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JAMAA REVISITED: A PRELIMINARY REPORT ¹

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Most of what I will have to say is an attempt to disentangle some complex and confusing developments in and around a Zairean religious movement, the Jamaa. When I first came in contact with it, almost twenty years ago, I called it a charismatic movement because it seemed to confirm Max Weber's notions of charisma as a 'major force of revolution' in 'traditional' societies. In the years that followed I repeatedly revised my views on both, the Jamaa movement and the theory of religious enthusiasm (see Fabian 1979, 1981, for summaries). While I had tried to keep up with changes in the field, I was not prepared for what I found during two brief but intensive periods of research in the summers of 1985 and 1986. Some of the structural principles which Weber summarized in his concept of routinization have certainly been operative. But more striking have been developments which cannot be subsumed under that notion. These will make necessary further revisions. In the concluding section of this essay I shall tentatively sketch my current view by formulating some thoughts on power, or rather pouvoir, a term which has the advantage of embracing the English 'power' and the German 'Herrschaft'.

Fates of charisma

The project on which I am about to report was to take another look at the Jamaa, more than thirty years after its emergence and almost twenty years after I had begun to study it. I shall assume that it has by now a certain notoriety.⁽²⁾ Nevertheless, it will be useful to recall what, to me at least, have been its most striking characteristics. When the Jamaa appeared in 1953 near the mining town of Kolwezi (then Katanga province, now Shaba region) it was in many respects an extraordinary phenomenon. Its membership was almost exclusively African

¹ An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Colloque Franco-Allemand, Paris, November 1985 (a meeting of French and German Africanists).- Travel to Zaire was supported by an grant from the Subfaculty of Social Science, University of Amsterdam. I am grateful to J. Dassas for the hospitality he offered in Lubumbashi, and to Kitenge M. and Tshunza M. who made possible the trip to Kolwezi. Members of the Jamaa and of the charismatic prayer groups, too numerous to be named here, generously contributed their time, energy, and thoughts to this project. I must insist that this paper is not only preliminary but also limited to an attempt to construct a sociological frame for further anthropological questions. It is based largely on first-hand information and impressions; little attention is paid at this point to the vast literature that could be cited. Also absent from this account is most of the ethnography that will eventually be part of a fuller report (documents, printed and oral texts, taped conversations, and so forth).

² As far as I know, De Craemer 1977 and Fabian 1971 remain the only book-length studies of the Jamaa. There have been several memoirs and dissertations of which only Zabala 1974 was based on sociological inquiry in Lubumbashi.

but the founder, Placide Tempels, was a Belgian missionary. In Central Africa, and probably beyond, it was at the time also the only religious movement of importance to arise from a Roman Catholic background. Although it diverged in doctrine and organization from the mission church, it understood itself as a kind of revival (without using that term) within the Catholic church. In that respect it was perhaps comparable to the Balokole revival among Anglicans in east Africa.⁽³⁾ Theoretically, the Jamaa was interesting because it seemed to make the case for 'endogenous' social change, being creative and innovative rather than reactive or nostalgic.⁽⁴⁾

At first the Jamaa was acclaimed as a genuinely African form of Catholicism. Yet, as it elaborated and consolidated its own distinctive identity, a confrontation with the hierarchy and clergy (then still largely expatriate) became inevitable. The tensions came to the surface as early as in 1967 in Lubumbashi and 1970 in Kolwezi, after years of internal conflicts among factions in the clergy. By chance, because I was then working on another, unrelated project, I was in Shaba in 1972-74 when a Jamaa, weakened by dissent from within, with little support from the clergy (the founder was still alive but had returned to Belgium in 1962 where he was under ecclesiastic censure), and afflicted by self-doubt and a kind of fatigue, was given an ultimatum by the Zairean conference of bishops: either to abjure, in a public ritual, its doctrinal errors and practices considered deviant or to be excommunicated.⁽⁵⁾ Because I was preoccupied with other matters I could not do systematic research at the time. Informally, I was in close and frequent contact with leaders and members of the movement. I noticed that reactions to the ultimatum were by no means as clear-cut as the hierarchy had hoped. Large portions of the Jamaa simply refused to be put, collectively or individually, in an either-or position. They insisted that they had nothing to abjure and continued to attend church services even after the bishops' decisions had been read from the pulpits. Frustrations among the more authoritarian pastors and bishops mounted and made some of them resort to legal action and appeals to the government, to the army and to the largest employers of the region. Jamaa members were psychologically and physically brutalized, thrown out of churches, fired from mission-linked jobs, even accused of supporting anti-government rebels.⁽⁶⁾ Using an expression from Max Weber, I described the outcome of the 1973-74 campaign of suppression as a 'castration of charisma'. A concerted exercise of spiritual and political power and outright coercion had, in my view, more or less disabled a once vigorous movement.

³ Lloyd Fallers was the first to make that connection (see his preface to Fabian 1971). To my knowledge it has not been followed up systematically. For a more recent article on the Balokole, including references to the existing literature, see Winter 1983.

⁴ My own attempt to place the research on the Jamaa into the context of social change theory was a paper published in 1969. For a thorough revision of these views a decade later see Fabian 1981.

⁵ For the full text of the list of abjurations compiled by the conference of bishops of the Shaba and Kasai regions (at a meeting in Lubumbashi, January 15-20, 1973) see Zabala 1974: 113-19 and Tshibangu 1974: 46f (French version only).

⁶ I first reported these events in Fabian 1979: 201-3. On my recent trips I was given more, and more detailed, information. I realize that my account makes or implies grave allegations regarding the violation of human rights. I therefore must insist that, at this time, I merely report testimony by members of the Jamaa whom, for obvious reasons, I cannot name. I should also note that, within the possibilities given to them by the Zairean system, Jamaa groups and individuals have engaged in legal action to protect their rights.

I concluded then that there 'is a good chance that oppression will succeed in adding the movement to the long list of sectarian groups which vegetate as interesting but largely inconsequential by-products of colonization and decolonization' (1979: 200).

