concept. Thus, local stalwarts with despotic control and questionable tactics and who can deliver ZANU(PF) dominated governments locally are supported by the central hierarchy of the party through patronage networks. Rival factions within the hierarchy of the party further debilitate politics at the local level and remove any vestige of responsibility or accountability. The resulting intrigue has virtually paralysed the administration and, at the same time, created tremendous opportunities for corruption. Nevertheless, while the party hierarchy is quick to chastise incompetent local councils, it is loath to dismantle the power relations which put them there.

Within this context there is little opportunity to develop new conventions of political behaviour beyond that encouraged by these power relations. Thus, participation by demonstration has become the main form of political action. While demonstrations have powerful effects on politicians and administrators alike, in that they fear them, political figures use them to increase their own influence. On the other hand, those who participate in

demonstrations gain no access to constructive political dialogue but rather rely on patronage favours dispensed by the party. Thus, women, for example, remain supporters of the party in return for patronage favours but gain no access to decision-making positions. On the whole political behaviour is shaped by the power relations of a decentralized despotism in the party.

It is far from clear whether the new posts of executive mayor will change politics at the local level in Zimbabwe. First, the legislation does not dismantle the power networks of ZANU(PF) but reinforces them as the central party holds tight control over the selection of candidates. Secondly, it also does nothing to dismantle local party syndicates that deliver local ZANU(PF) councillors. On the other hand, it puts great power into the hands of the a mayor and the executive council and thus paves the way for more powerful local cliques with even more powerful attachments to the centre. Thus, a fairly strong argument can be made that the legislation perpetuates the constellation of power relations of the bifurcated state, based on a decentralized despotism, and may even further remove politicians from accountability to their populations.

Finally, it must be concluded that there is political change afoot in Zimbabwe and that this has been manifested most at the local level. While the new legislation has not addressed the real problem of ZANU(PF) power relations, it has opened up the mayoral race (at least in a limited number of municipalities) to a general vote; and the evidence from the last local elections of late 1995 shows that the party's ability to control the selection and election of local candidates is weakening. It is too early to tell if this is a serious movement towards a new localism, but it has certainly been a challenge to ZANU(PF) hegemony at the local level. In Mutare there are some indications that it may make for a more united and accountable

local council but, as yet, there is little evidence that the legacy of participation by demonstration will be overcome by something more constructive. Nevertheless, change is emanating from the *local* action at the *local* level and this may be the best indication that a new localism is in the future for Zimbabwe.

Civil society and a new localism

In the next chapter I will continue to examine local government in Jinja and Mutare in light of the third requirement (the existence of an interactive process that might produce different political behaviour and relationships between the population and the local government) as I turn to the relationship between the local councils and the community-based organizations with which they come into contact. This involves an analysis of the community-based organizations with regard to the opportunity they present to their members for developing political behaviour which is conducive to democratic openings and the requirements of responsibility and accountability. I will also examine the relationship between these organizations and the local governments in Jinja and Mutare. Finally, I will turn to an example from each municipality of engagement between community-based organizations and the local government for the purposes of providing a service. The example is that of Parent Teachers Associations (PTAs) and their relationship with the local government with regard to the management of primary schools. Here, also, I will be looking specifically for the opportunities presented to develop new relationships that foster new political behaviour concerning responsibility and accountability - in other words, movement towards an internally driven and democratic new localism.

Chapter 6:

Meeting the Requirements of a New Localism IV: Civil Society and Local Government in Uganda and Zimbabwe

Introduction

In this chapter I will consider the third requirement of a new localism for sub-Saharan Africa: the growth of an interactive process in which there is at least some potential for different political behaviour and relationships to develop between civil society and the local government. The chapter is divided into two sections. In the first I will examine some community-based organizations in Jinja and Mutare and consider their potential to contribute to a new localism. This analysis will take into consideration whether these organizations provide an opportunity for members to develop political behaviour which is conducive to democratic openings and requirements of accountability and responsibility. I will also examine the relationship between community-based organizations and the local councils in Jinja and Mutare.

In the second section I will turn to an example from each municipality of an engagement between community-based organizations and the local government for the purposes of providing a statutorily required service. The example, in both cases, is that of parent-teachers' associations (PTAs) and their relationship with the local government in the management of primary schools. This is of particular interest as it brings the notion of the externally driven new localism analyzed in Chapter 1 - the need, brought on by global economic restructuring, to reach out to non-governmental actors in a search for a new mix in

providing services at the local level - together with an analysis of the requirements of the internally driven new localism developed in this thesis. In the case of Zimbabwe, there is a direct relationship between the statutory establishment of PTAs and adjustment. In Uganda a combination of internal society breakdown, aggravated by structural adjustment, has brought the PTAs to the fore. Nevertheless, in Jinja in the 1990s there is a new management initiative to enter into state/civil society partnerships in order to provide services.¹ The question is whether this externally driven focus on partnerships at the local level, imposed by the circumstances of restructuring, gives impetus to the development of an internally driven and democratic new localism or impedes that process.

I The state of local civil society and its relation to the local state

Civil society and a new localism

There is a propensity to consider civil society as an alternative for the absence of good government in sub-Saharan Africa and as a welcome partner in governance which will bring more accountability in government services. But I suggest in this thesis that African civil society has also been affected by the bifurcated state and the constellation of power shaped by decentralized despotism. As I outlined in chapter 1, Ekeh has argued there is a split between rights and duties that renders the civic an amoral space to be plundered, and the primordial a moral space where duties are performed. He suggests that for democratization to become meaningful there needs to be an integration of rights and duties. In other words, we must look for a movement towards an integrated public where a more universal concept of responsibility

¹ For example, the municipality has formed a partnership with a taxi association for the maintenance and management of the taxi park.

and accountability might be forged. In Chapter 2 I argued that under the colonial government in Uganda and the settler government in Zimbabwe, a strong bourgeois African civil society was largely proscribed. The struggling political development evident in the richness of politics from the 1920s to the 1950s was constantly undermined by the propensity of those governments to legitimize despotic decentralization while de-legitimizing other organizations and movements. As Ekeh has argued this action served to strengthen primordial networks that offered protection and some chance at receiving resources. Subsequent years of political violence and war continued to erode relations within society and, thus, weakened organized civil society which depended more than ever on patronage behaviour. Relationships within society and between society and the local governments were constantly bent to the shape of power relations concomitant with the bifurcated state. Thus, civil society was shaped by the power relations of decentralized despotism within the bifurcated state.

That argument having been made for an earlier period, I assume that there are certain effects on civil society. First, in the interaction between civil society and local government both the making of demands and the adoption of solutions might be expected to be caught up in political behaviour based on personal connections to patronage networks. Within this vortex of power relations, organized opposition to government measures, devoid of a legitimate means of expression, may only amount to public demonstrations. This, in fact, became apparent in the "participation by demonstration" that I described in Chapter 5. Second, the internal power relations within organizations of civil society may be caught up in the same power relations as those in the state. As Mamdani (1996, 22) has remarked, it is not that all behaviour conforms to those parameters but, given the legitimacy bestowed on decentralized

despotic rule for so many decades, the dice are loaded; and the fact that the bifurcated state has left the majority of the population in relative poverty while a small percentage enjoy privileged status means that the dice are doubly loaded. Thus, not only may organizations in civil society lack an adequate resource base on which to act independently but also they may have a membership that is heavily dependent on a better-off and better educated leadership. Here then are the concrete obstacles to the effective organization of civil society.

If civil society is not a panacea but, in fact, affected by the power relations of years of decentralized despotism does that mean that there is no hope for change emanating from civil society? Gramsci observed that in political society political power is manifest in the state but it has its roots in civil society. Thus, he argued that, what he termed, the "subaltern" classes must gain a foothold in civil society first in order to bring about political change (Buttigieg 1995). We may theorize that the constellation of power characteristic of decentralized despotism thrives as long as its roots are in a civil society hospitable to such power relations. However, to the degree that civil society becomes inhospitable to those roots they may wither and die. Thus, it is important to examine civil society for signs of change while, at the same time, keeping in mind the considerable obstacles to that change.

Local civil society in Jinja and Mutare

The study of local civil society in Jinja was particularly fruitful since there are many organizations either directly or peripherally involved with the local government. The associations under consideration are community-based (that is, they are not branches of larger organizations) with real roots in the local community and the possibility of connections with the local government institutions. The data for this analysis come from interviews with

twenty-one women's groups, one men's group, one youth group (male), three friendship societies, two tenants' associations, two welfare societies and seven PTA organizations. The interviews with the women's groups and the youth group were group interviews while the other interviews were conducted with executive members. I also attended a joint management/PTA meeting. The list is a sampling and by no means exhaustive of the whole range of groups in Jinja.

Local civil society in Mutare was harder to locate and to access. As in Jinja, under consideration are organizations that are community-based with local roots and with the possibility of either direct or peripheral involvement with the local government. In the mid-1990s there were few locally-based organizations. Moreover, this seems to be a situation not peculiar to Mutare. Richard Saunders notes that despite an upsurge in the early days of independence, locally organized civil society in Zimbabwe has weakened in the 1990s. He remarks that "Zimbabwean civil society is littered with the wreckage of countless failed self-help organizations, training programmes, savings clubs and other schemes which never established a consistent regime of operation nor attracted a regular membership" (1995a, 24). Among the most important reasons for this, he argues, is "ZANU's desire to maintain a leading presence in civil society... [and], as a direct result, the government has tried, variously, to block, frustrate, infiltrate, employ to advantage and otherwise neutralize many civics" (Saunders 1995a, 24). In her study of community-based housing organizations (CBOs), Anna Vakil found that housing CBOs in high-density areas in four cities in Zimbabwe were vulnerable to political interference from ZANU(PF) "which adds to their relative disadvantage" (1996, 345). In an even more worrying measure, Zimbabwe has recently passed

(1995) legislation governing NGOs that gives the central government sweeping powers to interfere with the internal management of NGOs. In at least one case this legislation has led to the central government's firing of board members of a large NGO and replacing them with a clique of Women's League members (Rich 1997). The paucity of organizations in Mutare may reflect this hostile atmosphere.

The data for discussing local civil society and local government in Mutare are sparse. The organizations under consideration include four women's cooperatives, a theatre group, the Mutare Citizens and Ratepayers Organization (MCRO) and three PTAs. Group interviews were conducted with the four women's cooperatives. I also interviewed three founders of the theatre group as well as the chairwoman of MCRO. I conducted interviews with the chairmen of the three PTAs involved in the three local government run schools, as well as the headmasters of those schools. I also attended a school management committee meeting. Again the list is a sampling and not exhaustive in that there are present in Mutare neighbourhood welfare societies which spring into action usually at the time of a death in a family and which were not considered for the present study. Technically ZANU(PF) does not fit the description of a community-based organization used in this study since it goes well beyond the local level. It has also been examined in Chapter 5. Nevertheless, since this organization has such an effect at the local level (and appears to be such a bearer of dominant political behaviour) it is never far out of sight in the analysis.

Women in local civil society in Jinja and Mutare

Women's groups in Jinja

I have argued in chapters 3 and 4 that women have made substantial political gains at

the local level in Uganda. However, those political gains have been part of a larger democratic project (the intent of which is to create democratic openings at the local level) as prescribed in the decentralization programme and have considerable support from the central government. The pertinent issue explored here is whether women's organizations in local civil society provide the fertile ground in which those political gains may take root.

Commenting on the women's associations in Uganda, Aili Tripp argues that, when considering associational life in Uganda,

some of the most dramatic changes have occurred in women's organizations. The remarkable new visibility of women in formal and informal unregistered groups provides an opportunity to explore the meanings of changing associational life in relation to political liberalization (1994, 108).

Certainly women's groups are visible in Jinja. A total of 543 women are involved in the twenty-one groups (averaging 26 members each) I interviewed (see Appendix A). Most are based in RC designated village areas and multi-ethnic in membership.² Four groups consist of women with common occupations (midwives, nurses and market women). The groups are a recent phenomenon, most having formed between 1993 and 1994.³ Thus, we can say that there is a recent proliferation of women's groups which has accompanied the institution of the RC system.

However, one could not argue that the proliferation of women's groups is only a result of the RC system although some ties to the local government are evident. At least one or two members of every group have some RC position, usually secretary for women. RC2 and 3

² Two groups that differed somewhat included one which started out based on church affiliations but which has become independent of the church and includes members not affiliated with the church one that is an ethnic-based association located in a village which is highly populated by that ethnic group.

³ Of the twenty-one groups, two had started in 1989, one in 1990, one in 1991, two in 1992, six in 1993 and nine in 1994.

secretaries for women also are acquainted with the groups in their parish or sub-county, as is the welfare officer who is the administrator in charge of women and youth. Some groups also cite the RCs for encouraging them to form groups and, in 1995, women's councils had recently been instituted for the purposes of encouraging development (see Chapter 4). However, women also assert that the success of an earlier group has encouraged other women to form groups. What is also apparent is that financial need has forced women to find creative ways of earning extra income. A variety of factors such as high unemployment, devaluation of currency, loss of husbands through violence or AIDS, increased responsibility for extra children (because relatives have died of AIDS) and the need to meet the cost of user fees are often cited by the women. What is notable is that only two groups of women cited national government representatives or international NGOs as having been instrumental in their coming together.⁴ Thus while we might say that there has been encouragement from RCs which have provided a more positive public atmosphere for women, there are various reasons for women to come together at this time and higher level political influences have played only a small part.

Moreover, the women's groups interviewed are remarkably independent of formal institutions. In 1995, only one-fifth (four) of the groups was registered with the National Association of Women of Uganda (NAWOU) although they are encouraged to do so.⁵ About

⁴ One group mentioned that they were encouraged by the CM (National Resistance Council Member) who brought a representative of USAID to see them. Another mentioned that they attended a meeting with the Central Government Representative (CGR) who gave them advice.

⁵ This is an umbrella group that is not a government organization but has government approval. The women's groups who had or were about to register said that they could not take advantage of NAWOU's *entandikwe* (start-up loans) funds unless they were registered. However, other groups were not aware of this. No groups had actually had any funding from NAWOU (Interview, RC2 Secretary for Women, Jinja Central Parish, February,

one quarter of the groups (five) was working with the Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA)⁶, a micro-credit NGO, while the rest had no affiliation with other organizations with the exception that two of the groups are registered with the Ministry of Culture.⁷ Three quarters of the groups conduct their own group savings for the purpose of generating rotating loans and share in group income-earning projects. Generally, the groups have a yearly membership fee ranging between USH1000/= and USH5000/= and a required weekly savings deposit of between USH100/= and USH500/= per member. Savings accounts are generally held in the Trust Women's Bank.⁸ The groups have little formal financial support from the local government. However, many have secured access to land through the

1995).

⁶ FINCA is a US-based NGO and originally encouraged by US-based Uganda Project to start FINCA/UGANDA which by 1994 had micro-lending projects in five districts in Uganda. It is funded by two US NGOs and gets matching grants from Rotary International which is affiliated with the Rotary Club of Jinja. FINCA's programme in Uganda includes training in bank operations, loan administration, bookkeeping, accounting and small business administration and combines credit for individual members as well as a group savings plan.

⁷ The two groups affiliated with the Ministry of Culture perform dance and drama but also have income-earning projects which have no ties to formal institutions. Another group is located in Danida Village, Masese, which is the locus of the Danish International Development Agency's (DANIDA) Masese Women's Self-Help Project. This project has also had some help from the Ugandan government and JMC has provided land. The project teaches women how to make bricks and build houses and has provided loans for 700 participants to own their own house. However, only 200 of the participants are able to get continuous employment from the project since further contracts are hard to come by (one such contract is for school rooms and will be discussed in the last section of this chapter). Thus the women are in need of other sources of income to pay back the loans (see Jinja Urban Study Phase One, 1992, 40, 41). The group that I interviewed, thus, was acting as a women's group independent of that project.

⁸ Originally located in the municipal building, but now located in the District Women's Council office which opened in February 1995, this bank was started in 1988. Its creation was driven by women RCs, especially the current JMC secretary for women (now chairperson of District Women's Council as well), and provides for savings accounts for women's groups (Interview, JMC Secretary for Women and Chairperson, District Women's Council, 31/3/95).

local government, something that has always been difficult for women to do.⁹ By 1995, ten of the groups had been allocated plots for income-generating projects and others were waiting to hear from JMC. In addition, JMC meeting facilities are made available to women for public meetings such as those held by FIDA to make women aware of their rights.¹⁰ With little formal support, then, most of the groups, whether by choice or not, have adopted an independent, self-help method of operating.

Practical and strategic gains

As mentioned in chapter one, women's interests have been conceptually divided into practical and strategic interests. The former include immediate interests which arise from the concrete circumstances of class and gender in the division of labour while the latter include broader issues of gender such as political equality and freedom of choice of childbearing. As I argued in chapter 1, although women of different classes have different practical needs and also may differ on strategic needs, empirically it is difficult to separate out the practical from the strategic, given the complexity of gender relations. In the following analysis I argue that the women's associations in Jinja have helped their members to make both practical and strategic gains.

Practical gains

Despite the fact that many of the groups are recent, there is some evidence that the women involved have already realized some practical gains. They have gained some limited

⁹ Women interviewed for the Jinja Urban Study complained that they take second place to men when applying for plots and are rarely allocated land (Jinja Urban Study, Phase One, 40). However, land does seem to be allocated more readily for women's groups.

¹⁰ One of these meetings, held in March 1995, was standing room only in the largest JMC committee room and attended by many of the women and secretaries for women that I had interviewed.

access to capital and land. The groups involved with FINCA loans report success in paying back the loans and also in gaining savings. One group (Alladina) is so successful that it is able to lend to members of an affiliated group. Of the many groups without institutional support most use their fees for starting group projects and individuals use savings to pay school fees and medical expenses. Two groups have been able to realize enough savings to start revolving loans; one group has made five loans while the other has made six. One group is able to carry on a savings group as well as sponsor a women's football team which has been quite successful.¹¹ At the time of the interviews, only two of the groups had not started activities and were still discussing what they would do. Just one group of women out of the 21 reported a failure to get a group project going and blamed the government for not helping them. Apart from these three, all of the groups report that their savings have allowed them to pay school fees and medical expenses.¹² Thus, the groups are helping the women to meet some of their practical needs.

Although the women's groups are vibrant, they also encounter difficulties. The women engage in a variety of group activities including crafts, gardens, keeping chickens and pigs, tailoring, grinding, making *waraji* (local gin) and tea packing as well as individual trading. However, many of the group projects involve similar activities resulting in competition for marketing the product. For example, six of the groups make crafts and this is a major part of

¹¹ This is a group of women who provide cooked food in the market and whose wooden stalls are located next to the bus park. Each woman who owns a stall outfits a member of the team and tries to meet transport costs for travelling to games. Many members of the team were picked to play on a Ugandan team in Nairobi in 1994 (Report of Secretary for Women Affairs, RC3, Jinja Central, 4/2/95). They also won the exhibition game at Bugembe Stadium on International Women's Day, March 8, 1995, making their women patrons very proud.

¹² All of the groups also have provisions for members to donate money in case of a death in a member's family.

their group project. Most of the crafts that are made are aimed at the tourist trade but in Jinja there are few places where these crafts can be sold.¹³ The next most common projects are gardens and keeping chickens and pigs and there is a competition for selling these products as well. However, these projects also help the women to supplement their own families' food supply. Some groups would like more access to capital without such stringent rules for paying back, since projects take time to bring income and the women already live on subsistence income. The most successful are those women who are able to get loans for trading or small businesses (salons, clinics) and six of the groups in central Jinja are able to do this. Some groups have plans for bigger projects. For example, one of the most successful groups has acquired land for a foam mattress factory and is looking for more capital to build it. On the other hand, the shops (not to mention incoming lorries) in Jinja are overflowing with foam mattresses from Kenya and one wonders how successful this venture might be. Other groups have plans for larger-scale projects for which they have no training or expertise, such as bee-keeping, and which require inputs that are just not available. Thus, there are limits to the practical gains that are made and most women still only derive subsistence income from their activities.

Strategic gains

Yet women in Jinja identified gains beyond the practical ones discussed above. The groups unanimously agree that there has been a great change in attitude among women. Previously, women stayed very much to themselves and were not accustomed to sharing

¹³ Jinja's main tourist attraction is the Source of the Nile park. There is a kiosk which sells crafts but there is no formal setup where every group might take advantage of this site. There are also two craft stores in the central business section of Jinja which sell local and imported crafts. While these are opportunities they are not enough to keep the women's stock moving quickly.

family problems. Now they talk to each other about their problems and look to each other for support and this extends across ethnic groups.¹⁴ They assert that they have gained confidence through the new skills they are acquiring, both in managing money and developing craft and agricultural skills or expanding businesses. One of the most successful groups rotates leadership on a regular basis so that all members have to learn some leadership skills. Furthermore, accountability is an important issue for the groups. All of the groups purport to make decisions together and members assert that the handling of money is transparent. Several groups testified that their numbers had dropped at the beginning because there were members who did not take savings seriously and thus defaulted on loans. However, the core membership remaining (26 on average, as mentioned above) now takes seriously the responsibility of contributing to the group. An interview with FINCA staff revealed that often at the beginning executive members use group savings to pay back loans and that the women quickly become aware that they must demand accountability in order to protect their savings.¹⁵ Tripp also gives evidence that members of women's groups are quite intolerant of leaders who are not transparent and who monopolize all of the benefits (1994, 121-3). For all of these reasons I believe that the women involved are developing strategic skills as well as practical ones.

There is evidence that the women's groups in Jinja are also laying the groundwork for

¹⁴ Tripp also observes that in the new proliferation of women's groups there is a notable lack of the sectarianism which has plagued Ugandan civil society in the past (1994, 117-21). One particular group in Jinja pointed out that they had several Muslim members who were involved in group projects including a piggery. Duties were arranged so that the Muslim women were never directly involved in that part of the project since it was in violation of their religion. All of the members seemed satisfied with the solution.

