Changing Youth Dynamics in Lusaka's Informal Economy in the Context of Economic Liberalization

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Abstract: The paper examines the consequences of changes in economic regime on the self-employed in Lusaka and attendant political dynamics. The focus is on urban vendors, particularly youth. The paper discusses how economic restructuring involves new regimes of spatial regulation and new strategies of urban management that have resulted in intensified political tensions and struggles. These struggles arise from the interaction between externally driven agendas and local political dynamics. The paper argues that the relationships between the state and vendors, while long-standing, are today more antagonistic than ever before, in the context of economic liberalization, structural adjustment programs (SAP), poverty strategy reduction programs (PSRP), and highly indebted poor countries initiative (HIPC). This is demonstrated, firstly, with reference to recurrent controversies between urban regulatory authorities and vendors over access to, control over, and use of market and public space. Occurrences of state imposed removals and relocations of vendors and their responses are discussed. Secondly, political tensions have also emerged from shifts in (state and donor driven) strategies for market management. Tracing the history of market management forms in Lusaka and the legacy of political party influence in the markets, the paper describes how the decentralization of market management has increased conflicts between different interests within the markets and reinforced the role of political interest groups, rather than democratizing social relations in the markets. Such top-down shifts in forms of market management have sometimes triggered major clashes in the markets.

Introduction

Focusing on the contested space of streets and markets while asking questions about the role of youth in claiming urban space, this paper explores whether and if so, how, young people's interests are attended to in the economic sphere in Zambia.[1] My backdrop is the streets and markets in the capital, Lusaka, that for the past two decades have been an important economic resource for urban livelihoods and the center of a storm of controversy. This is because the vast majority of Lusaka's residents, including ever more young people, create a living from a range of extra-legal activities that are most visible in public space. It is not surprising that the intermittent eviction of vendors from sidewalks and streets and their removal from market places to create room for redevelopments have received varied responses. On the one hand, vendors have appropriated these sites, customers frequent them to satisfy their daily needs

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because of their convenient location in public space, and politicians curry their patronage intermittently. And on the other hand, the public abhors street vendors for spreading dirt and disease, investors blame them for adversely affecting business, and local government and representatives of the state consider them to be unruly and difficult to regulate. Yet at the same time and according to recent development orthodoxy, such activities are examples of micro-entrepreneurship and hold the solution to urban poverty.

Controversies over the use of public space and access to markets in Lusaka's city center are by no means unique. They are not recent phenomena but date back to the colonial period. Such dramas have also taken place in many other urban settings, for example the 1997 eviction of Calcutta street hawkers, referred to euphemistically as Operation Sunshine, or the 2005 eradication in Zimbabwe of informal stands and housing, known as Operation Murambatsvina ("clean out dirt" or "restore order").[2] Each case reflects the operation of distinct local politics of space. In Lusaka the dynamics have changed since the past, with age, or rather generation, constituting the most conspicuous fault line today.[3] This has to do in part with the recent conjuncture of neo-liberal politics with a new demography, that is, the rapid growth of youth into a very large proportion of the overall urban population. I suggest for the case of Zambia that economic liberalization since 1991 coupled with structural adjustment programs, the highly indebted poor countries initiative, and the poverty reduction strategy program, are producing a relationship between the state and the urban informal economy that is more antagonistic than ever and in ways that severely circumscribe young people's options. That is to say, economic restructuring involves new regimes of spatial regulation.

Some of the key issues in confrontations over public space are epitomized in the demolition of *tuntembas*, a Bemba word for self-constructed stalls, that mushroomed in Lusaka in the wake of the introduction of free market policies in the early 1990s. I suggest that that ongoing struggles over access to, use of, and control over trading space are fuelled in part by externally derived planning agendas. What is more, we need to understand that these agendas interact with local dynamics of differentiation, including generational access, in complicated ways. In effect, externally driven efforts to regulate marketing that invoke a governance rhetoric of participation ignore the politics of everyday urban life, including generational issues, by detaching the marketing process from the social and cultural practices that organize it. As this paper demonstrates, the result is a politics of urban space in which young people are particularly constrained.