I had hoped that the essay from which I just quoted would be my last word on the subject. When I resumed contacts with the movement in 1985 and was thinking about a title for my report I came up with something like 'Goodbye Jamaa'. I am now convinced that the Jamaa is not likely to leave the scene although it no longer occupies the central place it once did. Nor do I think any longer that the movement should be dropped as a subject. I found it changed in unexpected ways. Friends and acquaintances I had made many years ago are still involved with Placide Tempels' ideas, some showing signs of fatigue, others are fired by renewed enthusiasm. Still others, many of them born after Tempels had left for Europe, are attracted by his teachings; both, members of the first hour and late comers, seem decided to carry on even if it means that the movement must be transformed.

'Survival through change' is a suggestive and handy formula for such a situation. Applied to the Jamaa in Shaba it would have to cover many interrelated forms and levels of change. Before I can sketch the outcome -- the present shape of the movement -- I must report on some of the events and conditions which provided the frame in which individual members and groups of the Jamaa have been making their choices.

Concentration vs. dissipation of power

Even if we started with the mistaken assumption that the Jamaa, during the last decade or so, has done little else but stagnate and decline, we would have to relate its internal development to some spectacular changes in its religious, political and economic environment. An explanation of the movement's career based on some sort of internal logic (be it structural, evolutionary, or both) seems less plausible than ever. The same goes for reductions to external pressures or causes. Both temptations are easier to resist now than twenty years ago, if only because the Jamaa has by now acquired a 'history'. It can no longer be made to accommodate the atemporal systemic approaches that were fashionable in the sixties. At any rate, I feel that I must first situate my report in a historical context.

During the period when I made my first experiences with the Jamaa and contributed with my writings, together with others, to its public image -- six to ten years after Zairean Independence in 1960 -- several things converged to create the impression of charismatic vigor, of intellectual originality, and of social innovation. The movement's political context in the second half of the sixties was marked by Mobutu's rise to power, by consolidation of his 'revolutionary' regime and by a modest economic boom linked, symbolically perhaps more than actually, to the nationalization of the mining industry, Zaire's principal source of wealth. The religious climate was one of optimism and experimentation encouraged by the Vatican council; the mission church was moving toward Africanization and Catholic Zairean intellectuals contributed to an official ideology of national pride, the famed doctrine of authenticité. The Jamaa, being the heir to 'Bantu Philosophy,' could appear as a contributor to these processes. Even though it remained aloof from party politics and had few followers among the new elites and cliques, the Jamaa took part in a society-wide struggle for cultural independence.

Experts in the field will remember that an optimistic outlook on their innovative and integrative contributions was characteristic of the study of religious movements in Africa during that period. In part this was justified by situations such as the one I just described; but

it was also, in varying degrees, the artifact of a certain kind of social theory that owed more to Talcott Parsons than to Max Weber and very little to Karl Marx and other more pessimistic theorists of religion and politics. Be that as it may, in Zaire, after a period of divisive tribal and ethnic conflicts following Independence, the general tendency appeared to be one of concentration of power and efforts. Even rapid, indeed rabid, urbanization manifestly did not result in the predicted disintegration of culture and society. Instead, Zaire became one of the African countries most remarkable for the rise of a new popular culture expressed especially in music and painting (see Fabian 1978).

In the mid-eighties, some of the external forms of that remarkable period continue to endure on the surface -- Mobutu still is the sole ruler of the country (although no one is sure where his power ends and that of the new Zairean technocrats and multinational interest groups begins); mining is still the pivot of the economy and somehow manages to keep the country afloat; the Catholic church seems to have consolidated its power (in some respects there has been a return to privileges enjoyed during colonial times, especially in the fields of education, social services, and health care). Still, the economic crisis which began in the mid-seventies has become endemic. Shortages of fuel, food, and basic consumer goods are constantly felt; pauperization is rampant even among those who still hold jobs; apathy and despair have replaced the optimism of the period between 1965-1975.

According to a widely held opinion this should be just the situation to encourage the rise of religious movements, and, if one does not probe too deeply, this seems in fact to happen. Repression succeeded in removing the threat once posed by the Jamaa to the power of the church. However, at the same time when that victory was gained, the urban and rural areas of Shaba witnessed a great proliferation of independent churches and cults.⁽⁷⁾ Further research would have to determine to which degree the legal confrontation between the church and the Jamaa served as a catalyzer in this process. My guess is that it did.

Since the mid-seventies, up to 1986, there has been a liberalization of the tough policies toward religious groups (other than Catholics) which the Zairean government had inherited from its colonial predecessors. Religious independency had for some time spread in the Protestant context and could, at any rate, be predicted there from recent history in other African countries. Little or nothing prepared the Catholic church of Zaire, used as it was to docile 'lay' movements, for the emergence of a pentecostalist revival, locally most often referred to as groupes de prière (prayer groups). From all available evidence, two things happened almost simultaneously around 1973-4, a turn among African Catholics to forms of worship and rituals hitherto considered typical of Protestant or traditionalist sects, and the importation of the international charismatic revival led, in Lubumbashi, by a small group of missionaries (mainly Jesuits) and other expatriate Catholics.⁽⁸⁾

⁷ Several of these groups have been the subject of mémoires de licence at the University of Lubumbashi. There has also been an attempt to construct a typology based on an inventory of more than 100 'churches' and 'communities' in Lubumbashi. The author dates this proliferation back to 1971 (promulgation of 'l'ordonnance-loi No. 71/012', December 21) when the Zairean government first defined conditions for the recognition of cults and churches; see Lukanga Dende 1983. At least one other legal text seems to have been published in 1979 (ordonnance-loi No. 79002, January 3). In June 1986 the local press reported 'There are 227 religious sects in Lubumbashi of which 75% operate illegally'--which still leaves an impressive number of 'legal' cults and churches.

⁸ Two texts on the history and nature of the charismatic renewal in Zaire were available locally: Verhaegen 1983 and **Le Renouveau, une Chance pour l'Eglise Africaine**. Important indirect information, especially on the problems this movement poses for the church hierarchy, is contained in a pastoral letter by Archbishop

All of a sudden, the environment in which the Jamaa had arisen and developed was changed, especially within that core of ardent practicing Catholics that was at one time the domain of the Jamaa (with some competition, admittedly, from the Legio Mariae, another international organization which had come to Africa earlier). From then on the Jamaa's problems were no longer competing leaders and factions within, and a more or less united adversary without, but a new kind of religious fervor all around. No wonder that leaders of the Jamaa, and not only they, experienced this new situation as a dissipation of charismatic power. All the persons with whom I discussed these recent developments, including followers of the charismatic revival, deplored the proliferation of groups and cults; most of them blamed the economic and political situation, that is, misery and a special kind of organized anarchy.