¹⁵ Interview, Director FINCA, Jinja District, April 1995.

broader strategic gains. During every group interview the subject of the role of women in Uganda was discussed and the women were keenly interested in finding out about women's lives elsewhere (in this case, Canada). For example, one issue that was prominent in discussions was the concern over defilement (rape), an issue that is also highly visible in the news media. Many women wanted to know what was being done in other countries. Tripp also notes that "women's groups and leaders have become vocal around issues of sexual harassment, rape, wife beating and child abuse for the first time" and that in 1990 the women elected to the National Resistance Council were instrumental in getting amendments to the criminal code that made rape a capital offence (1994, 117).¹⁶ But even more concern was expressed about the heavy responsibilities that women are facing, especially responsibilities for children. These responsibilities have increased for two reasons: there is high unemployment among men and, increasingly, there are extra children to look after because of the death from AIDS of close relatives. While their groups provide an opportunity to share their problems and derive extra strength to handle the extra burdens, at the same time they are questioning kinship responsibilities and the fairness of the heavy burdens they are expected to carry. A drama group in Walukuba wrote and performed a play about a woman who, crushed by kinship responsibilities, asked these very questions. This group has earned recognition for

¹⁶ The newspapers most commonly report on headmasters' defilement of students and defilement of children by fathers or grandfathers. However, women are also concerned with the issue that they cannot say no to their husbands and the corollary that men are entitled to sex no matter who the woman is. One newspaper editorial emphasizes that, currently in Uganda, men still pay brideprice and assume that this brideprice "buys out all the women's (sic!) rights. This gives him the right to beat her, and for her to be unquestioning" (The Monitor, 19/8/97). Women are also concerned about young uneducated women who can only get jobs as housemaids and, therefore, are often coerced into sexual relations by the master of the house. This has become a much more pressing issue with the spread of AIDS. During the 1995 interviews, one woman asked if it was not time to apply the "Bobbit solution" in order to make men accountable for their actions! Janet Fleischman notes that the spread of HIV has had positive results in this sense: women are asserting themselves and refusing to put themselves at risk (1995).

their music and drama, having performed live and on radio. The drama is carried out in the customary drumming and singing technique but addresses very current issues and questions 'traditional' custom. The women assert that through their writing and performing they have gained new respect from their husbands and neighbours and that people now often come to them for advice. The women in these groups are questioning the role of women out of their own practical experience and taking it to a new strategic level.

While these data might show the emergence of some new, more independent behaviour on the part of women, there is evidence that this does not always translate into a more effective political interaction. The RC system does provide a good vehicle for passing information and seminars, such as those given by FIDA on women's rights, are well attended. Nevertheless, although members were often involved in RCs, they do not see that secretaries for women are very helpful to the groups in general, especially those in the higher tiers, and there is little bridging to formal political institutions. No doubt some of this perception is the result of the fact that there is no local government funding targeted for women in particular. When it comes to higher political officials there is much more of a tendency to revert to old political behaviours. The interactions are patterned on official "invention of tradition" as political show (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) as well as old patronage behaviour, both on the part of the women and the politicians. For example, in the 1995 interviews the groups commented that they rarely, if ever, see any higher tier politicians or representatives of NAWOU. However, if they do appear it means a great deal of extra expense for the group since it is the 'tradition' that they pay for the visitor's transport and prepare food. In this 'tradition' we may see the remnants of patronage behaviour towards someone in a higher

position who might perform a favour.

Another example of "traditional" behaviour is the celebration of International Women's Day. Women's groups are expected to come to International Women's Day celebrations every year as participants, either performing or marching. This involves considerable expense in transport and food since these events are always an all-day affair. In Jinja many women's groups from the surrounding district came to march or perform on March 8, 1995 in this new invented 'tradition'. On that occasion the National Resistance Council women's representative for Jinja District addressed the women and spoke about the water situation in Walukuba, claiming solidarity with the women who had to suffer because of poor availability of water (discussed in Chapter 4) and received cheers from the crowd. However, this politician had never been mentioned by anyone connected with the struggle with NW&SC, nor was there a record of her having worked to solve the problem. Thus, we may see the old behaviour of using official occasions for the purpose of political gain; in other words, the practice of politics without substance. Moreover, at the end of that day's celebrations there were several women's groups left stranded because they did not have money for transport home. Again, the groups' expectations were for patronage behaviour on the part of higher politicians to make arrangements for transport. Since many of the women genuinely find the expense beyond their resources it puts them in a vulnerable position that invites patron/client relations.

A further example of the limits to a new political interaction can be found in the opening of the District Women's Council office in Jinja February 25, 1995. The Vice-President, who, as a woman in high office, is a symbol of political gains for women in Uganda, was invited to the opening and local women's groups turned out in great numbers for

the occasion. In her short address the Vice-President noted that women were trying hard to work for the country. However, she then proceeded to tell the women that her position was a supportive one and compared her role to that of a wife. Hence, she was advocating the old role of supporting men in politics while, at the same time, symbolizing a new political power for women.¹⁷ Thus, while the women's groups show signs of new organizational independence and behaviour, the old political behaviour is never far from sight.

Nevertheless, a good example of how women are fashioning to a new, broader *place* in local civil society is the fact that woman-led local organization has gone beyond self-help. There are two service organizations in Jinja initiated and operated by local women. One organization that goes a step beyond self-help into service is Protect Our Youth From Aids (POYFA). This organization was started in 1993 by women in Jinja Central who were concerned about the spread of AIDS among young disadvantaged girls. POYFA concentrates on helping girls and young women who come from poor families, drop out of school, have few skills, and usually look for positions as housemaids or as consorts of older men. These individuals are particularly vulnerable to contracting AIDS because both options lead to sexual relations with more or less sexually promiscuous men (see also footnote 14). POYFA acts on two fronts by counselling for AIDS prevention as well as addressing the economic condition of the clients. To meet the former objective, they have secured the cooperation of the AIDS Information Centre which gives seminars to sensitize the young women about AIDS. In order to satisfy the latter objective POYFA seeks to identify school dropouts and

¹⁷ On being appointed Vice President she commented that her happiness on the day of her installation only outweighed her happiness on her wedding day. Indeed, the role of wife seems to never leave her speeches (National Analyst, 2/3:6-9, March 7, 1995)!

provide an opportunity for training so that they will acquire skills and, thus, be less likely to enter into these situations. At present the group operates out of a rented storefront and consists of an executive committee headed by the director who oversees day-to-day operations including the supervising of 30 client/members. The committee has enlisted the help of FINCA which has provided seminars in small-business management and has started micro-lending with 22 of the women. In addition, through donations, the group has acquired sewing machines, a knitting machine and typewriters in order to teach the women skills. The group also makes crafts which the director retails in her small shop in town. In the long run the group wishes to open a formal vocational centre.

The second group, The Nile Crane Save the Vulnerable Children's Project, started in 1994 and deals with the growing problem of street children in central Jinja. It was formed by the Jinja Central Women's Council (the sub-county level of the women's councils), the members of which "as mothers felt concerned and obliged to rescue 'their' children from out in the cold".¹⁸ The group has acquired land from JMC for a complex which would contain a nursery school, a clinic, a recreation hall, a training centre and accommodation for employees. Eventually the complex is to be self-sustaining through the sale of products and rental of the recreation facilities to other groups. They have also approached local service clubs such as Lions and Rotary for financial help and have been registered as a non-profit, non-governmental organization. At present they have conducted an informal survey of children at risk and are employing interim measures such as arranging for alternative accommodation or

¹⁸ Memorandum and Articles of Association of The Nile Crane Save the Vulnerable Children's Project, p. 2.

reuniting children with their families through counselling.¹⁹ They also visit one-parent families for whom the burden of raising children has become overwhelming. These two groups, therefore, are evidence of a move beyond self-help to another level of civic organization for the purpose of providing social service.

Both groups have made extensive use of the RC system in order to get their projects up and running. While the women in both groups express the need for donors or patrons to reach the goals of permanent and self-sustaining structures, in the mean time they are establishing service through their own initiative and employing all present means available to them. The women cite the RC involvement as integral to their project. As an off-shoot of the Women's Council, The Nile Crane Save the Vulnerable Children's Project has had the official support of the JMC since its inception. JMC has acted in an advisory capacity, lent its full support for the group's registration as a non-profit and its encouragement for fundraising. This group has also had the full support of the RC Chairmen from the district to the village. The village RCs were instrumental in helping to carry out the survey of street children and are often involved in finding alternative accommodation or helping to reunite children with their relatives. The executive members of POYFA also cite the RCs as instrumental in identifying young women at risk and helping them in their efforts to reach the community. Thus, not only are these organizations adding a new dimension to local civil society but they are also engaged with the local government institutions in a very practical way. Moreover, activity

¹⁹ Using anecdotal evidence from talking to the children and the village RCs, the group asserts that many of the children belong to immigrants (mainly Somalis) and Northerners (Iteso and Karamojong) who have been unable to establish themselves economically. There are also many orphans who have lost their parents in the violence of the 1980s or from AIDS related illness but have stayed in town rather than searched for relatives in the countryside (Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Nile Crane Save the Vulnerable Children's Project, p. 3).

shows some movement towards a more integrated public where there may be established some more universal idea of accountability.

It is clear that the women's groups in Jinja are gaining ground in local civil society, in the Gramscian sense, and are providing fertile ground in which the roots of a new localism might flourish. First, the groups show strong initiative and a degree of independence from the patronage of individuals or organizations that might establish patron/client relations. Second, despite their short histories, the groups are already fulfilling the practical needs of their members. Third, the women involved in these groups are aware of strategic needs and so are better positioned to press for their rights. Finally, women's presence in local civil society is establishing more democratic behaviour and practices in general, such as accountability and inclusiveness, which can be carried over into other civic concerns beyond self-help. The existence of new service organizations is testimony to this process at work. Although old patron/client behaviours are never far from sight, there is some evidence that women in local civil society in Jinja are building some bridges to the local government institutions in an interaction that allows for new political behaviour more characteristic of a new localism.

Women seem to be establishing different patterns of political behaviour even when they are interacting with clientelistic politicians. Perhaps the strongest evidence of this fact is in an incident that reversed the pattern of the politics and actually turned patronage political behaviour to good practical use. The CM for Jinja Central (the same person who offered a patronage solution for the Walukuba water problem) made arrangements for the secretaries for women in Walukuba to visit their counterparts in Gulu district, providing all transport free-of-

charge.²⁰ While the trip may have been arranged in order to gain political support from women who had suffered long over the water crisis (and at this time in 1995 it was particularly bad with many taps being closed - see Chapter 4), it is evident that the greater impact was to increase the experience and independent organizational strength of women. Upon return the women were ebullient in their comments. First they were astounded that they were not massacred on the road (as some warned them they would be). Second, they were amazed at the warm reception and wonderful hospitality they received and at how easy it was to communicate even though they did not all speak the same language (most understood kiSwahili). They also could not believe that the women in Gulu had formed groups similar to theirs and that they could exchange ideas for improving their organizations. They exchanged gifts of crafts that they had made and over the two days of meetings, dotted with music and dancing performed by both groups, made arrangements for more exchanges. I would suggest that it is because the women are grounded in more participatory local institutions and a new more autonomous local civil society that they are able to use old behaviour to create new opportunities for new political behaviour. This also demonstrates an important point: while the RC system cannot stamp out patronage behaviour overnight, it has provided enough opportunity for new political behaviour to develop in spite of the old; and women's growing presence in political society demonstrates this point.

Women's groups in Mutare

In Chapter 5 I argued that women perform a much more subordinate role in local

²⁰ This district is one of the northern districts on the border with Sudan which is very poor and plagued with insurgency even ten years after the NRM took over. People in the South think of people from the North as very backward and there is little people-to-people communication. Thus, people in the South only know the North by newspaper or word-of-mouth accounts of violence.

politics in Mutare than in Jinja. Moreover, the means by which their role is played out (participation by demonstration, selective intimidation of opposition candidates and their families) tends to reinforce the political power relations of a decentralized despotism. This participation is carried out through the Women's League of ZANU(PF). Therefore, the question that one must ask is whether the community-based women's cooperatives in Mutare provide the soil in which such relations may continue to flourish or whether they provide the opportunity for new behaviour and attitudes to evolve.

The women's groups that have some interaction with the local municipality in Mutare are fewer and their membership is smaller. I interviewed four groups, 47 women in total. The smallest had seven members while the largest had 14. However, they are established on a much more formal, cooperative, basis and much more highly capitalized than those in Jinja. They were organized in the early 1980s through ZANU(PF) and the Ministry of Political Affairs, both of which worked through the Women's League.²¹ They are registered as cooperatives, originally under the Ministry of National Affairs, Development and Employment Creation and, now, under the Ministry of Cooperatives.²² All four belong to the Organization of Collective Cooperatives of Zimbabwe (OCCZIM), an NGO based in Harare, to which they pay a \$Z50.00 annual fee. While all of the cooperatives practice group savings and have raised money from their families, by far the largest amount of capital has come from formal institutions. The Ministry of Cooperatives has arranged for thousands of dollars of loans and grants through various formal institutions and donors and provides training through OCCZIM,

²¹ One started in 1982, two in 1983 and one in 1984.

²² For list of cooperatives see Appendix A. Interviews were conducted with all four cooperatives in June 1995.

the Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce (ZNCC) and the International Labour Office (ILO).²³ The local government has cooperated variously in providing temporary premises and in allotting commercial stands (plots). Substantial loans have allowed three of the cooperatives to establish formal commercial premises at the long-distance bus terminal in Sakubva. There they operate restaurants (sitting and take-away) and sell sundry food and beverage items. The fourth group operates a similar catering business out of MCC premises (Moffat Hall) opposite the Housing and Community Services complex in Sakubva. The women at the long-distance bus terminal are able to hire one or two staff and take turns for shifts of cooking. The women are also contracted by ZANU(PF) and organizations such as PLAN International to provide refreshments at seminars. Thus, considerable official assistance with training, capitalization and contract work has put the cooperatives on a formal basis.

Despite the formal basis on which they run their businesses the women in the cooperatives demonstrate little independence. They complain that the repayment of loans eats into their profits, as does the competition with each other. They are unable to buy ingredients cheaply because they do not have the capital to buy in bulk nor to pay for transport from the countryside where prices are lower. They cannot provide for maintenance of their equipment and therefore look for donors when they need new pots. They expect that officials such as the mayor, the provincial governor and MPs should bring them donors so that they can expand

²³ OCCZIM, ZNCC and the ILO assist in providing training in accounting, catering and uniform making. Through the Ministry of Cooperatives the women have received substantial loans from the Beverley Building Society Z\$108,000) and the Social and Economic Development Cooperative (SEDCO) (Z\$47,000). The loans have been for mortgages of premises for three of the groups. The fourth group rents council premises in Moffat Hall which is beside the Department of Housing and Community Services in Sakubva. They have also received grants from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) (Z\$25,000), Africare (a US donor) (Z\$2500), the Canadian High Commission (Z\$2500) and the Zimbabwe Project (OCCZIM) (Z\$2500). The grants have covered the costs of equipment such as freezers, stoves, tables and chairs. The Ministry of Cooperatives has also given a direct donation of Z\$20,000 to one group to complete the roof.

their businesses. They also criticize the local government for neglecting their interests and only showing them off to visitors. There is no communication between the cooperatives in order to discuss common problems, although they are located in the same row of shops.²⁴ Thus, there is an expectation of patronage behaviour from government officials at all levels and little sense of independent action.

Practical Gains

The women have made some practical gains. Obviously, they have gained access to property and considerable amounts of capital. However, they cite personal incomes of between \$Z100-300 a month which they consider to be inadequate (Z\$400 is considered the poverty line - see Chisvo and Munroe 1994). Although 13 of the 42 women involved are widows, they are only able to supplement family income, usually by helping with school fees and food. More positively, they all report that their homes are better off and they have even been able to send children to university. They comment that best of all they have learned to generate income and, thus, are helping the nation. Therefore, they concede that there have been some practical benefits.

Strategic gains

The women cite some strategic benefits that they have derived from associational life. They comment that as women they have learned to be active, presentable in public and cooperative with other members of the group. They also have acquired an abundance of new skills. Some of the women remark that they have come into contact with people they would

²⁴ Although every group lamented that they could not afford transport for cheaper food from the countryside, they had not talked to each other about this problem nor tried to pool their resources. However, based on a suggestion from the interviewer, they met, arranged to pool their resources and hire a truck and were getting cheaper food from the countryside by August, 1995.

never have met (eg. ministers) and have been to new places (eg. community college for training) and now know how the system works. It is a great opportunity for women to be out, they assert, and their income generating helps the nation as a whole. Unlike the women in Uganda, the groups interviewed in Mutare show no interest in what women in other countries are experiencing and, during the interviews, there was no mention of grievances over the position of women in general. Thus, their practical experience, though providing opportunities for expanding their horizons, has not led to heightened interest in broader strategic interests.

While the women were critical of the Women's League during the interviews, there was no discussion of political goals for women. Most of the women commented that while the Women's League had been helpful in the beginning, now it is only for those who like to chant and sing hymns. However, they say that it is necessary to be a member in order to be recognized and to receive contracts. One group *did* insist that it is up to the women to make the Women's League a better organization. Nevertheless, the strategic concerns of these groups remain centred on keeping the attention of officials and the party in order to solve their practical needs.

Thus, these women's groups in local civil society in Mutare do not appear to be preparing the ground for a new localism. While some practical and strategic gains can be noted, there is little movement towards a broader strategic perspective that would encompass political demands for women's participation or practical interaction with government structures at the local level. On the other hand, the women demonstrate little independence of action in their associational life and depend largely on official government and party contacts to further their ventures. Thus, they have no independent resources upon which to build some

autonomy. Although they have become conscious of the weaknesses of the Women's League there is no indication at the moment that this heightened consciousness has resulted in changed political behaviour.²⁵ Clearly, the women favour the system that has helped them gain some income-generating capacity and have little incentive to change it.

Other local associational groups in Jinja and Mutare

Moving towards a new localism: a youth group in Mutare

While it would seem difficult to escape the constellation of power relations of the bifurcated state and ZANU(PF) politics in Mutare, a Dangamvura creative arts group, Taona Theatre Productions, is the rare exception that combines both practical and strategic purposes in local civil society in a different way. Operating out of Dangamvura, this group started with five young people who had gone to the same secondary school and found that they were facing unemployment along with many of their friends. They started with volunteer work for AIDS prevention in the local high schools and became a formal group of ten members (now 13) in 1990. Once established, they were able to charge for performances and creating productions for high schools is still a large part of their work.

In a practical sense, the group has managed to put itself on a solid footing through its own initiative. The members work full time on their performances which requires that they, in their own words, "hustle for work all the time" and everyone is involved in performing except for one member who acts as an administrator. The group works extensively with the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare, the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Mutare City

²⁵ Indeed, the fact that one of the executive members of one of the cooperatives led the demonstration against the newly-elected executive mayor and other 'independents' in November 1995, one of whom was a woman from Sakubva, is indicative that there is little change in political behaviour ("Zanu(PF) women demonstrate", The Manica Post, 3/11/95).

Health Department as well as international organizations including PLAN International and the Netherlands Organization for International Development Cooperation (NOVIB). They are registered as a full-time production group with the Ministry of Education and Culture and the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe and rent an office from MCC in the Community Services compound in Dangamvura. The city also lets them rehearse free of charge in the community centre and helps out with transport if they are performing for the Department of Health. They have received Z\$4500.00 in grant money from the Mutare City Department of Health. They have also been able to attract considerable amounts of funding to put on performances including a grant of Z\$85,000.00 from NOVIB to perform province-wide in an AIDS prevention campaign. In 1995 they were about to start a Zambian tour, planning their programme for the International STD/AIDS Conference in Uganda, making a record and holding a disco show to raise funds for a pilot tour of rural centres in 1996. There is no doubt that on a practical level the group is successful.

The group demonstrates a consciousness of strategic needs both in its operation and in its programmes. While the content of the group's productions concentrates on AIDS, the group is sensitive to many social issues including gender issues and both the chair and vice-chair of the production team are women although the four person secretariat has only one woman (of the current membership of 13, five are women). Just as the Walukuba drama group uses traditional drumming, dancing and singing for promoting change, so this group uses traditional performance in order to bring a contemporary message to young people. In addition, the group holds itself up as an example to young people of how to deal with unemployment by inventing their own work.

Moreover, like womens' associations in Jinja, the group has moved beyond its own boundaries to bring about social change. Taona has helped organize and train an AIDS Support Group among sex workers in Mutare. Moreover, while it has the support of government ministries and the local government administration, the group has not engaged in patronage politics and has established an autonomous outlook. The group performs at official functions that involve ZANU(PF) dignitaries but the party has not interfered with the operation of the group. The local government sees the members as people who get things done and, therefore, gives its support. On the other hand, the group deals with social issues in a way that does not seem to pose a threat to the party's power. One of the aims of their productions is "to articulate needs and problems faced by people especially the underprivileged" but they do so in a seemingly apolitical way.²⁶ Thus, they are able to work for change and extend the boundaries of local civil society, in the Gramscian sense, but without presenting a threat to the ruling party. Therefore, they represent a rare and important departure from, and alternative to, old political behaviour that may prepare the ground for a new localism.

Looking for new ground: citizens and ratepayers association in Mutare

On the other hand, the Mutare Citizens and Ratepayers Organization (MCRO) presents a more contradictory picture. MCRO was born out of a smaller association of ratepayers at a disrupted meeting in 1992 when a small group of women demanded that the association take more initiative in demanding accountability from the local council. At that meeting the chairman stepped aside and the current executive committee was elected. The organization

²⁶ "HIV/AIDS Awareness Through Drama", project proposal, Taona Theatre Productions, May 1995, p. 1.

now has a very large membership (over 1000 members), mostly from the high-density suburbs and is run by a small executive committee of six people (five women and one man), mostly middle-class and from the low-density suburbs. The organization is dependent on membership fees for operational costs but the fees are very low (Z\$2 annually) to accommodate the low-income membership and, therefore, the organization lacks sufficient resources. Meetings are expensive since a hall must be rented and insurance paid every time. The few meetings that are called are well-attended, boisterous with the complaints of local citizens and hard to handle.²⁷ Usually communication is made through flyers instead and full use is made of local newspaper reporters. The lack of resources extends to people. Few members seem to have time or resources to volunteer and the smaller middle-class membership is reluctant to spend their own resources or to get involved in political confrontation. Thus, the leadership is largely left to one person, the chairwoman, whose private home and telephone are used for day-to-day business. Indeed, the chairwoman reports that she receives constant calls from residents wanting an advocate against MCC. Thus, it would seem that this association enjoys popular support but lacks grassroots organization.