Briefly, to situate the social biography of this project, it was in the 1990s, when I worked in and around Lusaka's city center markets during my research on the secondhand clothing trade, that I was struck by the number of youth, especially young men, who were active economically in public space. As the 1990s went on, I became convinced that a variety of new forces were restructuring public retail space and in the process, bringing potential new actors to the fore, among them youth, at an unprecedented scale. While my research since the beginning of the new millennium has focused on youth issues across class in Lusaka in a very general way, I also continue to keep track of developments on the market front.

Urban Transformations

The specific context for this paper's observations are the succession of structural adjustment programs (SAP) by a World Bank initiated Poverty Strategy Reduction Program (PSRP) in 2002, the compliance with which in April 2005 qualified Zambia for debt relief under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. While this new pro-poor policy approach aims to reduce some of the many adverse effects of SAP programs, including growing poverty, PRSP stresses that poverty reduction needs to take place in a democratic society with open markets and a competitive business environment. With PRSP, the previous development agenda's focus on growth and distribution has yielded to concerns with governance and capacity building. Spending policy under PRSP targets agriculture, tourism, and the social sector (health and education). Zambia's 2002-2004 PRSP document leaves out major issues, among them, employment, housing, and markets, thus ignoring the livelihoods of the urban poor.[4] School leavers, school drop outs, and graduates are all pressing on a shrinking formal labor market in Zambia. Between 1992 and 1999, formal employment declined from 17 to 11 percent of the labor force.[5] According to 2004 United Nations Development Program (UNDP) projections, young people below 25 years of age comprise 64 percent of Zambia's total population of around 11 million. Close to half of the total population is urban. Lusaka, the capital has an estimated population of 2.5 million. Young urban people in Zambia face serious odds because of the country's striking decline. The two decades during which Zambia has been a target for IMF/World Bank initiated SAP programs were marked by growing inequality, rising unemployment, deteriorating health (including a high HIV/AIDS prevalence rate), declining access to education, and an infrastructure that has not kept pace with urban population growth. Zambia's 2003 ranking on the Human Development Index slid to a low of 164 (of 177 countries), making it the only country on the list for which the index was lower than in 1975.[6]

SAP and recent neo-liberal reforms have spatial ramifications that affect the livelihoods of different population segments in disparate ways, sharpen social and spatial inequalities, and extend them in new ways. Two decades of SAP and neo-liberal reforms since the early 1990s have altered the nature and availability of urban space in Lusaka, including land and infrastructure, and access to markets. In the wake of these reforms, changes in land values have adversely affected access to housing and its location as well as the place and nature of commercial activity. Because housing markets have been privatized and no low-cost government housing constructed since the 1970s, the vast majority of Lusaka's population lives in informal housing in the peri-urban areas.[7] Inadequate provision of electricity, water, and transport reduces the exploitation of service and small-scale manufacturing activities by residents in such areas. In their efforts to earn an income, many peri-urban residents have turned to the markets and streets in Lusaka's city-center.

In popular representations in Zambia, "freeing the market" has almost come to mean opening it up to external rather than local participation. Globally promoted development policy since 1991 has encouraged foreign investment which in Lusaka by and large has been directed toward the retail sector. Urban retail space has been reconfigured as investments, especially by South African and Chinese firms, resulting in selective urban upgrading and new patterns of spatial segregation. One of the highly visible results has been the opening of four up-scale shopping malls since 1999, financed by British and South African capital, as well as by local business interests. Additional malls and upgrading of long-existing markets, some with

Chinese financing, are also under way. These processes reach markets and streets as well, with Chinese shopkeepers selling low-priced imported goods, introducing a competitive wedge at the very lowest level of the urban trading system.