The charismatic revival had one immediate effect on the Jamaa. It recruited many of its followers and leaders especially among those Jamaa members who had put their loyalty to the Roman Catholic church above their attachment to Tempels' movement, at least publicly. My own observations show that this, while syphoning off some membership, has in fact contributed to a further spread of Jamaa ideas, perhaps not so much on the level of doctrinal content as in the form of discourse or discursive praxis. The style and rhetoric of the Jamaa mafundisho can easily be detected in the prayer meetings of the charismatics. To determine this more exactly will be a principal task for future work on the recordings of services and conversation that were made recently.

The new situation also brought about important changes on the level of organization. In the past, the Jamaa had been remarkable for its ability to maintain local groups (usually attached to a parish), as well as regional and supraregional links with a minimum of organizational means. Until the seventies the movement functioned without bylaws, membership roles, or even written material for instruction. Networks of spiritual kinship and orally transmitted teachings were considered sufficient to safeguard the identity of the Jamaa. This changed when it came to the decisive confrontation with the church hierarchy. For different reasons, loyal as well as dissident Jamaa groups were forced to adopt a complicated bureaucratic organization and to codify the doctrine in written manuals. Loyal groups were ordered to conform to the organizational pattern of other religious associations recognized by the church; the dissidents had to show a règlement intérieur, official representatives, financial statements, and information on membership, in order to satisfy government regulations regarding cults and churches.⁹ Although this is a hunch that will

Kabanga (in French and Swahili, printed in Lubumbashi, no date). He also seems to have appealed to his confrere, Archbishop E. Milingo of Lusaka in Zambia, probably the most prominent African Catholic Charismatic. He visited Lubumbashi around 1974 (I was unable to get the exact date) but he did not leave much of an impression on local leaders, mainly because of linguistic difficulties. On his ideas see Milingo 1984. One example from the vast literature on the Charismatic Renewal in which its world-wide impact is reviewed is Martin and Mullen 1984.

⁹ For the loyal Jamaa (JTK) see their 'Règlement d'ordre intérieur' approved by Archbishop Kabanga on June 9, 1974. This was published as part of the officially approved text of Jamaa teachings (Comité ya Jamaa 1975: 1-3). In 1986 a further step toward formalization was taken. A project of 'statutes' formulated with the help of a jurist, member of JTK, was formulated and submitted to the hierarchy for approval. It was discussed at a conference of the local clergy in Lubumbashi which failed to come up with an official response. JTK leaders interpreted silence as approval and organized a national congress to discuss the project. It took place after my departure in July. As yet I have no information about the results. For the dissident, independent Jamaa takatifu mu Afrika (JTAF), the 'Holy Family in Afrika' see their detailed 'Outline of functions in our Church, the Holy Family in Africa', JTAF 1984-85.

have to be checked later, in both cases the Mouvement Populaire de la Revolution, the unique party of Zaire, may have served as a model. A party-like organization quite likely increases the chances for recognition and survival, given the fact that, until recently, official policies prohibited all non-party associations, from boy scouts to veterans' clubs.

It would be a mistake, however, to take this surface trend toward more formal and more centralized organization as evidence contradicting earlier observations on the dissipation of power. The Catholic charismatic groups of Lubumbashi, for instance, also had to conform to church regulations. From local to national levels they are officially headed by 'shepherds' and steering committees presided by priests; pastoral directives formulate doctrinal guidelines and rules of conduct.¹⁰⁾ But it is doubtful whether these manifest structures are more than tokens of transparency calculated to satisfy the church hierarchy. On the ground, pentecostalism resulted in a multiplication of groups which are more or less independent of each other, oriented toward individual prophets or small groups of leaders. As we know from its long history in the Protestant context, this development tends to multiply units of basically the same pattern; its innovative potential is small. Religious entrepreneurship, centered on a founder-prophet-healer, creates highly localized and often short-lived congregations. People move around among these groups, in fact there is a kind of shopping around for the most satisfying results which is revealed when one looks at the biographies of adepts. This may be experienced as a new kind of freedom; it also causes frustration and disaffection.

In sum, as far as the Jamaa is concerned, it faces in the 1980s conditions which no longer resemble those that obtained in the years immediately before and after Zairean independence. A veneer of overt organizational structures may suggest hierarchization, centralization, hence concentration of power. Charisma seems to be transformed into bureaucratic structures. In reality something much more complex may be happening. In order to understand the changes that are visible on the surface I must now back up and point out some facts that are less obvious but all the more important.

Charisma and embourgeoisement

Originally, the Jamaa in Shaba had its demographic basis among young married adults. Socially it drew on what might be called a 'captive population' (as we speak of a captive audience). These were the mine workers and other wage earners who lived in the company settlements of the Union Minière du Haut Katanga and of the BCK railroad, the two largest employers in the area. Mobility of workers due to transfers between sites, or connected with certain projects, such as the electrification of the railway between Lubumbashi and the Angolan border, but also return to rural areas after retirement or termination of contract and, finally the upheavals of the Katanga secession and later invasions all contributed to a rapid spread of the Jamaa throughout Shaba and beyond. In spite of such frequent movement, however, the official labor policy was to discourage short-term migration of the kind that still serves the mines of South Africa. Since the 1920s the economics of labor recruitment and the exigencies of labor management in Shaba had favored stable, long-term contracts with workers who lived with their families. These labor policies entailed company responsibilities for feeding, housing, and entertaining workers and keeping them and their families in good

¹⁰⁾ In the archdiocese of Lubumbashi, a pastoral committee officially supervises all prayer groups. That committee was involved in formulating the pastoral letter cited above in note 8. From conversations with some of its members I took it that it has been more or less inactive since mid-1985.

health. They also favored cultivation of moral values thought to be guaranteed by stable nuclear families. Early on, this invited close collaboration between companies and missions. Since the 1940s Catholic missionaries were on the company payroll, not only as teachers but also as pastors. In Katanga, and not only there, the policies of labor stabilization served as a model for native policy in general, especially when the creation of an African middle class became an actively pursued goal (e.g. through the creation of urban zones called centres extra-coutumiers).¹¹

Jamaa doctrine, with its emphasis on christian marriage and the couple, expressed the experiences African workers had made with labor stabilization and endowed them with deeper meaning. No wonder that in the eyes of church leaders and company managers the Jamaa first appeared as a harmless 'family movement' that could help to defuse the danger of 'deracination' and proletarianization among the urban working masses.