For the present, MCRO seems unable to establish a space in which a new relationship might evolve between the residents and the municipal council. The history of the organization has been one of confrontation between the chairwoman and MCC in her one-woman attempt to demand accountability from administrators. While the chairwoman blames the councillors for being ineffective, she blames the administration more, claiming that they dictate policy to

²⁷ As mentioned in Chapter 5, officials attest that the chairwoman is adept at handling these unruly meetings. She asserts that people respect her because she listens to their problems and tries to act on them. The seat on council that she won in the 1995 election would seem to prove her point.

the council. Thus, the tendency has been to verbally attack the administrators but in particular the town clerk. While MCRO blames the administrators for the 7/8 split, the singling out of the town clerk for attack seems to have exacerbated the 7/8 tension. Moreover, MCRO uses participation by demonstration as a tactic and this was particularly apparent in the demonstrations against the town clerk by civic employees in April 1995. As I reported in Chapter 5, the employees felt they were used by both ZANU(PF) and MCRO. Thus, although the intention may be to demand accountability, the tactics have tended to reinforce political behaviour that precludes more effective debate and action.

The contradictory nature of MCRO makes it hard to assess its potential contribution towards a new localism. On the one hand, it is an alternative voice and provides a much needed demand for accountability in Mutare. On the other hand, the organization itself depends very much on one leader and, although it has popular support, is not particularly based on grassroots participation.²⁸ In addition, the association has not been able to avoid falling into tactics that tend to feed the factionalism on MCC. Since the change in leadership after the 1995 local elections (in which the chairwoman became a councillor) MCRO has continued to demand accountability from the new council and called into question the 1996 budget which raised rates once again (ironically, the former chairwoman is now the chairperson of finance and presented the budget). This time MCRO held consultation meetings in all the low-density suburbs. Perhaps a more grassroots organization and a better relationship with the new council will evolve. Thus, while the evidence is that MCRO has not been very effective in creating change, it may still be instrumental in creating openings that

²⁸ I am not suggesting that the blame for these circumstances be laid at the feet of the chairwoman who has, herself, endured considerable harassment when trying to get answers from the municipal council.

lead to change.

Taking a hint from women: a men's group in Jinja

In Jinja I did not find a similar proliferation of groups among men as among women but there is an indication that the apparent success of women's groups has raised the consciousness of men. In 1995, there was only one men's group. The men's group is in the same village (Alladina) in Central Jinja as one of the most successful women's groups and has adopted the same village name for the group. The men are forthcoming about the fact that they decided to form the group because the women were so successful and, moreover, that they have sought the women's advice in setting up their group. This is indicative of changing attitudes among men about the independent legitimacy of urban women in the face of such vibrant activities among women. These men formed the group in August 1994 and by 1995 had created group savings but had not yet started lending nor had they any affiliation with a micro-lending NGO. Surpluses are to go to a group project which was yet to be formulated. The formal constitution lays out very stringent lending rules and is particularly geared to accountability. For example, there is provision for regular rotation of members for chairing meetings "in order to know what leadership means", strict provisions for electing executive members and a loans committee annually and rules against conflict of interest.²⁹ Thus, there is some evidence that not only are men taking the women's lead but also they may form similar associations that could lead to some autonomy in local civil society and provide more fertile

²⁹ Constitution Governing Alladina Men's Association, Article 28, p. 13. Although Aili Tripp cites the existence of a formal constitution as an indication of demanding accountability I am reluctant to take it as very strong evidence until there is proof in the practice and, as argued earlier in the chapter, women's groups have had to learn through practice. Nevertheless it is true that accountability is in the front of people's consciousness and this is particularly relevant given the social chaos that Ugandans have endured.

ground in which a new political behaviour might flourish.

Moving away from patronage: a youth group in Jinja

Another exclusively male group, the Walukuba Youth Development Association which started in 1992, has been more directly encouraged by the RCs in response to the condition of unemployed youth in the housing estate. With the continual influx of new people (often young, poorly educated males) and high unemployment, residents were starting to blame young men for insecurity in the estate and the RCs in Walukuba realized that something had to be done to help them develop skills and generate income.³⁰ It started with the municipal council giving land and a few people starting to cultivate and then others joined to make 30 members in 1995. The organization is open to boys and men from ages 8 to 30. Now the group cultivates several crops, has financed bicycles for *boda boda* work, has a grocery kiosk in the local Walukuba market, sells produce in the central market and is developing a fish pond under the guidance of the Jinja District Department of Fisheries. Each person works his own plot but the produce is marketed by the group which gets 30% of the profits to buy inputs such as equipment and seed. Though the profits are small, the group has been able to accumulate a small store of equipment and maintain the marketing venues. Besides the practical benefit of maintaining a small income, the young men cite several strategic social benefits from the association such as learning to get along with people from other ethnic groups, self reliance and being able to speak up for youth. They stress the fact that they are not political and welcome the new youth council (implemented in 1994 along with the

³⁰ As with women, every RC committee has a Secretary for Youth. There are 21 RC1 secretaries for youth in Walukuba division, three at the RC2 level and one at the RC3 level. Thus, 25 people represent youth in that sub-county. The RC3 secretary, who is on JMC, is in close contact with the group and attends their meetings.

women's councils) that stresses development. However, unlike the youth group in Mutare, this association does not bring the youth of both genders together. The young men assert that mixing young men and women together is too difficult socially. Nevertheless, in that there is the beginnings of some economic autonomy and a sense that patronage politics is not going to help them, there is reason to believe that this association may become part of a local civil society where a new localism may take root.

Preparing less sectarian ground: friendship associations in Jinja

In groups that include both men and women, the women take a backseat in the organization but there is evidence of increased social cohesion in such groups. This was true in the three friendship groups that were interviewed in Jinja, all of which began in 1991. Of the three groups, only one is based on ethnicity. This Iteso group is composed of couples who had originally emigrated from Soroti and Kumi districts in the north-east (a poor area of the country) and were making a subsistence living in Jinja. Many of the men were *boda boda* operators and played sports together while the women (who said they were "born to brew") had been engaged in brewing and baking activities. It was striking in this organization that the men provided the capital for group projects of brewing and baking which the women then carried out. However, both group activities had been curtailed because of lack of capital, expertise and equipment. Some women were carrying on individual brewing operations and it seemed a cruel irony that they complained that there was no money for school fees because the men spent too much money on drink while, at the same time, they were scraping a living by brewing. What fees were collected weekly were given to members in rotation as a loan which they used according to their own requirements. Although the group projects had not

worked the members still mentioned benefits from mutual support.

The other two groups are multi-ethnic. The members are better-off families of civil servants, business people and professionals and emphasize non-sectarian association. As one constitution put it, they "promote unity, mutual co-operation and understanding amongst its members irrespective of creed, tribe, sex and political affiliation".³¹ Of these two groups, one became the off-shoot of the other when the applications for membership became too numerous (they stopped at 100). While women are members, the executives tend to be mostly men although women are not precluded, and women's affairs are presided over by women. The primary purpose of these two groups is the support of 'rights of passage' among the members such as a death, a marriage, an introductory ceremony or graduation party.³² The groups also provide counselling to marriage partners when needed. These two groups have proved very popular and the benefits of membership go beyond the practical to encompass better social cohesion in the community. Members assert that the mixture not only of ethnic groups but of occupations had brought together people who had not trusted one another previously but had learned to do so through the association. These groups are also on a much better financial footing than the Iteso group since the members are better off. All of these mixed groups, but especially the multi-ethnic associations, may be contributing to forming the basis for a more cohesive and open local civil society in Jinja in which new political behaviour may take root.

³¹ The Constitution of Nile United Friendship Association, p. 1.

³² In Uganda the introduction ceremony is conducted when a betrothal takes place. This occasion is more elaborately celebrated than the marriage and involves a formal ceremony, a photographer and much gift-giving between the families involved.

The ambiguities of local civil society: tenants' associations in Jinja

There are two community-based tenants' associations in Jinja, the Walukuba Tenants' Welfare Association (WATWA) and the Jinja Tenants Association, which are organized to address the concerns of local residents. Both associations have some interaction with the local government because they represent problems with which JMC must also grapple. In fact, one of the reasons WATWA was reactivated in 1992 was to establish better relations with the municipal council.³³ The issues that concern WATWA and the rest of the tenants are those of allocation and eviction as well as the state of sanitation on the estate (see Chapter 4). In addition, JMC is in the process of drawing up plans to survey and sell the houses so that it will no longer have the burden of the estate. In this case, WATWA is anxious to have the capital to assist tenants in the purchase of houses when they have been surveyed. The association is also concerned with welfare issues of the more vulnerable residents of the estate including women, school dropouts and the elderly and wish to start income-earning projects which will help them. The Jinja Tenants Association, on the other hand, represents the tenants of central Jinja who are renting the properties of Asians for which the Departed Asian Property Custodial Board (DAPCB) had served as landlord. By 1995 most of these properties had been reclaimed or were being sold as the DAPCB was winding up its operation. This created a situation of tremendous insecurity for the tenants, since the properties, located mostly on the main streets of Jinja, provided a place of business as well as domestic accommodation. The association was formed in 1993 to open a dialogue with the landlords

³³ The history of the association is indicative of how local civil society also reproduced the politics of the bifurcated state. The association, formed at independence, became dominated by Milton Obote's Uganda Peoples' Congress (UPC) and the affairs of tenants (especially allocation and eviction) were decided on a patronage basis. Because of this, the first association became dormant by the end of the 1960s.

who had reclaimed (most of whom at that time lived abroad and operated through local agents and sub-agents), to protect the interests of tenants and to raise capital to purchase or build rental accommodation. Thus, the concerns of these associations tread into the territory of JMC responsibility.

Both associations are concerned with accountability within their own organization. Both hold annual elections to select an executive committee, have multiple signatories and provisions for members to have access to the accounts. The chairman of the Jinja Tenants' Association specifically cited the democratic RC system as a model for the internal organization of the association.³⁴ Although they both have chairmen, the associations have women on their executive committees and consider women to be an integral part of the organization. Thus the organizations are quite conscious of the importance of accountability.

However, lack of resources does affect the ability of these associations to reach their goals. The rate of participation is quite low and members lack resources. Of the 250 members of WATWA, many are labourers or subsistence earners in the informal sector.³⁵ Therefore, the annual fees (USH2000/=) are nominal and the optimum amount that could be raised is only USHS500,000/= per year (US\$500). This makes little headway towards establishing a fund for helping residents in the purchase of houses or providing revolving funds for welfare projects. Of the 100 members of the Jinja Tenants association, in 1995 only 50% had paid the yearly fee (USH5000/=) which also amounts to approximately US\$250 per year, a low sum for providing the services envisioned. WATWA is confined to following up complaints of

³⁴ Interview, Chairman, Jinja Tenants' Association, 2/2/95.

³⁵ Population of the housing estate (Walukuba West and East) is 11,394 with an average family size of 4.1 (1991 Population and Housing Census, Jinja District, p. 5, 9).

tenants and performing watchdog functions to see that municipal councillors do not take advantage of their position to acquire tenant status and sublet for an income. They were instrumental in calling municipal councillors to account when two of the councillors were allocated houses and participated in the proceedings of the Water Verification Committee (see Chapter 4). In 1995 the Jinja Tenants Association had obtained a meeting with government officials at which a committee was appointed (the chairman of the association, two rental agents and a state attorney) in order to come to some understanding of tenants' rights. Two association members had initiated court proceedings as *individuals* to challenge ownership claims and the cases were currently in the high court. Thus, both associations are limited in the actions they can take.

Moreover, these associations are indicative of the ambiguous circumstances on which local civil society is sometimes founded in Jinja. The ambiguous circumstances of residents of the housing estate were described in Chapter 4 but the main points bear repeating. Many of the tenants have 'inherited' the tenancy from older generations or they are the tenants of tenants. In the latter case there are several variations: sometimes the original tenant 'sells' the house outright to a new tenant who, nevertheless, is not a legal tenant; sometimes the original tenant moves out of town and sublets; and sometimes the tenant just sublets some space while still residing there. In the 1980s many of those who sought housing in this manner were traders and small businessmen. In fact, the chairman of WATWA in 1995 was also chairman of the Central Market Association and WATWA held meetings in the central market. This informal housing market creates the ambiguous circumstances under which residents must gauge their relationship to JMC and to each other. Thus, while WATWA may advocate for

residents, those residents are not always united behind the same structural conditions and often lack a strong case to bring to the municipal council. The Jinja Tenants Association also is founded on uncertain territory. The Asian properties remained under the jurisdiction of DAPCB but were given as patronage prizes to Amin's supporters. In turn, those properties were divided and sublet over and over again. No repairs were carried out and services, especially water, are often non-existent because it is the landlord who is billed and those who have been collecting rent have not bothered to pay. As in the Walukuba case, the tenants may be renting part of the space to their own tenants or renting from illegitimate patronage agents. In either case their claims are tentative at best. On the other hand, some tenants have genuine grievances when local agents, acting for absent landlords who have reclaimed, designate sub-agents, all of whom demand a cut of the rent (which pushes it higher) or just plain bribes. Also, when properties are put up for sale the tenants claim that there is no consultation and the auctioneers evict the tenants and start selling everything off immediately. Some tenants claim that they have rights because they have done their own repairs and improvements over the years. They also assert that some of those reclaiming property are illegitimate and that the tenants should have first refusal rights when the properties are sold. Therefore, the cases are complex and ambiguous.

The two associations are quite different in their engagement with government institutions. WATWA executives cite the enabling atmosphere of the RC system as the reason the association was able to be revived. The association is closely related to the lower RCs in Walukuba and many members are village or parish RCs. As mentioned above, they have worked closely with RCs on the question of evictions and the provision of water. Nonetheless

they are quite suspicious of higher RCs (municipal councillors) and claim that as soon as a person becomes a municipal councillor she/he forgets about the village. The Jinja Tenants Association also has taken some inspiration from RCs and claims that the organization "follows the norm of RC because people are well-informed about that".³⁶ Moreover, the lower RCs have aided the association in apprehending false agents.³⁷ However, in action, there is little consideration of the RC system. The association sees the central government as the custodian of Asian property (in charge of the DAPCB) and the members have preferred to work with the Central Government Representative (CGR)³⁸ and the District and Regional Police Commissioners because they have "thought it better to get the policy-maker".³⁹ Moreover, the association sees the local government as uncooperative because JMC does not want to get involved in the struggle between landlords and tenants and because the administration seems reluctant to take action on expired leases and make landlords more responsible. The association also faults JMC for raising rates which are passed on to the tenants. Overall, the Jinja Tenants Association sees the landlords as too powerful for either the local government or the association to handle and, thus, finds it necessary to have the central government as a mediator. However, when dealing specifically with local government they see JMC as an equal and do not feel the need for a mediator.

The behaviour of the municipal council towards each association is also quite

³⁶ Interview, Chairman, Jinja Tenants' Association, 2/2/95.

³⁷ People who pose as agents of the absentee landlord in order to extort money.

³⁸ Now designated as Resident District Commissioner in the 1997 legislation (Local Governments Act 1997, Part VII).

³⁹ Interview, Chairman, Jinja Tenants Association, 2/2/95.

different. There is a great deal of mistrust of WATWA on the part of JMC administrators because they feel that the association encroaches upon their jurisdiction and, in fact, the association is viewed as illegal.⁴⁰ The municipal council holds the responsibility to lease and evict and to set policies as to who may rent. Municipal councillors have actually set a policy which gives priority to council employees, teachers and other employed workers when houses become available but does not evict old tenants unless they continue to default on rent (also see Chapter 4). Administrators argue that WATWA leaders may misinform tenants who are easily misled and that the association is not necessary because the lower RCs are able to perform a watchdog function. Indeed, in 1995 the chairman of WATWA had just sought and won a parish by-election explaining that he could be more effective as an RC.

In contrast to its attitude to WATWA, JMC does not show a similar mistrust of the Jinja Tenants Association although it views its claims with a great deal of ambivalence.⁴¹ The tenants make up the majority of small businesses in central Jinja and JMC depends on them for revenue, especially for business licenses. Also, this association does not encroach on municipal responsibilities because JMC is not responsible for DAPCB business. In fact, as when dealing with NW&SC, JMC is willing to facilitate communication but wants no responsibility for the outcome. Thus, the council has attended meetings with the CGR and gives meeting rooms to the association free of charge. Therefore, at the municipal council

⁴⁰ Interview, Town Clerk, JMC, 12/4/95.

⁴¹ Interview, Town Clerk, JMC, 18/1/95. In 1995 the DAPCB was paying up its debt to the municipality and many of the properties had been reclaimed by owners who were taking responsibility, paying rates and doing renovations. This was viewed as a great improvement over the former situation of patronage allocation which resulted in neglected properties and the non-payment of rates. Thus, the administration was ambivalent about tenants' claims.

level, the acceptance of local civil associations depends very much on how sensitive the issue is to JMC's operation. In those cases where the association encroaches on JMC jurisdiction there emerges some mistrust on the part of officials of the ability of the population to avoid being misled. This is similar to the attitude in Mutare but in Jinja it seems to be mitigated by the presence of the lower RCs which provides a legitimate forum for dialogue.

The ambiguity of these associations makes it difficult to judge what fertile ground they may provide for a new localism to develop. Internally, both organizations are concerned with developing democratic practices which produce accountability but their membership is low and fairly inactive. Externally, their public **behaviour** varies. It is not clear whether the Jinja Tenants Association prefers patronage politics or not but it is clear that they are fighting against the return of legitimate landlords and have benefitted from the old system. WATWA, on the other hand, makes use of the new system and tends to share the advocacy role of the lower RCs. Their meagre resources, however, preclude them from establishing autonomous services or projects which might set them on firmer ground. However, WATWA in particular has fulfilled some of its goals through the lower RCs which carry more legitimacy. Thus, the RC system is able to provide a bridge with which local residents may enter in to meaningful dialogue with the municipal council. Despite their differences, both organizations take advantage of the favourable atmosphere that the RC system provides for civil associations and both demand accountability from local government. Thus, these associations are making some contribution towards a new localism through the enabling atmosphere provided by the RC system.

II PTAs in Jinja and Mutare: forging a partnership between local civil society and local government

The parent-teachers' associations (PTAs) in Jinja and Mutare present an interesting comparison of the interaction of local civil society with local government because in both municipalities these community-based organizations are in partnership with the local government in the delivery of primary education. In both Uganda and Zimbabwe, local governments are responsible for the building and maintenance of primary schools as well as their day-to-day running. The central governments, in both cases, pay the salaries of the teaching staff on a national salary scale.⁴² In the case of Zimbabwe, the Ministry of Education remains responsible for professional standards, while in Uganda the local government has a director of education and hires inspectors. However, at the local level the authorities in both Mutare and Jinja share their responsibility with community-based PTAs on school management committees. Thus, in this interaction we may see how the externally driven demands on local government affect an internally driven and democratic new localism which is analysed in this thesis.

Although the PTAs are in partnership with local government in both places, the circumstances of the partnership are sharply different. In Jinja, PTAs have been active since the end of the Amin regime. During the chaos of the 1980s it was the PTAs that kept the schools functioning since government funding was sporadic (often embezzled) and teachers' salaries were seldom paid. In 1995 under the RCs, PTAs continued to function separately from local government, providing essential financial support, but there was a partnership

⁴² In Zimbabwe the Ministry of Education is responsible while in Uganda it is the Ministry of Local Government, Decentralization Secretariat.

evolving which brought the two together under a school management committee in each school. Yet, PTAs are not statutory in Uganda and, therefore, their position within the partnership is not stable.⁴³ In Mutare, on the other hand, PTAs were encouraged to form in the late 1980s after the central government unilaterally devolved the responsibility for primary education onto local governments in 1987. Unlike the situation in Uganda, the local government provides for the bulk of the school expenses and PTA funds are supplementary to those provided by the local authority. Nevertheless, in 1992 the partnership between the PTAs, local government and school management was formalized by statute.⁴⁴ Thus, an incongruity lies in the fact that PTAs in Jinja, which provide the bulk of the funding for primary education, are not statutory whereas PTAs in Mutare, which provide only supplementary service, are.

PTAs and local government in Jinja

The situation of the primary schools in Jinja during the 1980s is indicative of the political chaos of the times.⁴⁵ During the late 1970s government money slowed to a trickle but the population of school children was growing rapidly. The municipal council levied parents for several nominal taxes but the administration could not account for the money collected

⁴³ This point has been made abundantly clear since the 1996 presidential election in which Yoweri Museveni promised universal primary education (UPE) for four children in every family. The institution of this programme after the election was accompanied by an initial banning of PTAs (or at least the fees required by PTAs) which was then lifted in urban areas. Thus, UPE, at least at the onset, has rendered the PTAs vulnerable (see below).

⁴⁴ Education (School Development Committees) (Non-Government Schools) Regulations 1992. The primary schools are considered non-government schools in that they are no longer the responsibility of the central government.