Gender and Age in Lusaka's Informal Economy

Past and present, Zambia's informal economy has been dominated by trade and retail, followed by services and small-scale manufacturing.[8] From small beginnings during the colonial period, these activities became more widespread in the early 1970s as the economy set on a downward slide.[9]. A common research finding from the 1980s and 1990s concerns the gender and age division of informal actors.[10] Contributing the survival margin to many urban household economies, women's work stimulated the growth of the informal economy, especially in trade, but mostly at much lower returns than men. The majority of traders of both sexes tended to be middle aged (25-40 years of age), and women dominated in petty trading, older men in carpentry and tin smithing, while younger men worked in auto repair, electrics, and mechanics.[11] But research findings since the mid-1990s have begun to reveal changes in the gender and age composition of the urban informal economy. First, the majority of street vendors are young, in the 20 to 30 year age category; and second, the majority of street vendors are male.[12] Because vending in the streets entails more risks and dangers than in designated markets, this gender and age profile is not surprising. What is striking is that only a minority of the young male vendors were married.[13] They earn so little that they cannot establish their own household, as I noted in city center and township markets since 1992, when I met many more young unmarried male vendors than I did in the 1970s and 1980s.[14]

Lusaka's streets and markets are among the most important sources for non-formal employment. But the mere reference to the enormous growth of the informal economy since the 1970s glosses over the many inequalities that are embedded within it, in terms of gender and age, and, depending on activity, location and organization. During the 1990s, privatization of the economy and retrenchment of the civil service pushed many adults into the informal economy. The presence of adults in the more lucrative jobs limits young people's entry to low-level jobs that offer few prospects for upward mobility and provide few skills that might lead to the acquisition of higher qualifications. As a consequence, young women and men from poor backgrounds have fewer economic options in today's transformed urban space than their parents' generation enjoyed. Adult stand-holders hire young women and men as "workers" for a pittance. Plenty of young men work on the streets, selling anything from foodstuffs and hardware to copycat tapes and videos. Much of this work involves subcontracting, which is most visibly evident in the young *Zamcab* drivers who hire wheelbarrows to transport the purchases of customers.

Tuntembas and Youth

The term *tuntemba* came into use in the early 1990s when traders and aspiring vendors left the designated markets in the city and the townships, descending on the city center and setting up stands they put together from wood, plastic sheeting, and cardboard. These makeshift structures became known as *tuntemba*s, which in the Bemba language translates approximately into "area of operation." The term graphically captured what in fact the traders were doing: staking claims on space for their own activities. The 1991 change of regime from a one-party command economy to a multi-party democracy had not helped formal employment to expand but rather fuelled the growth of informalization. In fact, the removal of controls on foreign exchange, imports, and prices attracted more people to trade than ever before. And vending became particularly visible and dynamic on the streets.

The Chiluba Movement for Multi-party Democracy (MMD) government had come into power with the promise of improving housing, social welfare, health, and education, yet rapid privatization of the para-statal companies did not benefit the general population.[15] Because of the strained economy, state intervention in marketing and street vending became a very contentious matter. In the first MMD government in 1991, the minister of Local Government and Housing, Michael Sata, ordered city councils to allow street vending.[16] This decision prompted many traders to desert designated markets for streets and sidewalks. When in 1993 the Lusaka City Council (LCC) assisted by police and military undertook one of many sweeps of street vendors, it clashed with the vendors and a riot ensued. An angry President Chiluba intervened strongly on the vendors' behalf, blaming the city council for not finding alternative places before forcing them off the streets. Extending this vendor friendly atmosphere, the president in December 1996 established a Vendors' Desk with a deputy minister at State House, a decision that was interpreted to mean that anyone could trade and erect a stand anywhere. And this is exactly what they did. By Christmas 1998, street vending in Lusaka had achieved anarchic proportions. Main streets, alleyways, and shop corridors in the city center, and many other places, had turned into one huge outdoor shopping mall with thousands of street vendors selling all manner of goods.