By the 1970s the policy of stabilization had done its service. The industry had created a labor force that was more than self-reproductive and could envisage cutting down on costs for the services it had to provide under a paternalist regime. This was at least one of the reasons for a weakening of the bonds between mission and industry. It also removed some of the means by which the church could exercise direct control of the movement and its sympathizers. At the same time it became apparent that accelerated urbanization did not inevitably result in proletarianization which would have endangered economic and political objectives. Rather, what occurred was in fact a sort of petit-embourgeoisement. Although living conditions remained precarious, especially for those who were not directly employed by the mining and railroad companies, a majority of the urban population developed aspirations to a modicum of the good life. To be accurate, that process dates back almost to the beginning of Belgian colonization; it became visible on a large scale as soon as direct controls on styles of living, leisure activities, and patterns of consumption were removed after 1960.

In the 1970s 'Africanization' seriously got under way. There was, in 1973, a rather short-lived scheme of Zaireanization of all small and middle sized business and industry owned by expatriates. Even if it was economically disastrous it gave many Africans experience in areas that had been closed to most of them. There has also been a steady increase of African personnel in the higher echelons of government, in industry (above all also in the technical branches), in health services, secondary and higher education, and the clergy. These new elites form a substantial part of the urban population, not so much numerically (although each 'bourgeois' tends to have a large retinue of relatives and clients), but economically, politically and culturally. Unlike their predecessors in colonial times, then called évolués, they adopt a life style that suits them without having to orient themselves on expatriates. It is therefore no longer appropriate, if it ever was, to view African middle class life as a mere imitation or importation of Western culture. The towns and cities of Zaire now have a petite bourgeoisie which, albeit with certain restrictions imposed by a depressed economy, has direct access to globally available goods and ideas -- from video recorders to Rosicrucianism. Whether one likes the term or not, Zaireans are reached by the world system much more quickly and directly than during the days when most of them belonged to a colonial labor force which employers and authorities tried to protect from outside influence.

¹¹ Two important sources on the history of labor economics and urbanization in Shaba are Fetter 1976 and Perrings 1979. For an account of connections between labor history and linguistic and other cultural policies see Fabian 1986.

Among the 'commodities' that circulate globally are, I am convinced, phenomena such as Catholic pentecostalism, a form of movement that confounded earlier theories which sought religious enthusiasm mainly among the oppressed and disenfranchised.⁽¹²⁾ I am not about to declare the spectacular rise of Catholic prayer groups in Zaire a mere side effect of the formation of a middle class. But that such connections exist can not be doubted and a comparison with the Jamaa brings out some of the salient characteristics of that new movement.

The vast majority of Tempels' followers were workers. If there has recently been an upward social trend it reflects the rise of members who first joined the Jamaa when Africans were barred from higher positions. Charismatic prayer groups appeared when such restrictions no longer existed. From the beginning they attracted larger numbers of 'intellectuals' -- members of the teaching professions, including university professors, physicians and other professionals, higher government officials and politicians, and especially young graduates of the university, of academies and training schools. Teachers, nurses, and technicians joined these groups, often when they were still students. This would have been impossible in the Jamaa because it only admitted married couples. In fact, the integration of young people and adolescents is one of the outstanding characteristics of the pentecostalist revival. These youths may even occupy positions of leadership because the spiritual gifts which confer high status are not a matter of achievement or seniority. In the Jamaa where seniority played a central role leaders had to rethink their positions and many have begun to follow the charismatic example in paying more attention to the young. At any rate, among the past mistakes now generally admitted in the movement has been the neglect of their children by parents too deeply involved in the marriage- and couple-centered activities of the Jamaa.

A worker-based religious movement formed during colonial times, my account seems to suggest so far, is being bypassed by socio-economic developments of the post-colonial era. It must keep up with these progressive forces or disappear. Leaving aside the question how meaningful the term 'post-colonial' is, especially as regards the economy, there are reasons to be dissatisfied with a straight tale of progress. I now want to offer some evidence for what, to me, signals regressiveness, or at least elements of regressiveness, in the process of (petit-)embourgeoisement to which I linked the emergence of the Catholic charismatic revival in Zaire.

Regressive progress?

One effect of embourgeoisement on religious orientations and attitudes should be a greater individualism, a privatization of beliefs and activities, perhaps something along the lines known from the history of Protestantism in Europe and America. Only a very superficial contact with the charismatic revival in Shaba could lead one to believe that such is happening in this case. True, as elsewhere in the world, prayer groups in Shaba seek uncontrolled inspiration by the Holy Spirit. Hierarchical power and functions reserved to the clergy usually

¹² One of the most encompassing works demonstrating the middle class roots, individualism, and entrepreneurship in many religious movements of the type to which the international charismatic renewal belongs is still the collection of essays edited by Zaretsky and Leone (1974). Notice also that in the document on Zairean pentecostalism which I cited in note 8 this movement is traced back to the so-called Cursillo (Verhaegen 1983: 12). On the Cursillo see the study by Marcoux (1982). When M. Marcoux, then a student of mine, began her investigations around 1970 she was very much aware of the Jamaa. We did not know then that scholarly comparison would one day be overtaken by actual confrontation -- thanks to 'global circulation'. See on that notion also Fabian 1981.

are not contested (although there have been dramatic cases of just that (¹³); they are relativized. More than offices inherent in an institution the charismatics value the 'gifts' of individuals such as speaking in tongues, the discernment of spirits, faith-healing, rapture and trance. All this I found in Shaba and it is conform to pentecostalist practices all over the world. But in groups that have only indirect connections to the international movement, if any at all, spirit possession and the detection of witchcraft and its exorcism seem to have become the foremost preoccupation. Similarities between these Catholic prayer groups and traditional anti-witchcraft movements are perceived by observers. Even some insiders are troubled because they realize that to combat witchcraft is to affirm its existence. It would be too easy, however, to qualify these preoccupations as a return to, or relapse into, tradition. This is not what I mean by regressive progress. Tradition has not remained constant, it cannot simply be returned to. The complex of ritual practices to which the charismatics resort is a recent construct, certainly in this Catholic context. To cope with the vicissitudes of urban life is one of its functions and in this it shares motivations with old escapist movements. New as a source of frustration is the widening gap between the aspirations of a middle class and the economic and political means to satisfy them. In fact, those links to the international charismatic revival that exist, may indicate that assumptions regarding economic deprivation and political oppression are not sufficient; somehow the Zairean bourgeoisie shares dissatisfactions or needs that develop in affluent Western societies.