⁴⁵ The sources of information are the minutes of the Education Committee, JMC, 1984-95 and interviews conducted with headmasters and PTA executives in March and April of 1995.

and schools were not being maintained, let alone new ones built. Although parents started to organize to meet the need, the council had repeatedly turned down requests by PTAs for the power to raise fees in order to keep the schools in repair. However, by 1985 one PTA had built a new school and others were making plans to add classrooms and dig pit latrines. As the PTAs made headway, the councillors insisted that the PTA money be turned over to council officials who would use it for maintaining the schools. However, the PTAs argued that a separate bank account should be maintained and a building committee established to look after it. By 1987, when the RCs took over, the schools were run entirely on the PTAs' initiative but the system was in chaos. Parents scrambled to send their children to the schools where the PTA was active, usually in the town centre where so many businesses were now renting, and school sites on the periphery were all but abandoned. In addition, teachers, working under terrible conditions, were actively encouraging private coaching to parents who could pay.⁴⁶ The chaos is neatly summed up in the report on education presented to the new RC local government in 1987:

While teachers are scrambling (sic!) for stores [school storerooms], kitchens, boys quarters and garages to live in the town centre, teachers' houses are empty and decaying at Masese Primary School. Nursery Schools have been turned into Primary Schools and 'coaching' is taking place so that the children can pass what is called the interview for P. 1 in certain schools. Those who do not succeed have to try other

⁴⁶ During the late 1970s and the 1980s when people were scrambling for accommodation, houses that were to be designated for teachers were taken over by other tenants and there was a particular housing crisis for teachers who were already suffering from poor and sporadic salaries. The report on education delivered to the new RCs at the end of 1987 explains the situation:

Generally, lack of housing facilities causes lack of concentration and Instability of the teaching staff. Lakesite Primary School, and Masese Primary school are particularly difficult to staff because the staff are housed a distance away from the schools. In the rainy seasons, teachers are faced with hardships. It may not be far fetched to call for provision of protective clothing like gumboots as an incentive (sic!). Because of the meagre salaries most male teachers are forced into hawking in the market, running stalls etc. While some of their female counter parts are forced into premature marriages, temporary marriages which have caused untold suffering. We have lost lives of some teachers this way (A Brief by the Education Officer, Education Committee, 16/12/87, p. 6).

channels e.t.c., complaints (sic!), accusations, allegations, suspicious (sic!) upon suspicion, leading to an unhealthy working environment. Some have called for the removal of Headmasters because they are corrupt e.t.c., BUT have no guarantee that their replacements will do better all other factors remaining constant... That is why the council has no alternative but to invest heavily in education and it must be seen to do justice to the majority of its residents and NOT merely service the gap between the privileged and the non privileged - see Victoria Nile School Primary School against Lake Site Primary School!⁴⁷

It was reported of one headmaster who had been under pressure from parents that,

he simply wrote a chit saying he was leaving the school and stuck it on the school notice board and handed the keys to the police station and went away⁴⁸

Thus the breakdown in the school system neatly mirrored the breakdown in society in Uganda. Although PTAs assured that primary education was still available in some schools, they could only do so for those who could pay; parents who were unable to pay had to find alternative, and often destructive, ways of accessing the system.

School management in the 1990s

In 1987 the new RC local government looked for ways to reduce the operations and influence of the PTAs as they were seen as the reason for inequities between schools. However, efforts to raise an education tax were abandoned because the suggestion was highly unpopular and another education levy raised by the district yields only a small amount for Jinja schools because JMC is seen as resource rich as compared to other parts of the district. By 1988, JMC had formally agreed that the PTAs could keep their budgets separate. They also urged the PTAs to supplement teachers' salaries and to help with the housing crisis (only 80 of 480 teachers received help with housing⁴⁹). By the early 1990s the council was entering

⁴⁷ A Brief by the Education Officer, Education Committee, JMC, 16/12/87, p. 2.

⁴⁸ Minutes, Education Committee, JMC, 4/4/95. p. 3.

⁴⁹ Report of Education Sub-Committee (Tour of Schools), Minutes Education Committee, JMC, 13/5/88.

into a 50/50 partnership with PTAs on capital works. The acceptance of PTAs has been inevitable simply because the local government is unable to fulfill its obligation alone.

Although conditions have improved, in 1995 the schools still reflected the chaos of the past. Of the 14 schools, two are recently built and the rest are slowly repairing and adding onto the dilapidated remains of schools that were mostly built in the 1960s. The newer schools consist of a block of classrooms only and have little furniture. Only Victoria Nile Primary School, in the better-off suburb where senior civil servants reside, has been kept in good repair. However, even in that school the lowest grades lack sufficient furniture and, at the lower levels, crowd 50 students into one classroom with two teachers. The worst of the schools (Uganda Railways School, east of town by the railway workers residences, Kirinya, named after the prison on which it borders, and the two schools in Walukuba) have only benches and black boards and few doors or windows that can be shut properly to keep what supplies there are secure. Some of the schools have electricity and standpipes and most use pit latrines.⁵⁰ In these schools overcrowding means classes of up to 80 students with two teachers in one classroom at the lower levels. Classes are smaller at the upper level, especially primary 6 and 7, since primary education is geared to one goal, the P7 primary leaving exams (PLE), and principals tend to give preferential treatment to the higher classes. Also, there is a considerable dropout rate. Thus, the schools clearly need improvement.

Primary schools in Jinja are still severely underfunded by government. Parents pay a

⁵⁰ The school near Uganda Railways Corporation (URC) houses the younger grades in old railway cars where there is no electricity although there is some furniture. The school depends on standpipes owned by URC which often does not pay the water bill and then the school must purchase water by the jerrycan. In 1993 JMC considered closing the school for health reasons because of lack of water (Minutes, Education Committee, JMC, 1/4/93).

nominal government school fee per annum (USH2500/= for P1-4 and USH4000/= for P5-7) and the central government, through the Ministry of Local Government is supposed to match this parent contribution.⁵¹ Ten percent of the combined fee is deflected to JMC for administration. Each school collects the parent contribution and turns it over to JMC. The government contribution goes to Jinja District administration to be distributed to schools in the entire district. In the 1994/95 estimates the government match should have been USH41,513,000/= for Jinja primary schools. However, the government contribution has never been more than a few million shillings in any given year and has declined steadily (21,762,602/= in 1991⁵²; 10,851,630/= in 1992⁵³; and, SH1,000,000/= in 1994⁵⁴).⁵⁵ The small amount from the education tax goes into making furniture in the council workshop (USH4,000,000/= in 1994). This means chronic and severe underfunding for the schools. As an example, Walukuba East Primary school had 800 pupils in 1995, taking in a total of USH2,255,000/=. If the total 10% deflection payment ([actually 20% of the amount collected] USH451,000/=) is taken off for JMC administrative costs that leaves USH1,804,000/=

⁵¹ The situation described is that in 1995. It changed somewhat in the 1997 school year (see below).

⁵² Minutes, Education Committee, JMC, 29/4/92.

⁵³ Minutes, Education Committee, JMC, 2/6/93.

⁵⁴ 1994/94 Estimates, JMC; Quarterly Audit Inspection Report on Jinja Municipal Council Financial Operations, January 31, 1995. The government contribution goes through the Jinja District headquarters in Bugembe and JMC has always complained that the district does not release their fair portion either through mismanagement or through directing those funds to rural areas that have less revenue than JMC. The government contribution was converted to a block grant of USH19m for the whole district in 1994 (Minutes, Education Committee, JMC, 13/3/95).

⁵⁵ This cannot be completely blamed on the Ministry of Local Government which matches according to parents' contribution documented. For a number of reasons the records of parent contributions do not get to the ministry in a timely fashion. Often school heads have just not accounted for the money and often parents have been slow at paying so payments get behind (Minutes Education Committee, JMC, 6/12/93). However, there is still a problem with getting the money through the district which has other priorities.

(approximately US\$1,804) to run the school for a year. Since most of this amount comes from JMC in the form of scholastic materials, there is really no budgeting for this money. For Walukuba East School the water bill alone was USH1,150,000/= in the 1994 school year.⁵⁶ Moreover, teachers in Jinja are still paid poorly (USH43,000 per month) and sporadically. The money for teachers' salaries is paid to the district which, in turn, pays the teachers. In April 1995 the teachers in Jinja had just received their February cheques. This grossly inadequate government funding leaves schools with demoralized staffs and no ability to budget.

PTAs remain essential to the running of primary schools and more than supplement the poor contributions of both central and local governments. PTA fees are charged per term and, thus, are more frequent as well as considerably more than the nominal government fee. In 1995 the fees varied between USH8000-13,000/= per student per term in most schools except for Victoria Nile which charged an average of USH77,000/= per student per term.⁵⁷ The largest part of the PTA budget goes for teacher welfare (salary⁵⁸ and rent supplements, lunch and tea) but the budget also pays for utilities, supplies, clerical staff and contributes to capital projects such as new classrooms and houses for teachers. Capital projects in the Victoria Nile School 1995 PTA budget totalled USH46,000,000/= for teachers' houses and

⁵⁶ Walukuba East Primary School PTA Estimated Income and Expenditure 1995.

⁵⁷ Interviews were conducted with the headmasters and PTA executives of seven of the 14 schools. Two out of the seven schools interviewed charged higher PTA fees for higher grades. Victoria Nile also had differentiated charges but charged the youngest children the highest fees (USH105,000/= as compared to USH75,000) presumably because they are the most numerous and, thus, bring in the most money (these higher fees did not reflect on the service provided for the youngest grades which was definitely inferior). These figures had to be gathered through interviews since JMC does not keep the information and there is no regulated amount.

⁵⁸ The supplements per month for teachers' salaries vary from USH8000/= at the poorest schools to USH18,000-50,000/= at better-off schools. In most schools there is a range which reflects qualifications, experience and grade level.

classrooms. In contrast, JMC spent altogether only USH13,200,000/= on capital projects for all schools in 1994.⁵⁹ This means that, in budgetary terms, JMC is very much the junior partner to the PTAs.

The necessity of relying on PTAs means that inequalities between schools are perpetuated. The condition of each school continues to depend very much on the number of pupils and the ability of the parents to pay PTA fees. For Walukuba East Primary School (800 students) the PTA fees (USH8000/=, P1-4 and 13,000/=, P5-7) for 1995 totalled USH20,640,000/= (almost 20 times the government amount of USH1,804,000/=) or USH25,800/= per pupil per year.⁶⁰ On the other hand, the PTA budget for Victoria Nile School (1205 pupils) was USH100,155,000/= or USH83,116/= per pupil per year. As mentioned above, schools with stronger PTAs pay the teachers more and house them better. In addition to disparities in the amount of the PTA fees, inequalities arise from the inability of parents to pay. Both Walukuba East and Victoria Nile schools reported that parents had paid the fees for the present term and another school reported that 90% of the fees had paid. However, of the other four, two reported that only 50% of the fees had been paid, one reported just 40% of the fees had been paid and the other reported that only 30% of the fees had been paid.⁶¹ Thus, those schools with better-off parents are able to plan and budget much better.

⁵⁹ JMC, Preamble to the Budget, 1994/95, p. iv.

⁶⁰ The actual PTA income and expenditure for 1994 was USH18,545,720/= as reported in the Walukuba East Primary School Estimated Income and Expenditure 1995.

⁶¹ The first term starts the first week of January and the interviews were conducted between the first week of March and the first week of April, towards the end of the term. Rather than turning students away immediately, the PTAs and headmasters have devised various strategies for accomodating poorer parents, mostly through incremental payments (see below).

The importance of the PTA is not reflected in the school management. It is as if the council believes that the inequalities represented by the existence of the PTAs will disappear if the PTAs are given little voice in the management. In each school a management committee sets school policy and oversees operations. The school management committee is chosen every three years (upon a new municipal council being elected) and composed of a two municipal councillors (chair and vice-chair) the school head (usually the secretary), two teachers, three members appointed by JMC and two parent representatives (the chairman and another executive member of the PTA). While this management team is weighted on the side of council, it only controls the account which holds government fees and money that the council grants either through general revenue or through the small amount of government contribution received (mostly in the form of school materials, not cash). In contrast, the PTA executive is elected every year at an annual general meeting where the budget for the next year is also approved as are the PTA fees for the following year. This executive committee is completely separate from the management committee and controls its own, much larger, budget but has little input into the management committee. While the management committee might meet twice a term, the PTA executive is called on regularly for signing cheques, providing support for the staff and encouraging parents to pay. In fact councillors have complained the "management committees are being marginalized by PTA's as far as financial control in schools was concerned".⁶² Thus, there is a mismatch of power over policy and resources and school heads report that there is often tension between the PTA executive and the management committee and, as a result, planning is a haphazard affair.

⁶² Minutes, Education Committee, JMC, 17/6/91, p. 6.

There are some real problems with the management teams as they are currently functioning. The politicians who are chairs do not necessarily have children in the school and thus have little contact with parents while those members who are parents have little clout in policy-making. PTA executives complain that the councillors take decisions that are unrealistic, given the resources available, but that the school heads find it hard to say no to politicians. Consequently, the school heads are constantly coming to the PTA for extra money to carry out the decisions. Sometimes the decisions are made by politicians alone without consultation with the rest of the management committee. For example, the RC3 councillors in Walukuba were told by the administration that there was some money available for building a new classroom but they must move quickly in order to access the money or another area would get it. The councillors quickly decided that Walukuba East School would get a new classroom, a contractor was hired and the rest of the management committee heard about it after the fact. The contractor, a local man who had begged the councillor who was chair of the Walukuba East School Management committee for the job, was paid and started, then abandoned, the project. Although the committee demanded to see the contractor he never appeared and his work had never been monitored. At a management meeting the councillor, who dominated the proceedings, advised the committee to let the contractor pay the money back in installments because "he was a father to me". She admitted that there had been no supervision or documentation of work done and no document of agreement beyond the original quotation.⁶³ In one of the seven schools studied a management committee was still

⁶³ Meeting, School Management Committee, Walukuba East Primary School, 17/3/95. This school had a succession of headmasters over the three year period that this contract dispute had been going on. The former headmaster had been removed for mismanagement and sent to Walukuba West Primary School (he had been removed from a school previous to that and at an RC meeting parents complained that they were given a

not functioning, which calls into question how serious some of the councillors are about their role. In the past three years five of the seven schools had changed headmasters at least once because of mismanagement. Thus, management committees are struggling to provide accountability.

While they have kept the schools functioning, the PTAs have had their own difficulties. In the past, PTA executives have been accused of not being accountable to the parents who make up their constituencies. Executives tend to be better off than their constituents and often fees were raised and budgets approved without reference to ordinary members. Councillors also complained that the funds were not properly accounted for and accused some PTA executives of embezzling funds. However, gradually the process has become more regulated and in 1995 fees and budgets had to be ratified at the annual general meeting. Still, there were complaints that the executive would rush the budget through without proper explanation and would save the vote until the end when many people had left.⁶⁴ A large part of the problem is that the majority of parents in most schools are poor and often are preoccupied with avoiding fees rather than demanding accountability. In the most extreme cases parents leave their children in a school until their children are expelled for non-payment then change schools and repeat the exercise. However, by 1995 schools had arranged for payments by installments and used expulsion as a last resort. Nevertheless, parents still

headmaster who had mismanaged both Main Street Primary and Walukuba East Primary and they did not want him [Meeting, RC3, Walakuba Masese, 12/2/95]. The headmaster who had just been appointed for the 1995 year, starting in January, had been removed from another school where he had run the school into debt (did not disclose water and electricity bills) and had rarely called a management committee meeting. The council administration had maintained that he should have a last chance. It was clear in this meeting that PTA members had been kept in the dark and were intent on using this meeting to raise questions. However, the councillor still dominated the proceedings.

⁶⁴ Interview, Chairman, Education Committee, JMC, 16/4/95.

avoid management and PTA executives because of demands for fees and, thus, are not in a good position to demand accountability.

The municipal council administration has also been unable to give good administrative support. Salaries are so low no one can expect even the Education Officer to be working full-time.⁶⁵ Only in 1991 was transport provided to the school inspector through the purchase of a motor bike. In addition, there has been no system for collecting school fees and, thus, it has been very easy for school heads to misappropriate funds. The administration tends to fund the schools through school supplies rather than cash. Both school heads and PTA executives complain that the council pays too much for these supplies which could be better targeted and less costly if included in a cash budget. During the early 1990s the attempt to manufacture desks in the council workshop was unproductive because of "no permanent staff to ensure efficiency".⁶⁶ When a contract was issued to the workshop, the supervisor used the materials for his own business and the money was lost. A tender by a local contractor also collapsed when the contractor reneged on the agreement. About 200 desks had been distributed between 1990 and 1994. Even though repeatedly asked, the Education Officer has not produced guidelines for PTA/Management relations. Councillors have also criticized the administration for transferring rather than dismissing school heads who mismanage school funds. Thus, the administration has not provided the support that is needed.

Nevertheless, the chaos of the 1980s is subsiding and there are some very positive signs that the three partners (council administration, management committees and PTAs) are

⁶⁵ In the JMC 1994-95 estimates the Education Officer's salary was pegged at US\$1,041,500/- (approximately US\$1041).

⁶⁶ Minutes, Education Committee, JMC, 26/10/91.

calling each other to account. By 1990 the administration had lists of teachers and their qualifications and, with the help of PTA executives, had started rationalizing the number of teachers for each school.⁶⁷ In 1988 schools were still refusing to pay school government fees into the council account and keeping them in the PTA account but by 1995 the parents were paying government school fees directly to the bank, thus diminishing the chances of embezzlement by school heads or PTA executives. There is also a concerted effort by the administration to pressure school heads to get all fees in according to the number of students registered and an effort is being made to keep on file PTA budgets for each school. PTAs are following suit and using bank slips to collect PTA funds instead of cash. PTAs are also finding ways to have parents pay by instalment to avoid severe hardship. In 1993 eight bursars were hired to cover all of the schools in the municipality. The administration and the councillors have also looked for creative solutions to building new classrooms. At Kirinya Primary School, which is built next to the prison, the prison has donated sand and bricks, the PTA cement and the council iron sheets in order to build new classrooms. An entire new school (set of classrooms) was built in a debt swap with the Uganda Electricity Board. Other new classrooms have been built with the cooperation of DANIDA women's project in Masese where the council and PTA have split materials 50/50 and DANIDA has paid the women to build. Unlike the classroom at Walukuba East Primary School, these have been completed

⁶⁷ The Education Officer found that many were underqualified and had not completed their courses. Thus, an effort was made to send them back to complete while new teachers were hired. However, new teachers often do not receive salaries because the lists are not rational and are never changed automatically. Therefore district lists had dead people on them but not new teachers who were working for the municipality. Although the official pupil/teacher ratio is 40:1, as explained above, often two teachers must share a small classroom with 80 pupils. The central government insists on one teacher and 40 pupils per classroom but the shortage of classrooms precludes this in reality.

without delays. Yet other classrooms have been built with a straight 50/50 cost split between the council and the PTA. Often the councillors/management chairs have been instrumental in negotiating the split in costs. PTA executives comment that since 1992 there has been a marked change in cooperation between the municipality and PTAs and things are getting done. In this way even the poorest schools with the least enrolment (Uganda Railways and Kirinya) have started building new classrooms. Thus, there has been more accountability and there is movement towards a school system with more equity.

There is also an indication that management by school heads is starting to improve. Since 1993, two of the most neglected schools which also had the worst PLE results, St. Gonzaga and Mpumudde, have turned around to become showcases for the municipality. Both schools are run by female school heads who have tried to make the tripartite system work. They have brought the PTA and management committees together in order to coordinate efforts, and thus have managed to not only make repairs but build new classrooms, offices and housing for teachers. They have done this by strictly guiding the process, including choosing the contractors and monitoring their progress. They have aided their PTAs in concerted efforts to get parents involved and arrange for incremental payments. These two school heads have also started formal savings groups with their staffs and have made sure that the PTA supplement is always on time for the teachers.⁶⁸ Mpumudde Primary School went from the worst PLE results in the municipality in 1991 to tie with Victoria Nile for the best results in 1994. The hard work has been duly rewarded by an appreciative municipal council

⁶⁸ Along with the substantial improvement, staff morale is palpably different in these two schools. At Mpumudde, where the morale is higher, the school head explained that at the beginning of the school year the staff decides on a joint goal. For example, in 1994 it had been that they all purchase suits that looked professional. Then, on rotation the teachers take turns receiving the month's contribution and make the purchase.

(some extra money and a party for teachers at Mpumudde when the PLE results came out). This success has also made other school heads aware of what can be done. Unlike Victoria Nile (where the fees are approximately USH77,000/=), these schools charge only average PTA fees (USH11,000/=) per term and, thus, they show that a great deal can be done to bring all schools up to an acceptable standard and prove that PTA involvement does not necessarily mean inequity.

While no one would applaud the lack of government funding for primary schools in Jinja, the forced institutional mix for delivering primary education has had some encouraging results with regard to accountability. There is no doubt that the RC system has been able to establish a partnership with the PTAs and the result has been more accountability from all sides, school heads, PTAs and the municipal council. Moreover, the results of this partnership show that the participation of PTAs does not necessarily lead to inequities. Furthermore, spreading the responsibility also means an increase in participation and, thus, making more people accountable. The fact that the partnership has been forged in practice rather than theory may mean that it will become more firmly grounded at the local level and thus provide some fertile ground for continuing to develop new relationships that contribute to a new localism.

Universal primary education: sounds like a return to old politics

The institution of UPE after the 1996 elections puts this very useful partnership and the system of primary education in jeopardy. As the programme was started, all PTAs were banned and teachers' salaries were raised from USH43,000/= to USH72,000/= per month.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ "Soldiers to replace defiant teachers", *The Monitor* 1-3/7/96. It is evident in news reports that rural teachers felt that the new system would be better and rejoiced that PTAs were banned. Since this study does not

Somehow the central government thought that the new government money was going to replace the PTAs. The new money covered fees of USH1670/= per term for P1-3 and USH2700/= for P4-7.⁷⁰ Although this would increase government funding (if it materialized) to schools, the Jinja study shows that this is not nearly adequate for the existing system let alone the increase in students brought about by UPE.⁷¹ One editorial lamented that,

Because of government's management approach we are facing a scenario whereby the young beneficiaries of free education will be entrusted to quack teachers – under trees.⁷²

After pleas by head teachers, the ban on PTAs was lifted for urban areas and a fees cap of USH10,400/=, which one editorial described as a "joke", was announced.⁷³ Meanwhile, school opening was delayed a month to February 1997 and no money was dispersed until March.⁷⁴ It is reported that schools in Jinja district are paralyzed because

instead of receiving its regular Shs 67m per month, the government sent only Shs 31m leaving the DEO's office baffled about how to divide the small amount among more than 80 primary schools in the district.⁷⁵

involve rural schools I have no evidence of the effectiveness of PTAs in rural areas. However, rural teachers seem to have believed that the money would be forthcoming, especially the salaries ("Teachers praise Museveni PTA ban", *The Monitor*, 15-17/7/96). Urban teachers, on the other hand, accustomed to very little government money and benefiting from much more reliable PTA funds, were shocked.