Designated Markets

The term designated, or authorized, market refers to areas where urban retail is permitted under the Market Act. In the late 1990s Lusaka had about 40 designated city markets and 54 designated township markets.[17] Proliferating and growing in size, these markets diversified their commodity base, service activities, and participants, including as I have already indicated, more adult persons retrenched from formal jobs and young people out of school, especially young men. Among these markets was Lusaka's largest, Soweto, that developed in the late 1970s at the edge of the light industrial area on privately owned land as a center of the produce trade for peri-urban farmers. Beginning informally and illegally, it soon featured the capital's largest auto part section plus the standard trades in small-scale manufacture, repair, and services. Over the years, the market grew rapidly. Toward the end of 1994, traders in Soweto's outside section and part of the built-up interior market were relocated to yield space for the construction of a new market. In return, the city council promised them stands in the new market. Some traders went farther out on the open field, establishing stands underneath tall pylons carrying power cables. Others moved on to Kamwala, Lusaka's oldest market built during the colonial period, where many set themselves up on the open field outside the built-up market, next to the railway tracks.

But above all, traders spilled into the streets. The 1997 opening of a new market at Soweto, called City Market, did little to halt these processes. Many stand-holders who had fought to be allotted space in the new market soon gave up their stands, complaining of lack of customers and high fees. A few days after the market's opening, the city council burned the *tuntembas* on its outskirts. Yet stand-holders continued to leave the new market for the streets resulting in ongoing conflicts between inside and outside traders, police, the LCC, management, and political cadres.

In the pre-dawn hours of 28 April 1999, city council staff, police, and paramilitary in riot gear razed the *tuntembas* in Lusaka's city center, extending the demolition the following night and weeks across the city, into the townships and, in June, to the Copperbelt and all the towns along the line-of-rail. This time, and unlike in 1993 when he supported the vendors, the president, who had approved this costly removal, kept quiet. Although it is illegal, political parties use designated markets to collect funds through market fees and levies. But street vendors come and go and do not even pay such fees. According to a well-informed source, the majority of street vendors were not registered voters. That is, they were entirely dispensable from the point of view of the reigning party, the Movement for Multiparty Democracy, who did not need their electoral support. The deputy minister of the Vendors Desk took the flak for the evictions, arguing that the move to designated markets would place vendors in enabling environments and enhance their security. For a while, Lusaka's main streets remained almost clear of the mass of street vendors who were such a common sight throughout the 1990s. Yet the vendors soon returned to trading in public in a variety of disguises, among them car boot sales, sales from containers, and business during early morning and late afternoon rush hours.

Market Management, Decentralization, and Participation

Markets in Zambia are state property. The Market Act empowers the minister of Local Government and Housing to delegate development and management of markets to local authorities (district, municipal, and city councils). In the past, markets were managed either by councils or authorized co-operative societies. Stand-holders paid levy to the council, rent to the co-operative society, and daily market fees. Many also paid fees to funeral societies, football associations, and security guards. Because markets are strategic places for party recruitment, their management has been a target of political maneuver. During the Kaunda regime, the ruling party UNIP (United National Independence Party) usurped power under the Market Act, often through the co-operative societies, in this way controlling, or taking control through its Youth Wing, of the allocation of stands in many markets.[18] UNIP membership became a prerequisite for access to a stand, with stand-holders paying fees or levies to the party. In those days stand-holders, especially women, were rounded up to line the streets or cheer at the airport on the occasion of formal state visits.