Compared to the optimistic, humanist, and universalist outlook of the Jamaa twenty years ago, the ritualization of problems of personal wellbeing and interpersonal relations which seems to occur in the charismatic revival look regressive; not as a return to pre-Christian forms, I repeat, but as an abdication from searching for solutions to societal problems that are larger than the admittedly real difficulties experienced in the middle class.

There is yet another way to illustrate what I meant by regressive progressiveness. Again, compared to the Jamaa of the sixties, a characteristic of the prayer groups of the eighties has been an emotionalization, or perhaps better: de-intellectualization, of religion. As far as I could detect from written sources and conversations, charismatics did not develop anything that could be compared to the elaborate philosophical-mythical system of mawazo (thoughts) which the Jamaa had inherited from Tempels' struggles with Bantu Philosophy; little also that could be compared to the Jamaa's practice of initiatory teaching. These mafundisho (instructions) found their palpable expression in a distinctive oral discourse, recognizable as typically Jamaa on all levels from lexical innovation to the creation of oral genres.

To me at least, it has always been its language-centeredness which made the Jamaa a creative contributor to social processes that started around Zairean independence. In the beginning, I was inclined to overemphasize the self-centered, even esoteric, functions of

¹³ The most notorious case is that of Abbé Pius Kasongo. He has been one of several African Catholic priests in Shaba who, in the early 70s, began to exercise charismatic gifts. Kasongo became the leader of one of the largest prayer groups in Lubumbashi and had great success as a healer. When he defied orders by his bishop to return to Kolwezi he was eventually suspended from his rights and duties as a priest (in 1983). He nevertheless continues to live at a Catholic parish (in the compound of the mining company) and to use adjacent grounds for his mass meetings. His political support among the middle class and elites of Lubumbashi has been strong enough to make the hierarchy back away from legal action. Kasongo, although we had become acquainted years ago, was the only important religious leader who refused to talk to me during my 1985 trip. Finally it came to a meeting at the end of my stay in 1986. Kasongo refused a recorded interview but gave me a published documentation of the activities of his group, Alimasi and Kasongo 1985.

Jamaa ways of speaking. With the years I have come to recognize that the impact it made on the popular language of Shaba and on moral and political discourse, including that of the MPR. As I noted before, Jamaa doctrine continues to be articulated in content and style by leaders of charismatic prayer groups who had their religious formation as Tempels' disciples. This constitutes a situation which is of special interest because it allows us to test, as it were, some of the sociolinguistic assumptions regarding the determinants of speaking. Even without much detailed analysis of recordings it is already clear that something changes when Jamaa teaching is no longer embedded in practices of progressive initiation. In the mouth of charismatics, Jamaa ideas are edifying but no longer vital, live-giving.

Predictably, as the charismatic movement turns away from oral and initiatory teaching to the scriptures, a personally 'inspired' reading of the Bible becomes more important. My first impression from witnessing such readings is that they are not only emotionalized but take on a divinatory function. That again would not be exceptional if one considers the use of the Bible made by fundamentalist Christians. But here the divinatory element seems to carry more weight. It may be linked to the discernment of spirits or the detection of witchcraft. During prayer meetings, choosing a passage from the Scriptures to be commented on seems to be the privilege of those that are recognized as visionaries. They make their choice usually according to the inspiration of the moment, not following a preset schema (although the liturgical calendar of the Catholic church is frequently an occasion to select a chapter or episode). In the Jamaa, use of the Scriptures was in the past very restricted. Certain, but few, events from the Old and New Testament were selected to serve in initiatory teaching; some favorite passages of Tempels' were often repeated. But there was no sustained study of the Bible and very little individual or divinatory reading. The Scriptures were foundational but any kind of Bible-fundamentalism was foreign to the Jamaa.

Finally, I should like to mention another point of contrast between prayer groups and the Jamaa. Paradoxically, the charismatics who place so much value on spontaneous, uncontrolled expression of feelings and experiences conduct their group activities with a degree of ritualization that never had an equivalent in the Jamaa. True, initiation was an important ritual in the Jamaa and its members, as ardent Catholics, regularly participated in the rituals of the church. But the weekly mafundisho of local groups, the monthly meetings of the fully initiated, and the occasional supra-regional events were striking for the absence of all those colorful actions, paraphernalia and attire that one saw in other religious movement in the same environment. There occurred some singing, of a rather subdued kind; prayers and instructions had a certain sequence and there were some typical gestures. But these could not be compared to the elaborate rituals, the special dress and other accouterments, the use of percussion instruments and choirs to lead the singing and dancing, the frequent shouting of Alleluia-Amen, ullulations, clapping of hands -- all this for two or three hours once or twice a week -- which one finds in the seances of the charismatic groups. Other than the Jamaa, charismatics also ritualize space within and around their meeting places.⁽¹⁴⁾ Frequent retreats, fasting, obligatory prayers at home and special prayers that may have to be said over a period

¹⁴ For instance, in one of the groups which invited me to several meetings, participants take off their shoes before entering the room. This interior sacred space (called Mont Olivier) has an exterior counterpart in the form of a small enclosure called Israel which serves for preparation and meditation. Another classical opposition which I encountered was that between inhabited space and the 'desert' or bush (jangwa or pori); the latter seems to play a role especially in the quest for visions and experience. - All this awaits detailed analysis before we can determine whether these notions are simply taken over, as ready-made elements, from Protestant cults and churches, or whether they were developed independently within the prayer groups.

of several months, not to forget attendance at mass and other church events add up to an amazing degree of ritualization. Of course it takes middle-class leisure for this to happen, limited as it maybe nowadays in Zaire where even university professors have to spend much of every day with non-academic activities to provide for their families.