⁷⁰ "Government kick starts free education with 4bn", *The Monitor*, 12/2/97.

⁷¹ It has been reported that pupils increased from 2.5 to 5.4 million and the administrator of UPE announced that 40,000 more teachers would be needed ("40,000 teachers needed for UPE", *The Monitor*, 29/4/97). IN October 1997 the Ministry of Education proposed to a parliamentary committee that the pupil/teacher ratio be changed to 110:1 ("110 pupils per teacher rejected", *The New Vision* 15/10/97).

⁷² "Free education welcome, but where are the teachers?", *The Crusader*, 18-20/6/96.

⁷³ "Headteachers plead for PTA", *The New Vision*, 4/2/97; "View: Free education gets a shock", *The Monitor*, 13/3/97. The headteachers had asked for USH35,000/= PTA fees given the rise in pupil numbers.

⁷⁴ "View: Free education gets a shock", *The Monitor* 13/3/97.

⁷⁵ "Lack of funds threatens UPE" *The Monitor*, 25/6/97. This is the old 'parent contribution' that is now being paid by the government which means that the schools are not even receiving that nominal money that they used to collect from parents. Some schools in Jinja district delayed opening even in February because of "lack of

Kampala schools received funding for the third term in the last week of that term.⁷⁶ Teachers' salaries have been delayed for months. At the close of the 1997 school year The Minister of Education announced,

I want to thank all teachers who have taught for all these months without pay, you will not only go to heaven but even in this world you'll get abundant blessings.⁷⁷

Thus, the situation of teachers is deteriorating since the amount of PTA funds allowed cannot possibly cover the school costs and regular salary supplements. The first year of UPE has undermined the efforts of the RC government and PTAs in Jinja.

The whole exercise has once again reduced accountability and triggers old political behaviour. The PTAs have once again been demonized and school heads who deal with them are seen as criminal. In Jinja one of the most successful female school heads was threatened with arrest for allowing PTA fees to be collected. One councillor asserted that the central government was now going to pay teachers regularly as well as fund the schools and that things would be better without the PTAs.⁷⁸ While this was only one reaction, it does point to the fact that the old negative attitude towards PTAs is not far under the surface, as well as to a totally unrealistic assessment of central government capability. UPE is seen as a panacea, without any substantive reason to believe it so, legitimizing JMC's claim to be the provider of primary education despite evidence to the contrary. Elsewhere, school heads were found to be

scholastic materials ("UPE delays to kick off in Jinja", *The Monitor*, 27/2/97).

⁷⁶ "Kampala schools lack UPE funds", *The New Vision*, 10/12/97.

⁷⁷ "UPE teachers will go to heaven - Mushega", *The Monitor* 17/12/97.

⁷⁸ Interview, Municipal Councillor, JMC, Guelph, Ontario, 18/6/97.

registering "ghost" pupils and were accused of trying to abscond with money.⁷⁹ On the other hand, far removed from school management committees, district administrations were found to be diverting funds for UPE to other budgets without any consultation.⁸⁰ Thus, the institution of UPE has frustrated the attempts to develop new conventions of behaviour and accountability at the local level. This example demonstrates the fragility of the nascent partnerships with which a new localism might be established.

PTAs and local government in Mutare

There are several differences between Mutare and Jinja when it comes to the delivery of primary education. Because the responsibility for primary education is so new (1987), Mutare does not have to deal with the legacy of old and neglected schools. In addition, although the situation is changing, up until 1991 a great deal of money was put into education on a national scale in order to correct the inequities between white and African education. With free primary education after 1980 the school population grew from 18,483 in 1979 to 60,886 in 1990 (Unicef 1994, p.90). An aggressive and innovative teacher training programme was introduced to meet the need for primary teachers.⁸¹ Thus, there has been a concerted effort to meet the needs of primary children. In addition, teachers in Mutare are paid more than their counterparts in Uganda and, more importantly, they are paid regularly. Thus, there

⁷⁹ "UPE 'ghost' pupils in city schools - officials", *The Monitor*, 25/4/97; "Luwero census nets 1,000 'ghost pupils'", *The Monitor*, 11/8/97.

⁸⁰ "Soroti diverts UPE 6m/=", *The New Vision*, 23/4/97; "UPE funds diverted", *The New Vision*, 24/4/97. This report included allegations that administrations of six districts had diverted the funds.

⁸¹ There are nine government primary schools in Mutare which were built before 1987 and which remain under the management of the central government (Pasteur 1992, 101). The innovative teacher training course was called Zimbabwe Integrated Teacher Education Course (ZINTEC) and involved combined theoretical and practical work at an accelerated rate (see Unicef 1994, p 91).

is not the legacy of severe neglect that Ugandans endured during the 1970s and 1980s.

The primary school buildings in Mutare reflect the higher level of development in Zimbabwe as compared to Uganda. Through a school levy and supplementary funding from the general revenue the MCC has built three schools since 1987, the most recent completed in 1990.⁸² They are all located in the newer high-density suburbs, two in Dungamvura and the other in Chikanga. The school buildings are of a high standard with an administrative block and classrooms that are fully furnished, relatively well-equipped and able to be secured. All of the schools have indoor plumbing and electricity. Although the teachers complain that they do not have enough text books so that students have to share, the quantity and quality of school supplies are much superior to those in Uganda. Thus, comparatively, residents are using better facilities in Mutare than in Jinja.

Despite the decline in funding, Mutare's primary schools enjoy a larger contribution from both central and local governments than Jinja's. The central government contribution is Z\$12 (US\$1.20) per pupil per term as compared to USH2500/= to USH4000/= (US\$2.50-4.00) in Jinja but, unlike the case of Jinja, this money, which comes in the form of a vote from the regional education office, is intact and on time according to the heads of the two oldest schools. However, concern was expressed from the head of the newest school (Chirowakamwe in Dangamvura) that the government grant was not available in the 1995

⁸² There was a general protest from local authorities in 1986 when the central government unilaterally decided to download the responsibility of primary schools without increasing the resource base of the local authorities. As a result most local authorities instituted a school levy either on the general population or on the parents (Interview, Secretary, Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe, 16/8/95). In Mutare the school levy is paid by the parents at the same time as they pay the school fees. In 1995 the levy was Z\$14.70 per annum per student. With approximately 5871 pupils this money (Z\$86,303.70) only provides for maintenance and most of the money for new buildings must come from general revenue. Two were built in the late 1980s and the newest school, built in 1990, cost Z\$1.4m (Interview, Headmaster, Chirowakamwe Primary, 19/7/95).

year and that the school had to buy its own scholastic materials.⁸³ Although the school heads claim that the money is far from meeting the requirements, the two schools that receive the money are at least able to plan with this budget which is used for scholastic materials only. As mentioned above, the central government pays for the teachers who are also regulated by the central government's regional education office. Teachers' salaries in 1995 ranged from Z\$21-29,000 and teachers also receive a housing allowance of approximately Z\$150 (varying with the amount of salary).⁸⁴ Even more importantly, unlike those in Jinja, teachers in Mutare are regularly paid. The local government pays for the construction of new buildings and the running costs for the three existing schools. Parents pay a Z\$14.70 per term school levy to alleviate the running costs. This levy covers only about 50% of running costs, the rest coming from the health and welfare budget of the local government areas account.⁸⁵ The local government pays for the utilities, maintains the buildings, purchases furniture and employs a clerk, groundsman and messenger for all schools. It also pays for all of the inputs for the Education with Production (EWP) programme and the profits from this programme go back into the school budget.⁸⁶ Again, the school heads report that MCC is very reliable for its

⁸³ Interviews with the three school heads in Mutare in July 1995.

⁸⁴ These salaries, quoted by the school head of Dangamvura Primary School are higher than the statistics provided by the international labour office which was for the lowest category. Also there was a 22% raise in salaries in 1994/5 (Chisvo and Munro 1994, 10).

⁸⁵ The total education levy collected for Dangamvura Primary, Chikanga Primary and Chirowakamwe (Dangamvura) Primary was reported to be Z\$66,443, Z\$58,589, and Z\$68,174, while the total expenditure was Z\$128,990, Z\$110,623, and Z\$124,612 respectively (City Treasurer's Report & Accounts for Year Ended 30th June 1994, pp. 130, 133, 135).

⁸⁶ This programme teaches children how to market garden and tend small domestic animals such as rabbits and chickens. The children supply the labour and the profits are put back into the school budget. MCC's contribution to this programme is substantial. In 1993/94, the total input for the three schools was Z\$39367, while the profit was Z\$35,967 (City Treasurer's Report & Accounts for the Year Ended 30th June, 1994, pp. 130, 133, 135).

funding, maintaining buildings adequately and taking the EWP programme seriously. Thus, the schools in Mutare have much more government support for new buildings, school materials and school maintenance than those in Jinja.

The formal role of PTAs in Mutare is substantially different from the largely informal one in Jinja. Bringing in the PTAs has been a deliberate policy towards developing a partnership between school management (school heads and teachers), local government and parents and the PTAs have substantial power. They have official statutory status on the School Development Committee (SDC) which oversees the day-to-day running and future planning of the school. Five PTA members are elected to the SDC by the parents and they are joined by the school head, the deputy school head, one teacher, and a municipal councillor. Thus, they make up a majority on the SDC. The chairmen and deputy chairmen of the SDC must be chosen from among the parent representatives and, moreover, those two executives must also sit with the school head on the finance subcommittee which is responsible for "administering the fund and supervising the committee's honorary treasurer".⁸⁷ Before the new legislation and the establishment of the SDCs all, government money, including the government grant, was administered directly from MCC. Now the SDC has direct access to the central government grant through the regional office and also collects and dispenses the user fees. Thus, the statute has decentralized considerable power to the SDCs and, thus, to the PTAs which are prominent on them.

⁸⁷ Education (School Development Committees) (Non-Government Schools) Regulations, 1992, Section 6; Section 12; and, Section 16. There is a qualifying clause (Section 6(2)) which allows the secretary of the SDC to alter the number of elected members of the SDC with permission of the local authority. However, since the Chairman and Deputy Chairman must be chosen from among elected members and must be on the finance subcommittee, this provision does not seem to be a threat to PTAs' statutory power.

Despite the government support, the PTA-managed funds also make a substantial contribution to school budgets. The government allows a fee of Z\$20 (US\$2.80) per pupil per term which provides the fund over which the finance subcommittee presides. The SDC must get permission for amounts over this limit and in Mutare all of the schools have received permission for extra funding with fees ranging from Z\$25-30. There are some inequalities in this funding but not nearly the inequalities experienced in Jinja.⁸⁸ The funds match or slightly surpass the central government per capita grant and local government levy combined and, therefore, are substantial. Apart from augmenting the scholastic materials, the PTA fees pay for extra clerical staff and nightwatchmen. However, PTAs in Mutare are also able to plan for more than running costs. The fund pays for school sports and choir uniforms, first aid, school trips, cameras and video players and screens. PTAs are also responsible for expansion of the existing schools and more and more will be responsible for repairs. Therefore, funds are also invested for future expansion plans such as libraries, playing fields and tennis courts as well as expansion of the EWP programme. In Mutare there has not been a need to provide the teacher welfare which takes up such a large part of PTA funds in Jinja. Therefore, PTAs in Mutare have had the luxury of augmenting rather than providing general budgets.

The partnership between the SDC and the local government is still in the early stages of development. There is unanimous agreement that the arrangement is far better than before when the municipal council was completely in charge. The SDC has a flexibility that the municipal bureaucracy (Community Services) was unable to provide. PTA officials also report

⁸⁸ The fees charged for Chikanga Primary School, Dangamvura Primary School and Chirowakamwe Primary School are Z\$30, Z\$25.50 and Z\$28.05 respectively. When the local government levy is factored in, the fees are Z\$44.70, Z\$40.20 and Z\$42.75 per pupil per term respectively.

that parents are much more supportive of the PTA executives than MCC who they often accused of mismanagement of funds. Previously if there was a rise in the fees people would demonstrate but they accept the budgets and the requirement for funds when it is passed at the PTA annual general meeting. Although there has been a tendency for parents to leave most business matters to the school head, there has been a concerted effort to get parents involved and all school heads report good cooperation and much better attendance at PTA meetings. PTA executives are now very involved with school business although PTA executives express the need for more training so that they are able to perform better as managers. When the PTAs were established there was a move to get ZANU(PF) people elected to SDCs but the PTAs have been remarkably free from ZANU(PF) politics. PTA chairmen cite the fact that the parents are disillusioned with party politics and early PTA executives who tried to dictate policy on SDCs have been replaced. In Dangamvura both PTA executives and school heads commended the councillors for their work as liaison with MCC administration commenting that they were quick to go to administrators for answers. The councillor in Chikanga had long been absent from meetings as had administrators.⁸⁹ SDC members remark that the effectiveness of the councillor depends on his standing on MCC particularly in relation to the Mayor (a reference to the 7/8 split - see Chapter 5).

Administrators in Community Services have had to get used to their new advisory role and sometimes they neglect meetings although they come if called for specific advice. School

⁸⁹ It is important to note that the most highly commended of the councillors was one that is considered of 'poor calibre'(among the group of 7). Although he is ZANU(PF) he encourages people to vote for good candidates and encourages parental involvement in extracurricular activities. He also attends meetings regularly and takes matters to Community Services. The councillor in Chikanga is considered better 'calibre' although he works in Harare and rarely attends SDC meetings. This is another reason to question whether lack of 'calibre' is a useful argument.

heads also complain, as in Jinja, that if the municipal council does provide materials it is never as efficient nor as economical as the SDC. However, the overall assessment is that the SDC system is a big improvement over sole management by MCC.

However, MCC has proved to be a weak political vehicle when real problems arise. One of the greatest difficulties in Mutare is overcrowding in the schools.⁹⁰ The problem is met in a different fashion than in Jinja by 'hotseating'.⁹¹ Although it is a predicament in all schools it has become so critical in Chikanga that the municipality has to rent space in pavilions in the nearby showgrounds for the youngest classes while a new school is being built. However, all SDC officials comment that the overcrowding issue has not been effectively handled by MCC. In Chikanga the SDC was unable to get any movement from the administration on this issue. Indeed, from the opening of the last school 1991 through the time of my research visit April to August 1995, neither councillors nor administrators have raised the issue of overcrowding in the Community Services, Housing, Health and Education Committee.⁹² In the situation of Chikanga the matter finally had to be raised with the regional director of education who went to the town clerk in order to get action from MCC. In this

⁹⁰ In Mutare overcrowding has resulted from subletting and the renting of temporary structures (see Chapter 5). Official surveys of numbers of children only take into account the owner or original tenant of the property and so show fewer children than is actually the case (Interview, Housing Superintendent, MCC, 15/5/95).

⁹¹ In this case there are two classes and two teachers sharing one classroom in shifts and schedules are arranged so that while one class is in the classroom the other is engaged outdoors. Therefore, when a student takes her/his seat the seat is hot from the last class and, thus, the term 'hotseating'. It was explained to me that the children take sports outside and have Education With Production (EWP) classes which involves outdoor work such as keeping a large school garden and animals such as rabbits and chickens. Thus, the schedule is arranged around these activities. Still, they have to spend some of the time doing other lessons outside and this can be a problem especially on cold and wet winter days.

⁹² Minutes of the Community Services, Health and Education Committee, MCC, 1991-95. Rarely are education issues raised and the meetings are predominantly concerned with the running of the beerhalls and housing concerns.

case the SDC was able to use the connection with the central government in order to demand some accountability. SDC officials comment that MCC is more responsive on smaller issues but that there is not the political will to tackle the big ones. In general, the SDCs feel powerless outside of their own domain of responsibility.

Some warning signs in Mutare

There are several indications that the provision of primary education in Mutare may deteriorate in the late 1990s. The threat of deterioration is a result of changes taking place at both central and local levels of government. These changes may lead to a skewing of the partnership between the local government and the PTAs in which a greater burden may be put on the PTAs and, therefore, on the parents.

There is evidence that central government provision for primary schools is deteriorating in Zimbabwe. Since 1990 and the institution of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) there has been a steady erosion of central government support for primary education. Munhamo Chisvo and Lauchlan Munro report that "higher education has been better protected under adjustment than primary education or secondary education" as real per capita expenditure has fallen 32% from Z\$23.05 in 1990/91 to Z\$15.79 in 1994/95 "which was the lowest level since before independence" (1994, 9).⁹³ It is worrying that the withdrawal of the per capita grant from the most recently built school in Mutare might become a trend. Thus, government support for primary education has diminished.

⁹³ The actual per pupil expenditure has dropped from Z\$101 in 1990/91 to Z\$72 in 1994/95 and Chisvo and Munro explain that this fall cannot be blamed on increased enrolment which have leveled off in recent years (1994, 9). Nevertheless the expenditure is much more than in Uganda which amounted to 305 new classrooms country-wide, some iron sheets for roofing and sporadic payment of salaries (Background to the Budget 1994-95, 15, 16).

In addition, user fees, which have been instituted to help fund education are adding a burden to parents who may not be able to pay them. User fees were instituted in January 1992 at a time when the population was feeling the effects of ESAP including devaluation of currency, retrenchments and high unemployment. Indeed, Chisvo and Munro report a 3.8% drop in grade one enrolment in 1993 (1994, 11). The central government has set up a Social Development Fund (SDF) in order to assist those earning under Z\$400 per month with user fees and, thus, alleviate some of the pressure on the poorest Zimbabweans.⁹⁴ In paying school fees for poorer parents, this fund provides a guarantee of revenue for the schools. The fund covers only the base Z\$20 PTA fee leaving parents still to pay the local government levy and the supplement to the PTA fee. As of 1995 the inability on the part of parents to pay fees was not a big concern in two of Mutare's schools which reported that the percentage of parents who had outstanding fees at the end of the term was very small. It was more of a worry in the third school, Chirowakamwe, which reported that about 20% of the parents had difficulties. While the SDCs encouraged parents with real needs to apply for this assistance, in 1995 no money had been received and Chirowakamwe Primary School, which was most affected, just had to operate without this money. If the number of parents unable to pay should grow this would become a major problem especially if coupled with the withdrawal of the per capita grant.

Another concern is for the continued support of teachers. Over 90% of the budget for

⁹⁴ The SDF was set up by the government of Zimbabwe as part of the Social Dimensions of Adjustment Programme to counteract the worst effects of ESAP. There are two programmes covered by this fund: the Social Welfare Programme which provides assistance with school fees, health fees and basic food; and, the Employment and Training Programme which provides training for retrenched for setting up small businesses. The Fund is grossly underfunded. For a discussion of the Fund and its programmes see Chisvo and Munro 1994, 18-26.

the Ministry of Education goes to salaries and benefits and so the decline in funding has a direct impact along with the devaluation of the currency. Thus, Chisvo and Munro report that a UNDP study "estimated that it would take a 75% increase in secondary teachers' real wages to restore their 1990 purchasing power" (Chisvo and Munro 1994, 10)⁹⁵. Although there was a 22% increase in salaries in the 1994/95 financial year, in real terms the conditions for teachers are worsening and Mutare's PTAs may find themselves taking up the slack. In the long run, as in Jinja, teachers' welfare may take up a great deal of the budget.

Finally, finding the money for building new schools has become harder for MCC since the liquor operations have been losing money and health and housing continue to operate at a deficit. SDC officials voiced real concern that MCC might withdraw from operation costs and only build new schools which would put the burden of the day to day operation of the school completely in the hands of the SDC and effectively remove the partnership. Thus, apart from overcrowding, there are growing concerns that the provision of primary education could fall on PTA fees entirely in the future.

The benefit of state/civil society partnerships

The evidence presented here indicates that these partnerships have benefited the creation of a new public space in political society in both Jinja and Mutare. Clearly, in both municipalities new conventions of political behaviour are evolving between the local governments and the PTAs. In Jinja this interaction has granted legitimacy to both the PTAs and the local government to create a public space where some common sense of accountability and responsibility is developing. In Mutare this partnership has afforded a

⁹⁵ UNDP 1993. *Zimbabwe Government Salaries and Cost of Living: UN Agencies Practices of Supplementing Civil Service Salaries*, Harare, January as cited in Chisvo and Munro 1994.

public space where ZANU(PF) patronage politics do not thrive and where some new political behaviour is developing. For these reasons I conclude that the externally driven demands on local government, now evident worldwide, need not be impediments to the development of an internally driven and democratic new localism. In fact this necessity to create new partnerships may benefit the development of such a new localism. Nevertheless, the evidence also points to the very real constraints that present many obstacles for these partnerships in progress.

Conclusion: local civil society and local government in Jinja and Mutare and the grounds for a new localism

It is clear that the RC system in Jinja has provided a much more open atmosphere for the flourishing of local civil society than the ZANU(PF)-dominated local government in Mutare. This is evident both in the quantity of associations which are involved with the local government and in the quality of associations. Thus, women's groups in Jinja not only have made practical gains which have led to a certain independence from patronage but they have also achieved considerable strategic gains which should prepare the ground for new political behaviour. Moreover, in those associations that provide a public service (POYFA and Nile Crane) women have taken up public responsibility in local civil society. This strong presence in local civil society (fulfilling their needs and providing public service), combined with their presence in formal political institutions, gives women a much broader base in Ugandan political society from which they may be able to start shaping the rules of the game. In Mutare, on the other hand, the women's groups studied have relied on the old patronage system and show little sign of preparing fertile ground for change since they have benefited from the system. Welfare and social groups in Jinja have also shown awareness of a new,

non-sectarian means of associating and an ability to engage the local government in new ways in order to demand accountability. In Mutare it has been much harder to escape the relations of power perpetuated by the decentralized despotism of ZANU(PF), although not entirely impossible as we have seen in the case of Taona Theatre Productions. Thus, associations such as MCRO tend to resort to the same tactics as ZANU(PF) and reinforce old political behaviour rather than forge new political relationships. Although there are signs of change in Mutare one must conclude that, at present, local civil society provides much more fertile ground for developing new relationships in Jinja than in Mutare.