The Local Government Act of 1991 uncoupled the party structure and operations from district councils in a move toward establishing autonomous local authorities with elected councilors and mayors. The majority of LCC members belong to the Patriotic Front (PF). The central government still reshuffles senior officers and controls finances.[19] In the open economy era, local authorities have begun to contract private firms to manage designated markets. Yet the political legacy, with its "cadre mentality," is still evident in many markets today. The MMD has kept a visible presence with an office and a staff in many markets, as do some opposition parties. Today the term "cadre" continues to be used for political involvement in a discourse that takes us back to the days of the one-party state and the disciplinary, vigilante functions of its youth wing. Politics in markets has complicated the Ministry of Local's Government's efforts to implement donor required decentralization of the urban administration, an example of which is the management of markets by private firms.

City Market, opened in August 1997, was the first market to be managed by a private company. This arrangement did not last much longer than a couple of years. In 1999, when I conducted research there, the MMD maintained an office in the very center of the inside section. Lusaka's largest market, Soweto, has offices not only of the council, the MMD, and other parties, but also of the Soweto Marketeers Co-operative, and ZANAMA (Zambia National Marketeers Association), an association that has managed markets on the Copperbelt for some years. Within markets, different groups quarrel over who is in charge in a process that pits marketeers' associations, the LCC, the ministry, and political party branches against one another.[20]

When things get rough in markets, party cadres are blamed. In efforts to lessen political involvement, the Minister of Local Government and Housing in 2004 removed the control of bus stations from organized groups of transporters with political affiliation. Similar plans were announced for the markets. With the ministry in charge, the door is wide open for private sector participation in the administration of markets. When President Mwanawasa introduced such an approach in 2005, he suggested that it would hasten the "development in Local Authorities and help … them control street vending."[21] The idea of establishing boards was not new but had already been introduced in the late 1990s in the management model that was part of an EU's market rehabilitation project in Lusaka and the Copperbelt.[22] In line with the externally mandated government policy on decentralization, such boards are expected to represent marketeers, consumer organizations, local government, commuters' associations, and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry.[23] Aimed at including a variety of stakeholders and empowering them through market governance, the establishment of boards might serve to depoliticize the management of markets, and perhaps lessen the persistent wrangles between councils, co-operatives and marketeers' associations, the ministry, and parties.

But this was not the outcome. The decentralized reform strategy of governance through stakeholder participation in fact reinforced the role of political interest groups and powerbrokers rather than democratizing social relations in the management of markets. In November 2006, Local Government Minister Sylvia Masebo dissolved the management boards in markets and bus stations.[24] Toward the end of 2008, the new Markets and Bus Stations Act (No 7) of 2007 went into effect. Board membership was based on party allegiance and special interests with cadres, political factions, committees, and associations collecting or soliciting levies (the PF at City Market and the MMD at Kamwala). Once again, the local authority, that is the ministry, took charge of the management of markets in its usual top-down manner. No doubt, the backdrop for this particular action included major clashes at several Lusaka markets between political cadres of different parties in the wake of the 2006 elections. A major promise of the populist campaign of opposition candidate, Michael Sata (PF), was jobs and housing.

Much like in 1991, when he was MMD minister of local government and housing, this time Sata also addressed the problem of street vending. But while he attracted the majority vote in all of Zambia's urban areas, Mr. Sata lost the election to the sitting president, Levy Mwanawasa. Although President Mwanawasa and Sylvia Masebo launched the "Keep Zambia Clean and Healthy" campaign that included ridding streets and corridors of vendors and removing *tuntembas* from the city center, street vending persisted.

Displacements

Because different segments of the state view street vending differently, interventions lack coordination and have been ad hoc. The market management approach dealt with street vendors in passing, pertaining to them only by way of control rather than of assistance. Efforts to renovate old market structures, upgrade, or entirely replace them have not effectively contained the problem of street vending. And the construction since the late 1990s of ultra-modern markets to enable street vendors to move to designated markets has been slow, or has stalled. In fact, some of the market upgrading, including the redevelopment project in Lusaka launched in the late 1990s by the European Union, were unfinished for several years and only completed in 2008. The project involved the demolition of old market structures that pushed many traders away from the old markets. Market redevelopments, for example the Chinese financed upgrading of Lusaka's oldest market, Luburma (Kamwala) built during the colonial period, charged high rental fees that forced existing traders away. Similarly, the redevelopment of the Town Center market financed by a local consortium forced traders onto the streets because of the limited number of stalls and the high rental fees. Taken together, these developments threaten the earnings potential and livelihoods of the thousands of people whom investment- driven market liberalization has displaced. No wonder that vendors keep returning to the streets and that the council's admonition that they should work from designated markets has had, at most, temporary effects.