Survival of the doomed: The Jamaa in the 1980s

To sketch some of the salient characteristics of the charismatic revival in Shaba was necessary because, apart from outright repression by ecclesiastic and political authorities, nothing affected the Jamaa more than the radical change in its own Catholic environment and, as it were, on its own ground, charismatic enthusiasm. In my account so far I used the past tense when comparing the Jamaa with the charismatics. This was to indicate that I had in mind the Jamaa I knew in the sixties and early seventies. It is now time to take a look at the present shape of Tempels' movement.

First of all, I think it is correct to use the term movement in the singular. All groups I had direct or indirect contact with during my recent stay claim succession to (or identity with) the Jamaa of the sixties. Even though divisions between them are great and likely to be of a permanent nature, it is not for the anthropologist to pass judgment on conflicting claims. One should also avoid, as much as this is possible, a typological or taxonomic approach in comparing groups or clusters of groups. Difficult as it may be to avoid such terms, one should not speak of branches and factions. This would lead to stating hierarchical relations between more or less authentic Jamaas. Rather, each of the recognizable varieties should be regarded as one current manifestation of the movement. This, incidentally, reflects attitudes I found among leaders and members of different and sometimes opposed orientations. No one saw in these oppositions within the Jamaa an instance of the proliferation of sects and cults. Sectarianism in and around the Catholic church is deplored, discord in the Jamaa is experienced as a vital threat. It is something that does not just affect or modify the movement; discord endangers umoja, unity, and in the classical teachings of the Jamaa unity has never been just a means but an end in itself.

Because it held an ontological conception of its own identity, organization, and activities, the Jamaa has been able for a long time to resist or ignore outside pressure to behave like just another pious association. If, as its doctrine asserts, to be Jamaa is not only to be a good Catholic but a complete human being -- in fact the only way to be a complete human being -- then the movement is not experienced by its members as a 'voluntary association', to use a term which at one time had much currency in African studies. To express this, Tempels and other Jamaa leaders often denied that a movement called Jamaa existed. Self-identification as a specific movement would have been incompatible with the universalist logic of their humanism.

Ironically, the same ontological conception of identity that made the Jamaa for a long time immune to outside threats and temptations caused internal problems it was incapable to resolve. Because of this, the movement became weak and vulnerable so that the confrontation with the church in the early seventies could have had the effect it did. This requires some explanation. In the classical Jamaa, doctrine and organization were inextricably one. Both were realized as initiatory teaching/learning. I once expressed this as 'becoming Jamaa is being Jamaa' (or the other way round). Ritualized teaching, the ritual of initiation, in fact all manners of participating in the activities of the movement, of relating to one's spouse, to other couples, and so forth, were considered realizations of mawazo. 'Realization', i.e. living these thoughts, was not conceived as applying moral rules to conduct -- in this sense the Jamaa was an amoral movement -- but as manifestations, proofs, of life, fecundity and love (uzima, uzazi

na mapendo). These were the 'three great mawazo' that made up bumuntu, what it means to be human, the central tenet of all Jamaa teaching.

Almost from the beginning, problems were caused by this ontological conception. It was incapable to separate organizational forms or means from intellectual ends. If, as it was postulated by the Jamaa, initiation through teaching was to 'give birth' to new member-couples (kuzala), hence a proof of fecundity (uzazi), then it became almost inevitable that leading members would be tempted to out-teach each other so as to maximize the proofs of their fecundity. At first this occurred as friendly competition, as demonstration of extraordinary fervor applauded by all. But then some leaders began to elaborate and intensify the ritual of initiation and to increase their lineages of spiritual kinship (kizazi) by actively recruiting candidates away from others. At any rate, the lineage concept, even in its spiritual interpretation, was inherently segmentary. Already in the sixties the necessity was felt to counteract these tendencies which threatened to explode the movement.

In retrospect it seems likely that the willingness or unwillingness to meet that danger created the major line of fission that separated the orthodox Jamaa from a heterodox form then called Katete. The orthodox groups, urged by sympathizers among the clergy, began to create a new kind of forum above the level of local groups and kinship lines in which leaders could meet and settle their differences. These meetings were also used for the first attempts to codify mafundisho in writing (around 1961 in Kolwezi, in 1967 in Lubumbashi). The documents that were composed then had little immediate effect on the oral practice of teaching and the meetings were not successful in counteracting competition for fecundity. For outsiders and potential candidates, these struggles were difficult to understand. They further contributed to an image already tainted by suspicion of esoteric practices.

Thus the repressive measures that were eventually taken struck a Jamaa that was internally weakened. Probably it also had crossed the peak of its attractiveness to African Catholics. As it turns out, repression, by forcing groups and individuals to face their commitments, actually helped the Jamaa to survive. Survival had its price, though. Painful choices had to be made and important changes accepted. Because a common basis for common response no longer existed, different leaders were taken into different directions. In 1985-86, the situation looked as follows.

There are at least four kinds or manifestations of the Jamaa movement in Shaba; elsewhere, especially in the Kasai and Kivu regions, things may differ slightly. The reports I have suggest that Shaba remains the model for other areas.

First there are groups in Lubumbashi and Likasi whose leaders and members submitted to abjuration, accepted a formal organization imposed on them, abstain from activities banned as deviant, and follow in their teaching, under supervision by a member of the clergy, written and approved documents. These 'loyal' groups, as we may call them if we adopt the perspective of the mission church, are in communion with the hierarchy and are admitted to the sacraments and services. They call themselves Jamaa Takatifu Katolika (JTK), The Holy Catholic Jamaa.⁽¹⁵⁾

Then there are groups in Lubumbashi and Kolwezi (and probably elsewhere) whose leaders and members either never submitted to abjuration or later recanted, claiming that they

¹⁵ Information gathered in the form of documents, taped meetings and conversations with leading members, most prominent among them Baba Seba (Nkondo) who had been a leader of the Jamaa in Lubumbashi twenty years ago. In 1985 I met with Baba Seba and his wife at least once a week. In 1986 our meetings were somewhat less frequent.

were misled. Technically they are excommunicated by the church but they refuse to accept this. Privately, they continue Jamaa teaching and initiation as before, while individuals and small groups quietly resume attending mass and other church activities. They do not seek a clandestine continuation of the Jamaa and think of the present situation as transitory. In some cases they act with the approval of individual pastors. By avoiding submission and continuing Jamaa activities without accepting new forms of organization or codification of doctrine this cluster of groups has remained closest to the Jamaa of the sixties; they call themselves simply Jamaa.⁽¹⁶⁾