However, there are some similarities between the two municipalities. In both Jinja and Mutare associations are hampered by the poverty of their members, a situation which spawns at least two major problems: a lack of resources which might give the association some independence of action and make it more effective; and an underactive membership which relies on a small leadership which, in turn, is open to suspicion because of its disproportionate power within the organization. In addition, both local governments tend to be highly suspicious of organizations which directly question certain aspects of municipal responsibility. Despite the more open atmosphere, the local government in Jinja can be just as intolerant as that in Mutare when an association is treading close to sensitive issues. On the other hand, the local government in Mutare has been as nurturing as that in Jinja in its support of associations which do not present a challenge to its authority.

An important component of Jinja's advantage is a particular organizational feature of the RC system, the lower RCs. They help to overcome the suspicions between local civil society and local government. Thus, although WATWA is highly suspect at the municipal

council level, it is able to cooperate with lower RCs and WATWA executive officers and members use the RC system as an alternative association for articulating demands since those demands tend to be legitimized by the RC structure. We might see the lower RCs as filling the gap through their hybrid nature: a cross between local civil society and local government. For this reason the intermediary, or bridging, role of the lower RCs becomes even more important as a new relationship is forged between local civil society and local government in a new localism. In Mutare there is no institutional structure to fulfil this function.

The political relationship developing between PTAs and local government in Jinja and Mutare attests to the fact that the externally driven new localism, demands on local government brought on by economic restructuring, may also provide the opportunity for developing new interactions between local civil society and local government in sub-Saharan Africa. In chapter one I noted that developed countries are more able to meet the challenge of this externally driven new localism because they are richer in institutions (public, private and non-profit) and resources. I argued that there was much less reason to think that African local governments could cope because of few viable institutions (public, private or non-profit) and poor resources. In short, I asked, What's in it for Africa? The evidence here shows that this forced search for new partnerships can lead to the development of new political relationships which enhance the possibility of developing a new localism as described in this thesis. The externally driven demands on local government may add pressures on an already inadequate and overburdened local government but it also may present an opportunity for the development of a new local politics in sub-Saharan Africa.

Because of the necessity of including local civil society in the delivery of primary

education, the local governments in both Jinja and Mutare have developed practices within which new types of political behaviour may be forged. Thus, despite the tragic history of mistrust and mismanagement, in 1995 the tripartite partnership in Jinja (JMC, PTAs and school heads) was beginning to yield practices that promoted mutual accountability between the three partners. In Mutare, too, the partnership forged with PTAs is producing new political behaviour that seems to be a departure from the despotic tendencies of ZANU(PF). Thus, elected PTAs, without ZANU(PF) rhetoric, have established practices which lead away from behaviour such as participation by demonstration and towards an interaction in which mutual accountability and responsibility is possible. Here we may see that the new demands on local government, brought on by the demands of restructuring, can provide opportunities for developing a new localism in which the political relations of decentralized despotism become less tenable.

Nevertheless, the evidence presented here also warns us not to be too sanguine about these claims. Restructuring in both Uganda and Zimbabwe has put new burdens on populations and the deterioration of a standard of living that is already on or near subsistence levels will greatly affect the effectiveness of both local civil society and local government. In Jinja the majority of the members of PTAs, struggling to meet the financial responsibility of paying fees, has little ground on which to demand accountability from PTA executive officers and school heads who are demanding those fees. In turn, uncertain financial support from members makes the PTAs less effective, especially when it comes to planning. Although the evidence is not as strong in Mutare, there is ample reason to fear that a deteriorating standard of living may produce the same effect in Mutare's PTAs. Local governments, too, remain

vulnerable. Grappling with a lack of resources that puts it in a weak position administratively and politically, JMC still claims for itself the only legitimate authority over the provision of primary education. The contradiction between its claim and what it can provide constantly threatens JMC's legitimacy at the same time as it lessens its ability to be accountable. Thus, there is a tendency on the part of the local government to delegitimize PTAs and, perhaps, grasp at panaceas, such as UPE, in order to legitimize itself; and, in the course of things, we can see that the foundation for a new localism, so recently laid, is easily uprooted. We get a glimpse of the old propensity towards form without substance and the apparent desire to disengage from local civil society at the slightest opportunity. While the foundation for the partnership in Mutare has been laid in a more legitimate manner through statute, the evidence presented gives some reason to believe that the municipality may withdraw from the partnership, at least for maintenance of schools, putting more financial responsibility on the PTAs. This, combined with the withdrawal of central government support, could produce heightened inequalities between schools and destroy the tripartite tension of accountability between MCC, central government and the PTAs. While the externally driven new localism has presented an opportunity for new political relations to develop between local civil society and local government in both Jinja and Mutare, there are many obstacles to the progress towards an internally driven new localism.

The evidence presented from this sampling of local civil society in Jinja and Mutare demonstrates how important relations within civil society are to the conduct of political behaviour in political society in general. At the beginning of this chapter I postulated that the constellation of power characteristic of decentralized despotism thrives as long as its roots are

in a civil society hospitable to such power relations. I maintained that to the degree that civil society becomes inhospitable to those roots they may wither and die. Therefore, I asserted, it is important to examine civil society for signs of change while, at the same time, keeping in mind the considerable obstacles to that change. The signs of change in local civil society are certainly evident in Jinja where there is some indication that an integration of rights and duties is taking place that will lead to a more integrated public space where a more universal sense of responsibility and accountability may be possible; whether it is enough to overcome the obstacles and present a truly inhospitable climate for decentralized despotism is not yet clear. In Mutare there is less evidence of change in local civil society that might lead to a more fertile public ground from which to establish conventions of accountability and responsibility. Of the two municipalities, it is clear from the evidence presented here that the municipal structure of Jinja is much more conducive to the mobilization of civil society than in Mutare; and that one-party dominance, as in Zimbabwe, can be a major impediment to the development of civil society. Thus, we are cautioned to remain aloof from the either/or dichotomy of government and civil society and take into consideration the relationship between the two.

Chapter 7

Conclusion: A Comparative Analysis As If A New Localism Mattered

This conclusion is divided into two parts. The first section is a summary of the main argument of the thesis and the evidence presented in previous chapters. In the second part I present some thoughts on why an analysis as if a new localism mattered is useful for understanding contemporary African politics, and suggest some areas for further research.

I Comparing Uganda and Zimbabwe in light of the requirements of a new localism

The case for a new localism

There is a strong case for an internally driven and democratic new localism in sub-Saharan Africa. The case arises from my attempt to locate local government within the analysis of African politics. As I argued in chapter 1, from colonial times localism has been a top-down administrative affair. Since the independence decade of the 1960s, the calls for localism have ebbed and flowed with the tides of development theory. The literature on decentralization has reflected this phenomenon, emphasizing technocratic solutions to development and largely ignoring politics. With the collapse of the central state into debt and the burgeoning of an informal sector under restructuring, calls for a new localism abound; these are the calls for a new local governance involving democratic representation, participation and accountability and an active role for civil society. This new emphasis on local government reflects the externally driven new localism which is apparent globally in developed and developing countries alike.

There has been little evidence in the literature that there is an internal, political basis for such a call in sub-Saharan Africa; rather, the basis remains within the familiar dictates of development theory. The literature shows that in sub-Saharan Africa, despite past decentralization policies, political power is concentrated at the centre by political elites for the purposes of political unification and resource appropriation. In fact, the argument has been made that even though national governments seem to be in retreat, the centrality of decision making is even more important for the implementation of IMF-induced measures through structural adjustment programmes. Thus, it is hard to find a political basis on which to build local governance and accountability.

I argue that if we are to discuss governance, and more particularly local governance, we must approach the topic within the framework of a complex political process. The conceptualization of responsibility and accountability in decentralization and governance literature more often than not fashions these terms as remedies, or strategies, to be applied. I argue that, rather than strategies to be applied, responsibility and accountability are products of a complex political process. Using Gramsci's idea of political society, which encompasses both the state and civil society as a public space where the rules of the game are produced, I argue that we must look to this relationship in order to understand the limits of responsibility and accountability. Gramsci's insight about political society is that, since the relationship between state and civil society is a symbiotic one, if there is a problem with the state there is also a problem with civil society. Thus, the character of responsibility and accountability, as a product of that relationship, must give some indication of the political challenges that face a political society.

Most often the political problem in sub-Saharan Africa is posed in the literature as one of incongruity between a modern central state based on market relations and a local indigenous society which operates on customary relations of reciprocity. Accordingly there are two main explanations: either the modern state overpowers the "real" indigenous character of African society which is powerless to demand accountability; or the social relations of the vast primordial customary society (based on ethnicity) overwhelms attempts by a comparatively tiny civil society and modern state to impose rational solutions. Some authors even question the empirical reality of 'civil society' since there is so little evidence of its effectiveness in African politics. Recent empirical studies emphasize changes taking place in African society, especially the burgeoning of the informal sector, and are both more flexible and more positive about the empirical reality of civil society and about the ability of civil society to affect the political rules of the game. However, most writers are unable to transcend the dichotomy, declaring one or the other, modern or customary, as positive or negative, as the problem or the solution.

In this light, Ekeh's analysis of the two publics begins to alert us to the much more historically specific and complex reality. In his analysis of the dialectic of the two publics, primordial and civic, he begins to unravel the knot by apprising us of the split between rights and duties which renders the civic an amoral space to be plundered and the primordial a moral space where duties are performed. He finds the basis for this behaviour in the practices of colonial rule which emphasized the colonial state as the bountiful provider to the poor African and, at the same time, forced Africans to seek protection in their primordial ties. He argues that both publics suffer because there is little basis on which rights and duties can be

integrated. Thus, Ekeh alerts us to a debilitating division in African political society that produces little ground for a more universal idea of responsibility and accountability.

I argue that Mamdani's analysis of the bifurcated state and decentralized despotism illuminates further this historical split in African political society and gives us a way of thinking about local government *politically*, beyond the imperatives of development theory. Mamdani highlights the form of the African state as it was forged in colonialism into a bifurcated state with two branches, a civil power at the centre supporting a despotic customary administration in local, ethnically-based administrations. He argues that this form so shaped political power that it was impossible to unite the local and the centre without recourse to ethnicity and patrimonial political activity. African politics at independence targeted the racism at the centre of the colonial state but never addressed the fundamental form of that state which was a decentralized despotism maintained by so-called democratic politics at the centre. These, he argues, are the inherited impediments under which political society in Africa is forged.

This analysis leads us out of the either/or, centre/local, customary/modern dichotomy. Mamdani argues that the historically specific political challenge before Africans is the dismantling of the bifurcated form of the African state which means transformation both at the centre and the locality. Inherent in that solution are some specific challenges: the reconciling of local autonomy with alliance at the centre and local participation with representation at the centre; and, finding the emancipatory practices in both the customary and the civil. Thus, democratic openings at the local level and a reconfiguration of power between levels of government that leads to a more autonomous local government are important

components of Africa's political challenge and provide the prerequisites for a new localism. Here, then, is a case for an internally driven and democratic new localism in sub-Saharan Africa, located within the historically specific political analysis of African politics.

The inherited impediments

In chapter 2 I argue that tracing the governing relationship, between ruler and ruled, in African political society, with a particular focus on the tension that produces responsibility and accountability, that is its product, is important. This helps us to outline the inherited impediments that Mamdani refers to more specifically and give content to a new localism that would answer the challenges issuing from Mamdani's analysis.

The evidence presented in chapter 2 leads us to some conclusions about the product of responsibility and accountability. The old, pre-colonial localism had been a system of positive patron/client relationships which opened up opportunities at all levels of society and allowed a fluid movement of people and politics, based on some common interests between ruler and ruled. Integral to the political power relations was alliance through the institution of marriage and the control of women by men. However, I argue that the political importance of marriage gave women some political maneuverability. With the imposition of colonialism the organic political relationships in African political societies in both Uganda and Zimbabwe were severed. Several factors - the need for fast revenue and cheap labour, the need for order and attitudes of racism - precluded the formation of new political relationships in a modern civil state. Instead, African political society was replaced with the bifurcation of authority between a central colonial power and a local African administration, based on the remnants of customary authority. This constituted the bifurcated state. The resulting fracturing of

responsibility and accountability gave rise to serious impediments in African political society.

The fractures were several. Specifically there was no direct relationship between ruler and ruled with regard to the means of administration. African chiefs had despotic power over their people to collect tax and order their lives but no power over the policy which they received from their colonial masters. Colonial administrators were responsible to the beneficiaries of the tax, the colonial power and its enterprising citizens, and had only indirect contact with the African population through the chiefs. Perhaps the most debilitating impediment of this bifurcation of authority was the severing of common interest between ruler and ruled. Thus, African local rulers (now administrators) were dependent on the colonial administration and its projects for their livelihood and elevated status. The only common interests remaining were the primordial ties which had some lingering moral value but no integrated political content. Integral also to this form of power was the subordination of women, strengthened by despotic customary practice and amplified by the Western notions of domesticity imposed by colonial authorities.

I argue that it is within the urban areas that one may obtain the clearest vision of the concrete reality of bifurcation. The evidence presented in chapter 2 highlights the structural bifurcation of both space and authority. It is here that we can locate the civil limits of the bifurcated state on the boundary of the African location. It is here also that we may see the inability of women to create any legitimate space that was not circumscribed by customary laws and Western ideas of domesticity. Without direct representation, the African population was located between colonial paternalism and indigenous clientelism; within this structure no productive version of responsibility and accountability could be fashioned in African political

society.

These impediments forged particular political relations and behaviour. The actions of the colonial administration in Uganda and the settler government in Rhodesia always inhibited and often proscribed political activity outside the parameters of the bifurcated state. Attempts to establish African presence in civil society were met with measures to strengthen the relations of bifurcation. Thus, with little recourse to any substantial governing relationship, African relations of political power were shaped by primordial ties through patronage networks and this form of power and these relationships were reinforced in Uganda after independence and in Zimbabwe during the guerrilla war. Generally, this form of power demands complete control over resources and political mobilization on the part of political leaders who cannot tolerate political demand or behaviour outside the networks of decentralized despotism. Integral to maintaining this political dominance is the perpetuation of male dominance over women. On the part of most people this form of power demands dependent and patron-seeking behaviour along the lines of clans and/or religious groupings. The political behaviour of women is so shaped that they are forced to manipulate customary practices and/or use political networks, but always indirectly through a male. Administrators and politicians are both revered by the public, through the cult of elitism, and mistrusted, since there is little accountability beyond individual clientelistic relationships. These are the split expectations of Ekeh's two publics: revering the 'big man' who might bring resources but scorning the official who demands a bribe or provides no service. The structural impediments, their concomitant political relations of power and the resulting political behaviour all place serious constraints on local democratic development but they also give

content to what might specifically constitute an internally driven new localism.

The requirements of a new localism

Based on these specific impediments, there are definite prerequisites for the development of a new, internally driven localism. The prerequisites are: democratic openings at the local level and a reconfiguration of power between levels of government that leads towards a more autonomous local government. These prerequisites lead to some more specific requirements developed in this thesis. The first requirement is the recognition of the political problem by leaders at the centre and some political will for dismantling the structures of bifurcation, most notably decentralized despotism. The second requirement is the creation of democratic openings at the local level and the breaking down of physical and administrative bifurcation with the goal of moving towards an autonomous and direct relationship between the local government and the local population. The third requirement is that the institutional setting must provide for enough political participation to allow new political behaviour to develop from which some common conventions of responsibility and accountability might be fashioned. An important component of this requirement is the public participation of women in the development of new political relationships. The presence of some or all of these requirements demonstrates that the prerequisites for a new, internally driven localism are developing; that is, democratic openings with participation at the local level and a reconfiguration of power between central and local government which encourages local autonomy.

Meeting the requirements of a new localism

How do Uganda and Zimbabwe meet these three requirements that evolve from the

prerequisites for a new localism? Considering the first requirement (developing the political will to dismantle bifurcation), there is considerable evidence that the Ugandan version of decentralization, may be meeting the first requirement of a new localism better than Zimbabwe. I argue that the actions and rhetoric of the NRM during the armed struggle suggest an awareness of the dangers of despotic power while the guerrilla movement in Zimbabwe's liberation war suggests a tendency to reinforce despotic power over people. This difference is echoed in the goals and rhetoric of the decentralization programmes of the two countries. Uganda's programme emphasizes democratic openings at the local level and trust in the Ugandan people to learn to govern themselves while Zimbabwe's programme highlights delivering development to the Zimbabwean people through technocratic (administrative) means and through party control, and displays a distinct distrust of the population's ability to be self-governing. Here we can see that political leadership has been very important. The first requirement of some consciousness of the political problem is not evident among Zimbabwe's political leaders while in Uganda it is.

Considering the second requirement (restructuring centre/local relations for local autonomy and democracy), I argue in chapter 3 that restructuring imposed by outside forces has had the effect of forcing autonomy on local government in both countries. Through the withdrawal of central government grants, both Jinja and Mutare are faced with forced autonomy despite limited resources and the a limited ability of a majority of the population to pay for services. This forced autonomy is double-edged. Local governments have to sink or swim and the fiscal constraint places an extra burden on the prospects for a democratic local government developing. However, it does create an opening because it is also forced self-

sufficiency and, accompanied by efforts to institute local democracy, it might be viewed as positive. Thus, externally driven forced autonomy may constitute the beginnings of a structural requirement for a new, internally driven democratic localism.

A comparison on the second requirement of local institutions reveals that, structurally, Uganda's RC innovative (local council) system provides for much broader political participation, including women. In contrast Zimbabwe's local institutions, based on colonial models, limit public participation, and especially that of women. At least on the surface, there are potentially more opportunities for new political practices to develop Jinja than in Mutare. Thus, if forced autonomy creates an opening, institutional forms are very important if the opening is to work towards a new, internally driven and democratic localism.

Still considering the second requirement, the two municipalities are different in other ways. The bifurcation of physical space is much more prominent in Mutare than in Jinja and this is echoed in the bifurcation of administrative procedures. Thus, the Jinja administration has an integrated approach for budgets and administrative units. In Jinja, also, the means of administration (the local financial arrangements) is much more directly connected to the low-income and informal sector. In contrast, the administration in Mutare, under the Department of Community Services has maintained separate budgets and administrators for 'local government areas' (where the majority of the population resides) along the old lines of bifurcation. Moreover, Mutare's municipal income is predominantly dependent on the formal economy. Therefore, with regard to the second, structural requirement for a new localism, Jinja demonstrates more movement towards a new, internally driven localism than Mutare.

Nevertheless, it is in political practices that the differences between the two

municipalities become even more marked. Evidence presented in chapter 4 outlines the ability of the lower RC councils in Jinja to politically mediate bifurcation through the opportunity they present for broad public participation. Thus, residents are able to settle disputes through a village (RC1) council of elected peers and RC1 councillors are also able to moderate the actions of the police. Moreover, women councillors are part of this process, breaking the customary rule by male elders. Lower councils are able to play an advocacy role, as demonstrated in the attempt to solve the water problem in Walukuba, and are also able to hold municipal councillors and administrators more accountable. Moreover, the lower councils are an integral part of the day-to-day running of local government and, thus, are kept active. The municipal councillors, on the top tier, have also demonstrated an ability to keep administrators accountable and to respond to demands for accountability from the lower councils. Women are represented and participate at higher levels including the executive committee of the municipal council. While there is evidence of top-down administration and some reversion to old political behaviour, there is also ample evidence that new political behaviour is developing. Thus, the third important requirement for a new localism is beginning to be met in Jinja.

The evidence presented in chapter 5 sounds a more ominous note for a new localism in Zimbabwe. It is clear that in 1995 the local government in Mutare did not begin to meet the third requirement of providing the political space for new forms of political behaviour to evolve. In practice, apart from elections, which are highly controlled through ZANU(PF), there is no institutional means of public participation for the majority of the population in Mutare. Moreover, it is evident that councillors avoid contact with their constituents in any

sort of public fora, even the one yearly meeting required when the budget is set.

What is evident is that local government in Mutare is captured by the decentralized despotism practised in ZANU(PF) in order to retain power over political mobilization both locally and nationally. Thus, patron/client relations predominate between politicians at the centre and local levels and accountability is to these relationships rather than to constituents. Rival factions within that hierarchy further debilitate both the administration and the council. These relationships produce no responsibility nor accountability and create tremendous opportunities for corruption. The remaining option for the population is participation by demonstration, an option that is easily manipulated by politicians in order to reinforce the political relations of decentralized despotism. While highly placed government officials (also ZANU(PF) officials) are critical of the performance of local governments and have produced new legislation ostensibly to create change, they are loathe to dismantle the power relations which keep them in office.

Nevertheless in 1995 there were some signs that political change might be afoot and that it might come from the local level. Thus, for the first time ZANU(PF) candidates were starting to question their own party and party networks. The successful election of three people, including the mayor who ran in defiance of ZANU(PF) rules, shows that the party's ability to dominate the selection and election of candidates is slipping; and that opposition comes from within ZANU(PF) ranks. It is possible that a new localism may evolve and it may originate at the local level but, for the time being, the third requirement is not being met in Mutare.

Meeting the requirements of a new localism in local civil society

The comparison between Jinja and Mutare of participation by local civil society tends to show that political openings at the local level provide an atmosphere for local civil society to flourish while a one-party despotism tends to close it down. Evidence presented in chapter 6 shows a definite burgeoning of local civil society under the RC system in Jinja, especially women's associations. Moreover, these associations tend to break down the barriers between the two publics described by Ekeh. Thus, the associations cross ethnic lines and seem to be veering away from dependence on clientelistic behaviour both internally and externally. There is evidence that women are finding some independence of action through their association and are questioning customary roles. There is also evidence that these women are breaking down the historically-based idea that urban women are immoral and are gaining respect in their own right. There is also evidence of associations that are venturing into public service and that are based on emerging ideas of universality. Thus, the concern for street children and youth is expressed in general terms rather than through particularistic ethnic or religious concerns. In addition, there is some attempt to develop a partnership with local government in order to provide the service. Women's solid presence in local civil society combined with their participation in formal government institutions is evidence that they are fashioning a broad public space in Ugandan political society. Therefore, local civil society in Jinja seems to be taking some tentative steps towards developing new political behaviour that might enhance a new localism by combining the concepts of rights and duties in a more integrated public.