Collaboration and Scope for Organizing

In response to the call of external advisors, new market associations have emerged that relate to the powers that be in the language of governance, demanding a place in decision making, including membership in new governance structures such as market boards. Aside from ZANAMA, which manages several markets in the Copperbelt towns and parts of some markets in Lusaka (Chawama, Soweto), most of these associations are trade specific groups, such as the secondhand clothes traders association, the fish traders associations, and the cross-border traders association. Adopting the language of free agents and entrepreneurship, such groups engage planning authority with a good deal of cynicism because experience has made them doubt the outcome.

Although young vendors are highly visible in markets and on streets everywhere in Lusaka, they rarely assume an organized presence. The dissolved market boards, for example, did not include any specific youth representation. The situation in which most young people find themselves in Lusaka casts serious doubt on the organizational ability the governance agenda attributes to civil society groups. To be sure, such groups do not arise automatically out of altruistic sensibilities or pre-existing cultural templates called "tradition." They are not primordial but have to be created in order to emerge.

There are many factors that operate against the development of wider self-help groups and networks of solidarity among youth. They include the fragmented nature of young people's activities in streets and markets and the need for flexibility in the competition for economic space. Such young workers need street knowledge, stamina, and capital. The work of many is subcontracted, including the sale at the traffic lights of major intersections of toys, cosmetics, and household goods as well as of fruit and vegetables and newspapers. The earnings of many young workers include little more than bus fare, a mid-day snack, and some spending money that do not enable them to accumulate start-up capital for future ventures of their own. Many young workers wish to get out of, rather than hang onto, such fragile and insecure informal economic employment. While a few young workers live alone or share rented rooms with friends, the status of most young people as dependent members of households vests part of their earnings in the household pot. That is why young people's individual interests in getting by economically in order to get on to establish adult lives do not easily coalesce into urban social movements. The types of collaboration I have seen involve a couple of friends who help each other watching out for the police or the sharing of costs for renting overnight storage space for their goods.

The struggles of Lusaka's street vendors and market traders have been episodic and disjointed, yet they keep reoccurring. The market scene is so fragmented that the ruling party in 1999 had no qualms about launching the largest exercise to remove vendors from urban space ever to be conducted in Zambia. This action was possible in part because of the striking fluidity of the market scene where traders come and go, change commodities, and move between indoor and outdoor spaces, and at times handle other jobs as well. And it also reflected that what is at the heart of the informal economy and keeps fueling its activities are first and foremost the survival needs of individuals and households.

Micro-Entrepreneurship as a Solution?

Employment reaches the core of the urban youth predicament in Zambia. The scale of that predicament is massive, as a recent event demonstrates. In the summer of 2005, more than 3,500 young job seekers turned up in response to a job fair in Lusaka held by Celtel, Zambia's largest mobile phone service provider. By late afternoon, Celtel staff had attended to more than 3,500 while 800 additional job seekers, mainly graduates from the University of Zambia, the Copperbelt University, and other tertiary institutions, were still waiting in a long queue. According to a news release, Celtel planned to employ 200 of the persons who were interviewed. When labor minister Bates Namuyamba commented on the event, he noted that the high unemployment levels among youth and women were now affecting college and university graduates. The situation, he said, has caused "formal employment to decline, forcing more people to seek refuge in the informal sector as more and more people are ending up on the streets."[25]