In Lubumbashi and Kolwezi, leaders in this second category were at one time associated with a third option which eventually led to the foundation of an independent church called 'The Holy Jamaa in Africa', Jamaa takatifu mu Afrika, abbreviated JTAF, conform to Zairean law regulating cults and churches. JTAF is represented in Kolwezi and Lubumbashi and many other places but has its headquarters outside industrial Shaba in the northern town of Kalemie. As far as I can tell from the materials gathered during my recent trips, this group remains entirely faithful to Tempels' teachings (it stayed in contact with the founder until his death in 1977). It views its independent status as a necessity forced upon it by the church hierarchy and it categorically denies being a sect or a form of Protestantism. To the outside observer interested in the history of Tempels' movement, JTAF is the most interesting among its current manifestations.⁽¹⁷⁾

Finally there is a residual category of groups with little or no contact among each other. It contains individuals and groups which continue to be inspired by Tempels' ideas. Among them are persons or couples who submitted to the church but chose not to continue actively with the loyal Jamaa. Many of them found a new social frame in the charismatic revival. According to some information I received but was unable to check the heterodox Katete of the sixties also survives. Their most prominent leader has returned from Kolwezi to his rural home base where his followers resurfaced as part of the Kitawala, one of the influential movements of colonial times. In fact, several persons to whom I spoke recently insisted that the Katete was never anything else but Kitawala. Because the latter was banned during colonial and early post-colonial times it used the Jamaa as a cover (among others).

Conclusion: Paradoxes of power

So far the current situation. Needless to say, this sketch gives little more than the barest outlines of the sociologically most conspicuous features that await deeper anthropological analysis. Survival through change, continuity through diversification -- these, apart from being commonplaces, are figures of speech that give our account a certain plausibility without telling us much about the nature and content of that which is said to survive and continue. Moreover, the fact that the Jamaa took the road of diversification still

¹⁶ Information based on several meetings with members of that group at Kolwezi. Some of the leaders I had known since 1966. I found them rather intransigent then (see Fabian 1971: 93ff) and they don't seem to have changed much since. More than other groups they showed signs of age and weariness. In 1986 I also met with B. Kaumba V., the most prominent leader of this second kind of Jamaa in Lubumbashi. The attitudes I had found in Kolwezi were confirmed. The reception was as polite as the refusal to discuss detail was adamant.

¹⁷ Information based on contacts (taped conversations, meetings, services) with JTAF groups in Musonoi (near Kolwezi) and Ruashi (Lubumbashi). In these groups, too, I found old friends from the sixties and was given a rather overwhelming reception. Important information was added in 1986 when I met with the leader of JTAF, B. Lutema Kapiteni (of Kalemie) and was given a copy of the church's catechism (see JTAF 1984).

requires explanation. How does diversification within the Jamaa relate to the proliferation of cults in its immediate and wider contexts?

In looking for answers it is tempting to relate our observations on religious enthusiasm to events and behavior in the economic sector. Several of my Zairean interlocutors pointed to similarities between religious leadership and the development of small and middle-sized business in Zaire. The typical Zairean entrepreneur, it was pointed out to me, and I had some occasion to verify this, prefers to operate on his or her own. Business associations are relatively rare and short lived; exclusive control seems to be more important than the possibility to spread risks and divide the profits. What are the reasons for this? Are they simply a matter of economic constraints, endemic lack of trust in a sick society, or should one consider that they express cultural preferences and therefore choices rather than failures?

If these observations are correct they must have some bearing on the question of power/authority/pouvoir. So far, we have asserted or implied the following: As illustrated by the Jamaa, charismatic processes (in the sociological sense of charismatic) have been involved in the emergence and legitimation of a certain kind of power. Whether or not certain laws have been operative (Weber's routinization, for instance), historical developments in Shaba during the last generation suggest that the principal change was not so much from enthusiasm to routinization, from charisma to a more formal Herrschaftsform, but from a concentration of charismatic authority to its dissipation or diversification. Must we regard this as just another instance of the decline in Zaire, the same sort of decline which other observers have seen in the crisis of the state, of education, of ecclesiastic authority?⁽¹⁸⁾ Must we, in other words, regard diversification as failure to assume power and responsibility, perhaps as an expression of the general economic and political powerlessness of Third World nations? When I noted that diversification assured the survival of the Jamaa I implicitly suggested another possibility. Dissipation, or to use a less evaluative term, dispersal of power certainly could be a matter of political strategy; it might also be a culturally specific way to conceive of power. At this moment, Zaire lacks both a clearly defined external enemy and a truly antagonistic internal structure. The dispersal of power that can be observed in almost all areas where power can be exercised, is therefore not likely to be a matter of strategy in fighting internal and external enemies. A different interpretation is conceivable and because what I have in mind really is a self-interpretation of Zairean culture I prefer to introduce it ethnographically rather than in abstract theoretical terms.

As there are images illuminating intricate connections, and keywords capable of unlocking semantic spaces, there may be communicative events which suddenly open up insights into a complicated praxis. In anthropological writing such events, when, reported, show up as anecdotes. As such they are suspect because, according to rigid canons, science needs cases, not anecdotes. Even if one does not subscribe to such rules, there is reason to be careful with anecdotes. Often it is difficult to tell whether it was the event that forced a new view on us, or whether it was the story told of that event that convinced us. I fully agree with recent discussions in which the role of rhetoric in ethnography is stressed.⁽¹⁹⁾ But precisely if

¹⁸ Three recent publications document the agonies of Zaire -- and those of the experts trying to understand what is going on: Canadian Journal of African Studies, Special Issue 1984, Young and Turner 1985, and Nzongola-Ntalaja (ed.) 1986.

¹⁹ To cite but one example: Clifford 1983, which see for further references. I myself have tried to make the case at some length in Fabian 1983.

we want to take rhetoric seriously we must preserve the difference and tension between experience and account.

Having said this I shall now tell an anecdote, recalling an event that at first seemed rather insignificant but has since given me much food for thought. It will, I hope, throw some light on the situation we are trying to understand.