Again, the evidence from Mutare presented in chapter 6 sounds an ominous note for a new, democratic localism. ZANU(PF), though it has little grassroots participation, tries to

monopolize civil society through its organs such as the Women's League. Any association that is outside ZANU(PF) control and that questions accountability is seen as opposition to be eliminated. In addition, local associations that do exist find it very difficult to escape the relations of power perpetuated by decentralized despotism in the party. Thus, associations such as MCRO (Mutare Citizens and Ratepayers Association) resort to the same tactics as ZANU(PF) and reinforce old political behaviour rather than forge new political relationships. Also, the women's cooperatives in Mutare, even if they have been established on a more formal basis and have more resources at their disposal than those in Jinja, rely on the old patronage system of politics and show little sign of preparing fertile ground for change, since they benefit from the system. As a consequence, they are not creating more space for women in Zimbabwean political society. Although there are some positive signs in Mutare (for example, the municipality's relationship with Taona Theatre Productions), there is much more fertile ground in Jinja for developing a local civil society in which new political relationships may evolve into a new localism.

Nevertheless there are some similarities between the two municipalities. In both Jinja and Mutare local associations are hampered by the low income of their members. This poses two significant problems: the meagre resources give associations less independence; and, the underactive membership relies on a small leadership which is open to suspicion because of its perceived disproportionate power within the organization. In addition, Jinja Municipal Council, like Mutare City Council, treats associations that tread on sensitive municipal responsibilities (for example, the Walukuba Tenants' and Welfare Association [WATWA]) with suspicion and even contempt. However, it is here that the lower RCs' mediating role is

evident again. WATWA members have gained RC1 and 2 positions in order to further their aims. Thus, the access to participation and the legitimizing function that RCs provide give them a hybrid nature: a cross between local civil society and local government. If we are to take seriously the split between rights and duties as characterized by the two publics produced by bifurcation, then the importance of this ability to mediate bifurcation and bring both residents and local civil society into a legitimate space where a more universal sense of accountability can be forged cannot be overestimated. There are no institutions in Mutare to provide this mediating function.

The effect of externally driven demands on a new local politics

Finally, the thesis examines the effects of the externally driven demands brought on by restructuring (the new localism referred to by Goetz and Clarke and Clarke and Gaile in Chapter 1 - specifically, the increased demands on local government and the need to create a new policy mix in the face of dwindling resources) on local government in Jinja and Mutare. The example of a partnership between PTAs and local government in order to provide a service, outlined in chapter 6, gives evidence that the current emphasis on downloading responsibilities to local government, driven by administrative cutbacks and the drive for fiscal efficiency and effectiveness (noting that in Uganda previous society breakdown also made PTAs necessary) need not hamper and may even enhance the prospects for a new democratic localism in sub-Saharan Africa. In both municipalities the inclusion of local civil society in service provision has helped local government develop practices within which new types of behaviour may be forged. Thus, in Jinja in 1995 the history of mistrust and mismanagement between the PTAs and JMC was yielding to new practices that produced mutual

accountability. In Mutare, too, the partnership was forging new political behaviour which departed from the despotic tendencies of ZANU(PF) and the practice of participation by demonstration and moved towards a new interaction which may produce a new sense of responsibility and accountability. This is an important finding since externally driven demands are likely to continue to effect local governments.

However, as I warned in chapter 6, we cannot be sanguine about these claims. As the evidence from Jinja and Mutare show, restructuring has put new burdens on populations (compounded by the chaos of the 1970s and 80s in Uganda) and the effect on standards of living will have repercussions for the effectiveness of both civil society and local government to carry out their functions. The beginning signs of withdrawal from the partnership on the part of both the central and local governments in Mutare is worrying. In addition, the introduction of universal primary education (UPE) after the 1996 election in Uganda has revealed the precariousness of these nascent partnerships as some of the old political behaviour resurfaces, demonstrating that these new relationships can be easily uprooted. While the externally driven demand on local government, characterized here by the partnership between the PTAs and local government, has provided opportunities for new political relationships to be formed in both Jinja and Mutare, there are also many obstacles to overcome in the progress towards a new localism.

II A Comparative Analysis As If A New Localism Mattered

It is clear from the argument in this thesis that a new, democratic localism matters a great deal if the barriers of bifurcation are to be broken down. In a more general democratic sense the thesis shows that a new localism matters for several reasons: it provides a training

ground for democratic practices; it can act as a buffer between citizens and a remote national state; it can provide an alternative centre of power and, hence, a check on national government; and it is a way to better ensure that policy is related to local needs. Apart from these arguments, I now wish to take up the argument of why an analysis 'as if a new localism mattered' is so important when considering current African politics. The conclusions reached here are not meant to be definitive answers but are merely an attempt to loosen the perceptual knot that leads observers to believe that African politics has reached an impasse; as the knot loosens, the importance of local government emerges.

Critical juncture or impasse?

African politics is not at an impasse but it *is* at a critical juncture. The critical juncture involves structural change resulting from the world-wide effects of globalization. Global structural adjustment, directed by global capital and IFIs such as the World Bank and IMF, provides a remarkably uniform and inflexible set of market driven solutions which, in turn, engender complex political problems in developed and developing countries alike. This remarkable inflexibility, fostered by neo-liberal political solutions at the national level around the world regardless of the political orientation of the government, has also spawned an equally remarkable broad and flexible range of political solutions to cope with the effects of globalization, especially at the local level. Thus, we have an emphasis on the local level in which governments seek to derive solutions from a complex policy mix involving a partnership between government and non-government actors.

This emphasis on structural change within states has important implications for Africa. First, this critical juncture may provide a most auspicious moment for politics in Africa

because it is the first time since independence that there has been a general tendency, world-wide, to rethink the configuration of government within the national state. Since this is happening within states in the so-called developed world, there may be a more permissible atmosphere for experimentation within the African state.¹ This could give African political societies a grace period in which new political solutions may be allowed to develop. Another implication of the critical juncture for African states is the effect it may have on internal political relations. The end of Cold War politics and restructuring has limited some of the methods (often backed by Cold War inspired allies and their aid and trade) by which African leaders have maintained political power relations that depend heavily on an unproductive clientelism and little engagement with their populations. For the first time since independence African leaders may have to turn to, and take serious note of, their own populations in order to survive. Both of these implications provide openings for change in the configuration of power relations in African states.

The comparative analysis of local politics in this thesis points to some of the important questions to be considered at this critical juncture. African politics is not at an impasse but it does function under the influence of the inherited impediments (more or less, depending on the specific historical circumstances of a given country) of the bifurcated state. These impediments have established a pattern of politics for almost a century, but this may be

¹ In August 1997 the outgoing American ambassador to Uganda, Michael Southwick, had warned the NRM government that they should listen to multipartyists but he also "said that there is need for dialogue and alternative political forces must be prepared to exercise democracy responsibly. He said Ugandans are ready to move on but are very cautious of their past" (*The New Vision* 2/8/97). In March a draft copy of the new political organizations bill was sent to Western diplomats including the new American ambassador, Nancy J. Powell. The press reported that her comments were "awaited with interest. The belief is that she is more open to other forms of governance than her predecessor" (*Uganda News*, 23/3/98). President Clinton's visit in March also gave credence to Uganda's political experimentation.

unravelling as we enter the next one. Although greatly influenced by external factors, such as international relations, the world economy, international development organizations and international financial institutions, this process is also influenced by internal factors such as ethnic conflict, indigenous economies, political institutions, and intellectual and political leadership in both state and civil society. Thus, there will be as many ways of overcoming the impediments as there are polities. Liberia and Somalia are the extreme cases where political society is undergoing a disintegration, the result of which is not yet clear. Tanzania and Senegal, on the other hand, present a different scenario where political relations of power may undergo more peaceful transitions. In considering African politics from this point of view it is not so much how it happens but whether there is a fundamental change in political relations away from those inherited impediments. This change is the clue to transformation; and what is taking place politically at the local level is crucial.

The importance of the local lens

The comparative analysis and conclusions reached in this thesis highlight the importance of viewing African politics as if a new localism matters. In comparative terms Zimbabwe often presents a picture of a more developed, orderly and peaceful country. Uganda carries the reputation for disorder, corruption, violence, economic disintegration and political ineptness. However, put to the test of creating a new politics which meets the challenges of overcoming the political relations of the bifurcated state, a very different picture emerges. Therefore, once we focus on local politics, we are able to begin to establish more thoroughly the grounds on which politics is being played out *both* locally and nationally. We see that the National Resistance Movement, under the leadership of Yoweri Museveni, has

embarked upon an ambitious plan of democratization at the local level and it seems to be this focus on democratization which is shaping the institutions as they are evolving. The Ugandan people are in the process of experimentation which may very well lead to the establishment of fundamentally different political relationships. In contrast, the Zimbabwe government, under the leadership of Robert Mugabe, has emphasized the preservation of inherited forms in order to bring about development and has not yet made any conscious effort to address the *political* problems inherited from the colonial experience. Thus, the larger and more formal Zimbabwean economy and the thrust for development in the first few years after independence are shown to be misleading indicators of *political* development when fundamental political relations at the local level are taken into consideration. If one gives serious regard to local politics in this manner, a new clarity in the analysis of African politics is made possible.

Historical context

The material presented in this thesis also points to the importance of historical context in contemporary political analysis. This importance is evident in the analysis of the historically specific form of African political society and its components, state and civil society, and the accountability produced from their complex relationship. Furthermore, understanding the importance of historical context alerts us to the fact that the inherited impediments will play out differently depending on the specific historical context. The question remains: How is it that Uganda, a much less developed country, is beginning to overcome the inherited impediments while Zimbabwe remains mired in old political relations? Some of the reasons must be found in the different historical contexts.

For theoretical purposes this thesis has emphasized the similarities between the two countries historically, especially the severing of organic political relations in the 1890s and the subsequent decades of building up the political relations of power that were shaped by the bifurcated state. However, there are several differences which also come to light in this analysis. One difference is that Zimbabwe endured a longer and harsher period of formal bifurcated rule under the white settler state which may have produced more intransigent political impediments. Formal laws provided for the spatial and economic separation and were strictly enforced for a much longer period. Political action was much more severely penalized in Zimbabwe than in Uganda, and independence came twenty years later. Thus, Zimbabweans have also had a comparatively, shorter time in power than Ugandans.

The years after independence gave Ugandans the experience of party politics and the UPC attempt to impose one-party rule (which seems to be the institutional product of the inherited impediments of the bifurcated state). Furthermore, independence removed race as a political factor, as Mamdani has argued, and the expulsion of the Asians by Amin served to remove race as an economic factor, at least for a time. Thus, by the 1980s, race was no longer a consideration and could not be used for pseudo accountability by a nationalist government. It is only now that Zimbabwe is experiencing the consequences of one-party rule. Furthermore, race, a very potent factor in the Zimbabwe economy and a latent factor politically, is still a card to play.² It may be that the much more productive and powerful

² Mugabe seems to have used the race option (Wetherell 1998) when he went ahead with appropriation of white farms right after the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) staged protests against tax hikes to finance Mugabe's decision to award gratuities to war veterans (Z\$50,000 each plus a monthly pension of Z\$2000). At the same time people were demonstrating over food prices. However, there is some indication that race is a less tenable excuse in the late 1990s. Iden Wetherell reports that one ZCTU protester commented that "Mugabe has no support among real people so he is going to buy the war veterans' support at the expense of the

formal structures of economy and government in Zimbabwe provide a barrier to change while in Uganda those structures disintegrated into chaos leaving an opportunity to develop new, more organic, ones. However, I am not arguing that Zimbabwe must disintegrate politically and economically, as did Uganda, in order to begin to come to a different political consciousness. What I am arguing is that Zimbabweans have not yet had the variety nor length of political experience yet that Ugandans have had.

Another significant factor in Zimbabwe is that, both during the guerrilla war and after, ZANU(PF) took the form of a vanguard party. This is not surprising, given that all Western governments had abandoned the guerrillas and their cause and that those who came to their aid included China and the Soviet Union. Thus, both the leadership and the ordinary soldiers, who were trained and armed by these nations, felt an affinity with them.³ The emphasis was on taking the lead while the people followed. The fact that the guerrilla war did not end in decisive victory but was brought to an end by a compromise which kept intact some of the political and all of the economic clout of the settler regime guaranteed that there remained a strong, well-developed, and largely unscathed infrastructure as well as a highly developed white society. This made development catch-up a visible and concrete goal which fed into the idea that the party would lead the way. Therefore, the continued existence of a bifurcated state is very evident in Zimbabwe and this 'developed' branch (the predominantly white, and

working people" while another group of protesters carried the sign: "Don't blame the whites for your failures" (Wetherell 1998, 17).

³ This was made clear to me by two veterans who were members of ZANU(PF), one of whom had obtained military training and, the other, medical training overseas. Both emphasized the extreme feeling of isolation and abandonment experienced by the guerrillas in the 1970s and the gratefulness with which any chance for training and support was received.

now elite, culture and economy) may provide the comparison to which the 'ordinary people' do not measure up. Here we may see also that, by itself, the income level of a developing country is not a determining factor for developing democratic institutions at the local level.

Analyzing politics with the concept of a new localism

This discussion should not detract from the significant accomplishment of the Ugandan people. After all, Uganda was considered a lost cause in the early 1980s and total disintegration was close at hand. The fact that the Ugandan people have been able to create an environment of political openness in which the opportunity for creating new political relationships is made possible is a significant accomplishment, given the breakdown in society that was evident in the 1970s and 1980s. Fundamental changes have taken place in Uganda (none of them foregone conclusions) all of which contribute to overcoming the historical impediments of the bifurcated state.

First and foremost is the enormous emphasis on democratic openings at the local level. This must be seen as a significant achievement of the NRM and, in particular, of Museveni.

As Mamdani has stated:

This is the originality of Museveni's political contribution. For while the movement for multiparty reform is literally content to translate democracy as a turnkey project from Western manuals, it is to Museveni's credit to come to grips with a key political legacy of Africa's colonial experience - the recognition that the real and enduring political legacy of colonial rule goes beyond the racial effrontery of alien rule to local despotisms that are institutionalised and legitimised as so many 'customary' forms of power.... NRM's great success has been the rural and the local (Mamdani 1997).

That Museveni and the NRM government have come to grips with this legacy is demonstrated in this thesis in several ways. They have emphasized the ability of local people to govern themselves. But beyond that, they have emphasized the right and responsibility of local people to question their politicians and administrators. It is apparent from the Jinja study that

the population has embraced this idea, has taken the local government system seriously and is prepared to use it to demand accountability from officials, political and administrative. Thus, a climate of demanding accountability has been produced as never before and there is some hope that rights and duties may reside in one more universally conceived public in the future.⁴ The NRM government has also emphasized autonomy and experimentation at the local level, leaving the door open for local innovation and new practices to develop. The Jinja case gives ample evidence that, both at the municipal and lower council levels, councillors are developing these practices whether they are trying to deal with NW&SC or developing a partnership with PTAs. Political leadership has been very important.

One party, no party - what's the difference?

At the same time Museveni and the NRM have insisted on continuing a ban on party politics for the purposes of election and the question remains as to whether this will impede democratization. Mamdani has argued that multiparty politics, although it is not an answer in itself, is the other half of the equation for overcoming the inherited impediments of the bifurcated state (1996, 291-3). Participation at the local level must be accompanied by political competition at the centre through multiparty democracy. Only this will guarantee adequate representation and bring opportunities for alliances. In his more recent assessment of the NRM government he asserts that,

⁴ In Uganda there seems to be a movement away from admiration for the 'big man' who is able to dispense largesse and this may signal some resolution to the problem of the two publics. Commenting on the growing mood among the public and in parliament to censure those who are corrupt, the *East African* states:

As a minister put it recently, the situation is such that when a state official appears in public wearing a nice pair of shoes, most people give him or her a funny look which says "You stole the money to buy them." ("Opinion: Christmas Present Puzzle for Museveni", *The East African*, 22-28/12/97).

its great dilemma continues to be the urban and the central... To take into account the most dynamic features of the African reality is to recognize that African countries are not just villages or towns but both; not just rural peasant communities or class divided urban areas, but both. It is a context requiring us to think of democracy in both its participatory and its representative aspect. How to marry the two is the challenge we face... is it not true that any political system that does not guarantee the right of opposition - the right to organize as an opposition - can never be stable and self sustaining? (Mamdani 1997).

It seems to me that the question is whether no-party rule is necessarily the same as one-party rule, especially on the question of eliminating opposition. Although the material in this thesis cannot address all of Mamdani's arguments, since my emphasis was on the openings at the local level in an urban context, there are some points to be made.

First, in Uganda under the NRM, at least for the present, national politics is less restrictive than in Zimbabwe. The Ugandan national parliament contains a variety of opposition members. Multipartyist members of parliament include Cecilia Ogwal, an active United People's Congress (UPC) executive and constant critic of Museveni. Even the Vice President, Specioza Wandira Kazibwe, was a Democratic Party (DP) member until 1989. Multipartyists (the common term for proponents of multiparty democracy who are usually UPC or DP members) are not excluded from parliamentary committees and have been particularly outspoken about corruption. They take a combined stand as they did to censure ministers Kirunda Kivejinja and Jim Muwezi. Active, too, is Winnie Byanyima (MP Mabarara) who supports the NRM but remains a critic, lodging a one-woman campaign against corruption in her own district as well as in the central government. Multipartyists have also been successful in the recent district elections (April 1998), most notably in the Kampala mayoralty race which went to a multiparty candidate. An editorial in the opposition newspaper, *The Monitor*, assessed the first year of the current parliament asserting:

To its credit, this parliament has shown some real teeth in fighting corruption in the ministries and some

parastatals. It has also set a precedent of enforcing accountability in ways unknown in the history of this country, especially with the ministers and heads of parastatals who had hitherto felt untouchable (*The Monitor* 3/7/97, 8).

Second, although there is a ban on election campaigns, parties openly meet. Both the DP and UPC have had conferences in Kampala in the last year.⁵ This is in marked contrast to the hold ZANU(PF) has on the electoral process which, on the surface, claims to be conducted through democratic universal suffrage. The evidence presented in Chapter 5 shows that not only do opposition party candidates in Zimbabwe receive so much pressure that they cannot perform effectively but also critics within the ranks of ZANU(PF) are muzzled, as in the case of Margaret Dongo when party executives tried to defeat her candidature in the 1995 national primaries. Exclusivity and silencing of opposition is a common problem in Zimbabwe while the no-party inclusivity of the NRM government has spawned a national parliament which contains a highly active and vocal opposition.

But the most important point to be made is that the analysis as if a new localism mattered presented in this thesis shows a marked difference between one-party dominance and a no-party system and, therefore, provides another measure of comparison. The comparative analysis at the local level (Jinja and Mutare) sets the political practices of the two countries in stark contrast. In Mutare the determination for exclusivity means that debate is lost in the din of party rhetoric and local issues are rarely raised, let alone debated, in public. Criticism is lost in the rivalry between factions and even public demonstrations are manipulated by rivals

⁵ *The New Vision* 21/7/97; *The Monitor* 2/12/97. *The Monitor* reported that "(I)n what is arguably one of the largest meetings of any political party since 1986, up to 200 members of UPS Saturday converged in Kampala to inaugurate their new parliament, the Party Representative Council" (2/12/97, p. 1). *The New Vision* also reported on a meeting of the Democratic Party (DP), which backed the presidential candidate Paul Ssemogerere, in July 1997 (*The New Vision* 21/7/97).

for political power within ZANU(PF). Thus, even in Mutare, which is the capital of the *only* province that has consistently produced opposition members of parliament, it is very difficult to break out of old patterns of political behaviour that are constantly reinforced by the party in power. In Jinja, with party pressures diminished and democratic openings emphasized, local issues are the focus of both the lower councils and the municipal council. The fact that there are no parties has not diminished criticism and calls for accountability. In fact, the innovative system of tiered councils presents openings at several levels for debate and demands for accountability. From the point of view of a new, democratic localism, no party is very different from one party.

A new localism and the question of power

Does this mean that the NRM has solved the question of power in Uganda? This is very doubtful indeed. Uganda is not nearly out of the woods yet. It is possible that the NRM's propensity for inclusivity may cross the line between forming alliances and creating suffocating policies which will establish a one-party system. A bill on political organizations is to be tabled in parliament sometime in 1998 and is purported to require organizations to practice inclusivity with regard to ethnicity, sex and religion but it is still not clear what form these organizations will take. Meanwhile, multipartyists argue that the "Movement Bill" passed in parliament in July 1997 is the thin edge of the wedge (Onyango-Obbo 1997). Charles Onyango-Obbo (1997) argues that alliances within the movement are breaking up and now it is necessary for the NRM to consolidate power by becoming one party as of old. The election of Movement (NRM) committees that parallel LC Councils is indeed worrying and bears watching. Even if they have the best intentions of developing inclusivity and new

political accountability, these committees may cave in to the pressure from other parties and adopt old-style political behaviour.

The political behaviour of some multipartyists is indeed questionable. There is no guarantee that multipartyists would be willing to share power if they had it; the old practices die hard. In the July 1997 meeting DP members commented that Ssemogerere "is running the party as personal property" and Maria Mutagamba, a DP activist, argued that "(I)t is imperative that DP embarks on internal democratization to prepare itself for the democratisation process of the nation. We cannot have moral authority to call upon Ugandans to be democratic when we are not".⁶ Mutagamba's comments suggest that simple multiparty elections are not the only answer. But they also suggest that there is a deeper democratic process taking place in Uganda (and having its effect on less than democratic parties) which may, in the end, make it possible for party politics to become effective. However, at present the indication is that a government under multipartyists might try to halt this process. For example, in the lower local council elections that took place at the end of 1997, two lower councils (LC1 and LC2 in Mokono sub-county) went to multipartyists who then, reportedly, put a ban on all meetings and vowed to oust all 'movementists' from higher councils.⁷ Thus, it is prudent to have some misgivings about the extravagant claims of multipartyists on the subject of freedom of opposition. Since party organization in Africa has tended to reinforce the inherited impediments of the bifurcated state rather than transform them it may be that, at least judging from the Ugandan case, suspension of active party politicking is required in

⁶ *The New Vision* 21/7/97, p. 1.

⁷ *The Monitor* 2/12/97.

order for a new politics to take hold.