Political rhetoric acknowledges the employment ramifications of the urban youth bulge, yet few policy measures are in place. Take Zambia's PRSP document, for example, that demonstrates an almost total disconnect with the situation on the ground. It makes absolutely no reference to young people even though, for the purposes of strategy development, they constitute an extraordinarily relevant category because their livelihoods cut across the specific sectors on which Zambia's PRSP focuses: agriculture, tourism, and health and education. Zambia's PRSP does not engage with the issues of rapid urban growth or the future of urban livelihoods. It does not recognize housing as an urgent urban issue, and most strikingly, it does not single out unemployment as a problem in its own right. Even the 2005 Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) report recognizes this when it notes tersely that "the employment content of PRSPs in Africa remains weak."[26]

Zambia's PRSP introduces issues related to earnings and income through a focus on investment, trade promotion, and the development of small and medium enterprises.[27] Such enterprises are hailed as development strategies and solutions to the unemployment problem in the new Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training (TEVET) policy, a program to support technical training (2001-2005) passed by an act of parliament in 1998 under pressure from the World Bank and international donors. This is an example of a youth oriented policy, specifically revolving around micro-enterprise with clearly targeted beneficiaries: young women and men from Grades 7 through 12 who are no longer in school, for a "demand driven culture of entrepreneurship."[28] While this policy shift is a reaction to the lack of fit between the skills taught in formal institutions and the needs of the labor market, it does not reckon with the workings and organization of Zambia's informal economy, nor does it engage with the structural barriers of the labor market in the era of late capitalism.

For a number of reasons, entrepreneurship and micro-enterprises in the informal economy are not grassroots solutions to unemployment. A focus on such activities implies that the informal economy can absorb ever-increasing numbers of newcomers. This view is flawed for many reasons, one of which is its tendency to lump all workers together. In the case of Lusaka, age- and gender-based employment hierarchies of the informal economy that I have alluded to restrict young people's access, propelling them into casual work and low-grade jobs that curtail upward mobility and the acquisition of the skills and qualifications required for job promotion.

A policy focus for youth employment that centers on training for small-scale enterprise and entrepreneurship draws attention away from the vulnerable position of young people in the labor market. The technical and vocational training approach does not acknowledge that today's competitive and technological job market is likely to leave growing numbers of young trainees without formal jobs or at best underemployed and performing casual labor. Such programs are not likely to make massive changes in the employability of the many young people in Lusaka, some of whom turned up at Celtel's job fair and the many others who will, as the minister of labor said, seek refuge in the informal sector and end up on the streets. Unlike the TEVET act that approaches the informal economy as a site of development, the minister saw Zambia's informal economy as proof of the country's economic problems, doubting that it can serve as a development strategy on young people's treacherous journey toward adulthood.

Routine allusions to youth empowerment in political rhetoric in recent years have been slow to produce results. In 2003, the Ministry of Sport, Youth and Child Development began preparations for a new National Youth Policy to replace the previous policy from 1994. The policy proposal was presented to the cabinet in 2005 and adopted by the government in April 2006. It contains some astonishing elements, among them the definition of youth as young people up to the age of 35 (unlike the previous policy that used the United Nations definition: up to 25 years of age). While the document gathers dust on the shelves, so far one proposal related to street children has been implemented. This proposal recycles a policy from the days of the one-party state with slight innovations to reckon with the present. At issue is a rehabilitation program launched in 2005 that places urban street children in two former Zambia National Service (ZNS) training camps near Kitwe and Katete. The target group is young people between 15 and 18 years who are taught carpentry, bricklaying, agriculture, animal husbandry, and poultry management. There are courses in shoe making and tailoring as well.