About halfway through my 1985 visit to Shaba I found myself one evening in the company of three Zaireans, an electronics engineer, an architect, and an agronomist, the latter a colorful person who had turned from a government official into a big cattle and grain farmer. In the course of that transformation, he had also become the founder and leader of a small independent church.⁽²⁰⁾ We all had met a few days earlier and I was invited every evening to join this group of friends when they made their rounds, eating, drinking, and talking in their houses and those of their women friends. That night, having already eaten a copious meal in one home, we went to one of the house belonging to Lukasu (the hoe, in Luba), as the farmer and prophet was called by his friends. In a large, barren, and ill-lit room whose walls and ceiling still showed the damage done by bullets and shrapnel during the last Shaba war, we settled down at a low table before a bowl of chicken, a huge bukari (the maize and manioc staple of the area) and a small wooden mortar of crushed peppers. An enamelled basin filled with water was placed on the floor next to the table. A young man and several women were ready to wait on us but kept themselves in the dark at the far end of the room. Earlier we had gotten into an animated discussion about religion, Bantu Philosophy, Placide Tempels and his Jamaa movement. We went on talking as we approached the table. Just as we sat down before the food there was moment of tension. I had the feeling that, unlike the earlier meal which had been served in a bourgeois fashion with plates to eat from and forks and knives to use, this one was offered to me as a challenge or test. This was not just food, it was material for some kind of communion (a feeling that was confirmed later when our host announced that this was a very special occasion). My companions watched me. I wetted my hands in the water, asked for towel, took a handful of bukari, kneaded it into shape, dipped it into the sauce accompanying the chicken and took the first bite. Immediately the tension broke; I had performed the appropriate acts in proper sequence and passed the test.

One of the men then reached for the bowl of chicken and offered me the gizzards. This is the piece reserved to the person of the highest rank, he told me. Somewhat confused and embarrassed I offered to share the choice piece. All three protested. The one who had offered it said, rather curtly, either you eat it or give it to me. It must have been obvious that I did not understand their reaction, certainly not its strength and unanimity. The explanation was quick and concise: Le pouvoir se mange entier. Power is eaten whole. That this dictum was pronounced in French took nothing away from its significance and authority.⁽²¹⁾ Its Luba origin was obvious even to me and it became an occasion to return to our discussion of African philosophy. The meal continued pleasantly.

Two things are striking about the saying that was quoted to me. First, it makes a connection between acquiring power and eating. The fact that in this case a meal was the occasion to invoke this cultural axiom only added force to an image long established. In the

²⁰ Called Sifa Lwa Bwana (roughly: Praise to the Lord). As I learned from another source, most or all of his followers are small peasants and agricultural workers who are employed or otherwise dependent on the church leader's farms.

²¹ Incidentally, I gave the piece to him and he ate it.

Luba languages of Zaire 'to eat' is frequently used to denote access to power (kudia bulopwe). It can also signify the conclusion of a special relationship or pact of friendship (kudia bulunda).⁽²²⁾ Indirectly the image is operative in honorific titles or, for example, when the elephant is said to symbolize chiefly power, not only because of its strength, size, and so forth, but 'because it eats more than other animals'.

In sum, these are images which depict access to power as ingestion/incorporation rather than occupying a position or territory, or imposing order. Once ingested, as it were, power is internalized; it becomes like a person's weight, a property rather than a function. Of course there have been Luba potentates in the past (and there are Luba politicians in the present) who were also strategists of power. Still, it can be said that the dominant connotation in the cultural image we encountered comes close to Weber's notion of charisma as a personal property. What we catch in these societies with our sociological category of charismatic authority should therefore perhaps be regarded as the routine and not as an exception. It would then follow, that to postulate in societies ou le pouvoir se mange entier logical or actual oppositions between charismatic authority and the forms designated as traditional or rational-bureaucratic, may be an ethnocentric projection on our side.

But our axiom has another implication that requires interpretation. This is the stress laid upon the wholeness of power. A paradoxical thought -- because eating entails destruction (or digestion) and incorporation in one body means separation from others. Power is here tied to concrete embodiments rather than to abstract structures. The point in this is perhaps less that power cannot be shared than that one refuses to acknowledge disembodied 'divisions' of power of the kind that characterize Western political thought.

Stress on incorporation and on the notion of wholeness, ontological ideas in the last analysis, create a cultural logic in terms of which 'concentration of power' will be tied to personal carriers. It will not meet expectations that we express, to cite Weber one more time, in the quasi-historical law of 'rationalization', i. e. an accumulation of power envisaged on the model of the accumulation of wealth and its attendant problems of organization. Therefore, what looks to us at first like dissipation in the stronger, or diversification in a weaker meaning, may not be indicative of forced adaptation, much less of disintegration and decline. It may be the very form in which a particular cultural notion of power realizes itself. What looks paradoxical or simply confusing from the outside -- the pursuit of power as ingestion and the insistence on its wholeness -- expresses a cultural preference for a kind of anarchy, be it in religion, economics, or politics. When, in the area that interests us here, secular and religious authorities try to remedy a state of anarchy perceived by them as dangerous they impose controls from the outside, often acting for outside powers. Such measures are not likely to 'ameliorate' anything; They only oppose different theories of power. When the Zairean government which, after all, must operate in its own cultural context, alternates between repression of, and tolerance toward, the proliferation of religious cults this may be interpreted by outsiders as a sign of weakness (or yet another instance of

²² I had heard the expression in a persiflage of a speech made by one of the politicians of the first hour (J. Sendwe, I believe) who began his discourse with 'Depuis que j'ai mangé mon pouvoir...' Regarding the rich semantics of kudia in Luba (in this case in Luba-Shaba) see Van Avermaet and Mbuya 1954: 106ff. In 1986 search for the meaning of Le pouvoir se mange entier took on a new dimension when a group of actors, the Troupe Théâtrale Mufwankolo, chose it as the topic of a piece. I was able to assist and document its production through all the phases from group discussion to rehearsal and the performance filmed in a village near Lubumbashi. The results of this sort of 'performative ethnography' are too rich to be summarized here except to say that they confirmed my intuitions regarding the importance of this cultural axiom.

corruption, since large sums of money are involved when groups apply for official recognition). It may also indicate that the Zairean state, other than the Catholic church, enacts a culturally valued anarchy based on notions that encourage the ardent pursuit of power, as well as the proliferation of its embodiments.

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