What is evident is that a new politics based on local democracy is taking hold in Uganda and, therefore, a new resolution to the question of power may be evolving. The April 1998 local government elections have produced many examples of the richness and complexity a new localism brings to Ugandan politics. Al Hajji Nasser Sebaggala, elected mayor of Kampala, represents the multiplicity of problems and identities that Ugandans must reconcile within the context of a new localism. He is a businessman who thrived under Idi Amin and the *magendo* economy of the 1980s. Refusing to speak English during his campaign, he seems to represent

a class of business people in this country who have been buried by the economic liberlisation of the Yoweri Museveni years, and the return of stolen property to the Asians... The people who have been eaten by the unforgiving march of capitalism downtown are Move-mentists, multi-partyists, from all tribes, they are uneducated, [but also] they are very educated" (Onyango-Obbo 1998, 14).

Here we have represented in one person all of the contradictions that a new localism must absorb: the contradictions that are the result of the old inherited impediments; and the new contradictions of globalization with which the old contradictions interact. The multipartyists claim that the election of Sebaggala is a decisive victory for them and a defeat for Museveni; in fact, they claim that it is the beginning of the end for Museveni because Kampala is the heart of the country and if you lose the heart you lose it all (Onyango-Obbo 1998a). But is it? The fact that the NRM does not see the Kampala elections as 'do or die' and the multipartyists do is also revealing. The multipartyists are working on the premise that the whole country can be controlled from the centre (old inherited impediments) but the NRM seems to be disengaged from that premise. What this election does say is that a new localism has been able to absorb contradictions without the system disintegrating into partisan

violence.

However, as Onyango-Obbo notes, there *are* national patterns to be discerned. Most Ministers or MPs who tried to interfere in the local elections saw their candidates defeated in the districts. An exception was Mbarara where MP Winnie Byanyima helped to oust one of the most corrupt district governments in Uganda. On the whole, the pattern seems to point to a weeding out of both corrupt and patronage-prone governments. Onyango-Obbo observes:

With decentralization, voters, quite correctly, want to establish the necessary level of independence from the central government. That independence can't be established if the LCV chairman is just the Kampala minister's stooge, hence the opposition to those perceived to be fronts (Onyango-Obbo 1998a, 8).

The disengagement of political parties from both local and central politics has not killed opposition but it *has* initiated the breakdown of the cycle of partisan clientelism. What is apparent here is that Museveni and the NRM have set in motion a political process which seems to be breaking down the inherited impediments and developing a new way to resolve the question of power; and it rests on the development of a new localism. Whether the NRM and Museveni are able to maintain their belief in popular democracy and the ability of ordinary people to work out the contradictions politically is an open question.

What this thesis makes absolutely clear is that an analysis as if a new localism mattered is absolutely crucial for capturing and understanding the complexities involved as the inherited impediments are played out in African politics. What is also made evident is that one side of Mamdani's equation, democratic openings at the local level, may be taking root in Uganda. The analysis of politics in Jinja has revealed that, to a certain extent (an unprecedented extent in Uganda's history), those complexities have been allowed an airing and given a legitimacy by the institution of popular democracy at the local level. (Specifically

we may recall the illegitimate nature of living and business arrangements in Jinja, which are the legacy of the UPC era and the Amin era, and the way the RCs have given people the grounds for making their demands legitimate.) An analysis as if a new localism mattered enables us to capture this process that is so important to African politics. Moreover, as I have attempted to demonstrate here, an analysis as though a new localism mattered gives us the tools with which to look for the transformational aspects at *both* the centre and the local - those two sides of Mamdani's equation.

Looking for a new localism

Is an analysis as though a new localism mattered only useful in cases where there are obvious democratic openings at the local level? The answer is a resounding "no" and the analysis of Zimbabwean politics in this thesis is proof of that. The use of Zimbabwe in the comparison has been essential for demonstrating the importance of a new localism but it goes beyond that. As pointed out above, the analysis used in this thesis gets beyond the camouflage of a more formal Zimbabwean economy, and the host of better indicators it throws up, to disclose some fundamental political problems that will need more than a multiparty bandaid treatment. It directs us to analyse politics at both the local and central level, and in civil society, according to whether or not they break down or reinforce the inherited impediments. What is made apparent in the analysis of Mutare's politics is that often an action by an MP that looks like resistance to bad local government is instead reinforcement of ZANU(PF)'s version of decentralized despotism. An analysis as if a new localism mattered also alerts us to the fact that *politically* Zimbabwe does not have the institutional means to absorb the contradictions which become more pressing as structural

adjustment takes hold.⁸ I have argued that there is some indication that change may come from within ZANU(PF), and that it may start at the local level. However, given the political relations of power in ZANU(PF)'s version of decentralized despotism described in this thesis, there is reason to believe that ZANU(PF) will not be able to withstand these pressures and some political disintegration may take place. In revealing the lack of a grounding in an internally driven new localism the analysis alerts us to the seriousness of the situation.

Women and a new local politics

Another new direction taken in this analysis is an analysis of the role of women in politics. An analysis that encompasses the local level gives breadth to the discussion of women in the broader political process because it reveals more thoroughly the extent of women's participation or exclusion. An examination of women's participation in politics in light of the inherited impediments allows us further refinement in that we may discriminate between those practices which break down or reinforce the old political behaviour that always limits women politically and those that do not. It also points to the fact that women's participation is an important indicator in this larger political challenge of overcoming the inherited impediments.

As I have argued, women in Uganda and Zimbabwe have been under the double restraint of customary law and Western patriarchal attitudes. Under the former, they are subject to the authority of male relatives and courts of male elders without the flexibility and

⁸ The camouflage of the formal economy is losing its effectiveness as the dollar loses value and inflation continues. Strikes, food riots, and student demonstrations are common occurrences as, at the same time, Mugabe tightens his control from the centre (see Wetherill 1998; Bond, 1998; Saunders 1997; "Decisions must come from the top", Zimbabwe Independent, 6/2/98; "Mugabe's winter of discontent", The Mail & Guardian, 13/6/97).

political importance they held before colonialism; under the latter, their productive role is unacknowledged or submerged in the glorification of women's domestic role. Most women must seek the protection of a male and are expected to support male dominance politically. Single women and urban women (whether single or not) are regarded as immoral. Moreover, most women must manipulate the males in the system, whether they are within the confines of the customary or within elite patronage circles. A foot in the door of the formal system may prevent the worst abuses of the customary but neither gives women legitimacy in their own right.⁹ Up until the 1980s women were not successful in establishing autonomous presence in political society in Uganda and Zimbabwe, be it state or civil society.

A cursory glance points out some similarities and some differences between the political and economic circumstances of women in Uganda and Zimbabwe. Women in Zimbabwe are better educated and healthier. Illiteracy among women in Uganda is 50% while it is only 20% in Zimbabwe.¹⁰ There are five times as many women in tertiary education in

⁹ Jane Parpart's (1995) analysis of widows in different economic circumstances in Zimbabwe illustrates this point very well. Parpart found that poor women and rural women, who could only appeal to customary authorities with regard to inheritance, had to do their best to manipulate the males in that system in order to maintain themselves. They were especially successful if they had a young close male relative who could, and would, bring some weight to the matter. Poor women who had some foot in the door in the formal system in urban areas (eg a rented house through the deceased husband's work) could find means to get around the demands of the customary if they could manage to keep their foothold in the formal system. Women with better education and employment could afford to access the formal system of justice which was more likely to give a favourable outcome on inheritance. In analysing the ways in which women defend themselves, Parpart argues that women do not just capitulate to male domination but use the system for their own benefit. However, this conclusion does gloss over the fact that they are almost always confined to a position that requires male compliance. Perhaps the most poignant fictional account of the effects of bifurcation on women is found in Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* which demonstrates the dilemmas of women whether they have a foot in one or both camps. Lucia, in particular, "who had grown shrewd in her years of dealing with men" demonstrates the consummate skill that is required to manipulate a council of male elders. (Dangarembga 1988, 126, 143-48).

¹⁰ World Development Report 1997, Table 7, p. 226.

Zimbabwe than in Uganda (Uganda=63/100,000; Zimbabwe=320/100,000).¹¹ Life expectancy for women in Uganda is 42 while it is 57 in Zimbabwe.¹² Maternal mortality is five times greater in Uganda (Uganda=506/100,000; Zimbabwe=100/100,000).¹³ However, political representation at the national level is more similar. Women form 10% of the members of parliament in Uganda while in Zimbabwe they form 11%. Women make up 8% of the government ministers in Uganda while they make up only 3% in Zimbabwe.

Again, a comparative analysis as though a new localism mattered reveals that a richer, more developed economy may camouflage the lack of political development. An examination of local politics points to some very important trends which do not appear if one simply reads national statistics on women's participation. It not only shows a more complete picture of political inclusion or exclusion but also the extent to which women are able to enter into new patterns of political behaviour. Thus, we can judge whether their participation is more supportive of a new localism and lends them firmer ground upon which to produce new ideas of accountability.

The analysis of Zimbabwe reveals the extent of the exclusion of women and highlights the difficulties that women encounter in a one-party system. In Mutare women have few opportunities for new behaviour and retain the old supportive role which reinforces the old political relations of personal patronage. In fact, the material presented in this thesis demonstrates that women MPs may reinforce the subordinate role of women, especially

¹¹ Human Development Report 1997, p. 171.

¹² World Development Report 1997, Table 1, p. 214.

¹³ World Development Report 1997, Table 6, p. 224.

through encouraging women to work in the Women's League without calling for its reform. Here we may see that there is little public space where women can prepare fertile ground for a new political role locally that might counteract the conservative attitudes towards women in Zimbabwe. In addition, there is little movement towards articulating and universalizing women's strategic needs along with their practical needs and little opportunity to build up political strength locally that would match their need for local services.

In comparison, the examination of local politics in Jinja reveals the extent to which inclusivity has spread to include women at every level of the tiered system and, more importantly, has served to create a critical mass of women active in local politics. Thus, women have an opportunity to develop new political relations through their participation and also have the opportunity to gather their own political strength locally. Even if women and men at the national level indulge in patronizing behaviour, women at the local level have some grounds upon which to build some autonomy. Although they are only in the beginning stages, women in Jinja are using their public space to build a fertile ground for a new political role that is already changing the attitudes towards women in politics. Combined with their presence in local civil society where they are satisfying their needs (practical and strategic) and providing public service, women's presence in formal political institutions makes for a 'triple effect' that gives them a strong presence in Ugandan political society as a whole. Thus, women in Jinja may have a better chance to gain a political capacity that better matches their need and use of adequate local services and their triple role, pointed out by Moser (1993), of production, reproduction and community managing. One might argue that, given their family responsibilities and community concerns, women are more able to

participate locally than nationally and that the responsibilities of local governments are more oriented to issues that concern women, in their culturally determined role, especially.

However, as this thesis has shown, these factors, by themselves, do not insure that women will participate in a meaningful way. Thus, the institutional setting remains an important factor when considering women in local politics in Uganda and Zimbabwe. It is in the comparison of women in politics in Uganda and Zimbabwe presented here that we may see the importance of bringing in the local level.

Moreover, it may be argued that the consciousness of including women in politics may be an important indicator of the willingness and readiness, in general, to tackle the issues of the inherited impediments. There is no doubt, from the evidence presented here, that, along with the new democratic openings and the new culture of demanding accountability, there is a high consciousness on the part of Ugandan women, and many Ugandan men, that political rights and action are required to address the gender imbalance. This is not the case in Zimbabwe. Writing of the critical juncture in the 1990s Sita Ranchod-Nilsson argues:

Any benefits women might have derived from greater participation were ultimately curtailed by those in power who put forward a facade of multipartyism while manipulating government institutions and the electoral process to maintain control (1998, 255).

Moreover, she argues, there is a renewed attempt to relegate women to the home and family, a pattern upon which a "new nationalist woman" has been touted (Ranchod-Nilsson, 271). The evidence presented in this thesis reveals, in detail, the deep conservatism, in general, within ZANU(PF) and, specifically, with regard to the role of women. More importantly, it reveals how women get caught in the old political relations of personal patronage and, therefore, are unable to articulate and act on a more universal consciousness of women's strategic, as well

as practical, needs. In Uganda, the changing consciousness with regard to gender relations has accompanied a consciousness of the need to democratize at the local level in order to produce new relations of accountability. Thus, women's participation at the local level becomes an important indicator of political consciousness, in general, of the need to dismantle the inherited impediments of the bifurcated state.

Civil society and a new local politics

A vigorous political society needs vitality in both the state and civil society and an analysis as if a new localism matters helps us to better assess both the relationship between state and civil society in political society in Africa and the role of particular civil society actors in developing a new local politics. The comparison between Uganda and Zimbabwe emphasizes the negative impact of one party on the vitality of civil society and clearly indicates the impact on civil society that political openings at the local level provide. In Jinja there is a burgeoning of civil associations but in Mutare ZANU(PF) tries to absorb these associations in a fusion of state and civil society that leaves little room for the vitality needed for rule changing. An analysis as if a new localism matters allows us to refine our understanding of civil society itself by including either the potential for supporting new political behaviour or the propensity for perpetuating old personalized, patronage relations. In this way we may gauge whether civil society associations are engaged in the important task of changing the rules or not. Integral to this assessment is the integrating of rights and duties in a more universally conceived public. From the limited investigations in this thesis, it is clear that in Jinja, there is some indication that associations are establishing some autonomous ground from which a new relationship of accountability may be demanded. However, in

Mutare, it is clear that what civil associations exist often fall into the same pattern of political behaviour exhibited by ZANU(PF). We have a new tool for gauging the importance of civil associations in the process of rule changing.

But more importantly, the evidence from Jinja shows the importance of developing local government institutions which specifically mediate the inherited impediments of bifurcation and, thus, move Africans towards a more integrated and universally conceived public space. It is evident in Jinja that the lower tiers of the RC system, in providing for extensive participation, provide an *intermediate* political institution between state and civil society which lends credence to both. The lower RCs have provided the political space for the legitimation of both the local state and local civil society because they both represent their local residents *and* form an integral part of the functioning of the municipal council. It is in this intermediary capacity that they are able to contain the contradictions that are an integral part of the inherited impediments and transform them by providing a legitimate political forum for debate that seems to reach beyond, both criticizing and legitimating other levels of government. In other words, the lower RCs provide the liminality that Warren Magnusson has described and found so important to the function of government (see Chapter 1). The lower RCs are the least important, most permeable and most vulnerable institutions but provide the strongest legitimation factor. Their ability to mediate bifurcation provides the beginnings for integrating political society in general. This finding is particularly significant since one of the principal challenges for both state and civil society in Africa, in overcoming the inherited impediments, is producing new relations of accountability by bringing about political integration (Mamdani's combination of local political participation with representation at the

centre and local autonomy with alliance) rather than political fusion where one must dominate the other.

Globalization and a new local politics

Finally, an analysis as if a new localism mattered helps us to think about the political impact of globalization on African politics. It raises the matter of the impact of global restructuring and its consequences on the ability of African countries to overcome the inherited structures and develop a new, democratic localism. It also provides the tools to assess the capacity of political society to absorb the contradictions and social dislocation of restructuring, as well as the capacity to be flexible and innovative in finding solutions. Since there is every indication that external events will increasingly show their effect at the local level in sub-Saharan Africa, this is an important component of the analysis.

The evidence presented in this thesis demonstrates that structural change that is part of globalization need not impede the development of a new localism. One impact of this structural change that is emphasized in this thesis is the fact that local governments find themselves increasingly more responsible for the social consequences of globalization but at the same time have fewer resources to deal with those consequences. It is in the attempt to come to terms with these contradictions that local governments are compelled to seek new policy relationships between government and non-government actors. The example used in this thesis is the partnership being forged between the local governments in Jinja and Mutare and the PTAs for provision of primary education. As I argued in Chapter 6, there is good evidence that this externally driven localism is not an impediment to the forging of a new, democratic localism. In fact, there has been a process of mutual legitimization as the

partnership has developed between the PTAs and JMC. This is an even greater accomplishment if we consider the appalling relations that had developed during the 1970s and 1980s. In Mutare, too, the partnership between the local government and the PTAs seemed to be the one place where new political relationships may be developing. Worsening conditions, however, may have a negative impact on the effectiveness of these partnerships. Nevertheless, the evidence shows that the new localism need not be inimical to the development of a new localism.

What the analysis in this thesis does is point to the factors at the local level that give some indication as to the capacity of government not only to absorb, or contain, social contradictions but also the capacity and flexibility to develop innovative solutions. Overall, this thesis demonstrates that the system of local government in Uganda provides more capacity for absorbing and containing both the contradictions of the inherited impediments and those of globalization. Much of this is possible through the opportunity for deep participation at the local level described above. As I have argued above, further evidence that the political system, as a whole, has the capacity to absorb or contain these contradictions can be found in the results and reactions to the recent local elections in Uganda. The local government in Jinja also demonstrates some flexibility in reaching out to the population and the institutional capacity for mobilizing and eliciting support from the population in order to develop solutions. Further evidence that this is generally so is provided by Christie Cannon who finds that decentralization in Uganda "has the potential to enhance the government-NGO relationship at the local level" as donors and NGOs learn how to form a partnership with government for the STD/AIDS programme (Cannon 1996, 264). The emphasis here should be

on the fact that, more than ever before, the system provides the *opportunity* for participation, flexibility and innovation. There is also some indication that Ugandan people are starting to make it work. The evidence in this thesis leads to a guarded optimism that political society in Uganda may be able to withstand the pressures it faces.

The evidence from Zimbabwe is much less encouraging. It reveals that the capacity to absorb or contain contradictions is almost non-existent. This is because there is little participation of any kind, let alone the opportunity for deeper participation that the lower RCs provide in Uganda. As far as tolerating civil associations, there is little evidence that this is possible without absorption, or, at the very least, serious interference by ZANU(PF). The factional fighting within ZANU(PF) paralyzes bureaucracy and alienates civil associations. (However, as we have noted, the PTAs are an exception.) As pressure mounts, the ZANU(PF) hierarchy is likely to become more intent on maintaining power and, therefore, the ZANU(PF) version of decentralized despotism will be reinforced. The indications are that there will be a great deal of political strife in Zimbabwe as the economic effects of restructuring worsen.

Using 'a new localism' as a concept

It is my firm conclusion that a new, internally driven and democratic localism is essential for sub-Saharan Africa; however, the defining of a new localism is not meant to be an exercise leading to prescription. Sub-Saharan Africa does not need another disembodied concept. My suggestion is that the concept of a new, historically relevant, African localism might be used as a tool to examine politics and open up some areas of research and analysis.

Most interesting among these options is an examination of the political behaviour of both people and government. We need to analyse the impact of political institutions, whether

or not they provide the political space for new behaviours to develop; and especially whether they are flexible enough to provide the mediating function needed to bridge the gap between urban governments and large needy populations. We need also to examine the formal relationship between government levels to see how it enhances or inhibits political development away from the political relations of bifurcation. We also need to examine political parties, whether they depend on political fusion between centre and locality or whether they are developing new practices for political integration. We need to look at how political behaviour is shaped and where emancipatory breakthroughs may be located. We need to observe whether demands from the population, both men and women, are characterized by old clientelistic behaviour and confound government attempts at change; on the other hand, we need to look for instances where the demands from the population for a new assessment of responsibility and accountability are met with despotic or clientelistic responses from the government and its representatives, both men and women, or its 'modern' corporations. We also need to look for alliances between the centre and the locality which open up rather than shut down the efforts to forge new political relationships. It is in these struggles that we may see where the emancipatory breakthroughs are happening in African political society.

The concept is also useful when looking at the intersection of development practices and politics. We might examine the apparatus of development to ascertain whether international development agencies, local NGOs and community-based organizations are able to overcome the power relations of the bifurcated state and support emancipatory breakthroughs in the struggle to establish new political relationships, or whether they reinforce the inherited impediments and protract the political behaviour of the bifurcated state.

In short, the concept of a new localism helps us get beyond the negative idea of a political impasse. It encourages us to look for a new creative politics in sub-Saharan Africa as African political societies meet the challenges of overcoming their inherited impediments.

APPENDIX A

Women's groups interviewed:

Jinja, Uganda

Awaken Women's Club
Akanabola Women's Group
Allidina Women's Association
Ezrkokohina Women's Club
Jinja Nurses and Midwives Association
Jinja West Women's Group
Jocund (jolly) Ladies Club
Lubas Rd. Women's Development Club
Main St. E. Women's Club
Mirembe Women's Group
Mowada (Madi women's club)
Mpola Mpola Women's Club
Munoku Kama (work hard for progress) Women's Group
Ntenge Village Women's Savings
Our Lady of Fatima Women's Group
Police Wing Village Women's Association
Sanyu (joy) Women's Club
Twgyambeyambe (helping each other) Women's Club
United Women's Club
Victoria Club
Zinunula (rescue) Women's Club

Mutare, Zimbabwe

Zvirimugwara (on the right track) Co-operative Society Women's Project
Takundamatambudziko (we have conquered our problems) Co-operative
Shanje (doing things so people will come to our side) Co-operative
Munochemeyi (we uplift) Co-operative

Other community-based associations interviewed:

Jinja, Uganda

Alladina Men's Association
Atamak (trial)- a Teso friendship association
Jinja Friendship Association
Jinja Tenants Association
Nile Crane Save the Vulnerable Children Project
Nile United Friendship Association
Poyfa (Protect Our Youth From Aids) Association

APPENDIX A (cont'd)

Walukuba Tenants' Welfare Association

Mutare, Zimbabwe

Taona Theatre Productions

Mutare Citizens and Ratepayers Association

Parent Teachers Associations (PTAs) Interviewed:

Jinja, Uganda

Karinga Prison Primary, Chairman, PTA

Main St. Primary, Chairman, PTA

Mpumudde Primary, Chairman, PTA

St. Gonzaga Primary, Chairman, PTA

Uganda Railways School, Chairman and Member, PTA

Walukuba East Primary, Executive, PTA

Mutare, Zimbabwe

Chikanga Primary, Executive, PTA

Chirowakamwe Primary, Chairman, PTA

Dangamvura Primary, Chairman, PTA

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