In the wake of the adoption of the new youth policy, the government established a Youth Empowerment Fund. Much like the program to rehabilitate street children, this project recycles previous approaches to youth projects and innovations, in this case by creating a youth investors' fund to provide seed money. Outmoded notions of vocational training and micro-enterprises are at the heart of both the revived ZNS training program and the Youth Empowerment Fund. These projects will not solve the massive employment problem of young urban people. The Minister of Science and Industry put this plainly when commenting on the budgetary marginalization of the Ministry of Sport, Youth and Child Development: "The future of youth should not lie in *tuntembas* but proper education."[29]

Conclusion: The Battle over Regulation

Vendors have returned to the Lusaka's streets, in new disguises, with new sales strategies, at specific times of the day, and in strategic spots in the city even though police and paramilitary kept a visible presence in the city center since the massive clean-up exercise of street vendors in 1999. In 2009, ten years after that exercise, a New Soweto Market with stands for 5000 traders, financed by the European Union, was ready to be formally commissioned by Rupiah Banda, who assumed the presidency on Mwanawasa's death in 2008. Informal vendors had occupied the space where the new market was constructed and were promised stands within it. But a lack of transparency in the allocation of stands and allegations of political interference delayed the market's opening, and the initial allocation was nullified. As a result, street vendors crowded the nearby streets. Rumors of a major removal by the LCC of street vendors abounded in spite of an injunction filed in court by the opposition PF party against the government's plan to remove the vendors.[30] Meanwhile, rival political cadres from the MMD and PF took over sections of the Soweto market, collecting fees.[31] The new minister of local government and housing, Benny Tetamashimba, lacked the action of the former tough-talking minister, Sylvia Masebo. In effect, new wrangles and clashes keep rising in conflicts over space for trading and will no doubt continue to do so. To be sure, the government's lack of political will or power to regulate the management of the designated markets makes taking a stand on street vending highly problematic.

Exercises to remove vendors from public space have a lot to do with the introduction of "free market" practices, as well as many other matters that contribute to make street vendors a problem, among them sanitation, public health, and safety. Using the rhetoric of free markets and entrepreneurship, the government's approach to markets and vending produces new hierarchies of access and extends inequalities across space. In this new regime of power, the lines of access circumscribe space, and they hit young people disproportionately. The contradictions inherent in this approach to development are visibly evident on Lusaka's streets and in its overcrowded designated markets. When vendors speak about their *tuntembas*, they make unprecedented claims on ownership and self-employment, that is, filling the employment gap that results from the state's inability to grow the economy. The meanings of *tuntemba*, we recall, revolve around notions of "area of operation/ influence," that is to say, of being in charge, as a part of a larger whole. What the irony of the *tuntemba* narrative achieves is to subvert the state's lackluster control efforts and challenge its neglect/lack of support in the very rhetoric of entitlement and aspirations that democracy has promoted since the early 1990s.

Notes

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1. This paper is informed by observations from field research I conducted in Lusaka since the early 1990s, and it draws as well on public debate about markets, their regulation, and youth policy. Maurice Pengele assisted me with interviews of specific categories of street vendors in 2002. Northwestern University's Research Grant Committee, the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, and the Council for Development Research of the Danish Agency for International Cooperation have supported these research activities over the years. I am grateful to them. I have written about some of these processes elsewhere (Hansen 2000, 2004, 2008), but not with focus on youth matters.
2. Brown, 2006; Roy, 2003, pp. 173-174; Potts, 2006.
3. Cole and Durham, 2007.
4. Republic of Zambia, 2002.
5. Central Statistical Office, 2000.
6. United Nations Development Program, 2004.
7. Mulenga, 2001.
8. Central Statistical Office, 1991, pp. 24-25.
9. Hansen, 2008.
10. Bardoulle, 1981; Hansen, 1980; 1982; 1989; Jules-Rosette, 1979.
11. Hahn, 1982, pp. 6-9; Peters-Berries 1993, p. 3
12. Lusaka City Council, 1995.
13. Imboela, 1997, pp. 11, 27.
14. Hansen, 2005.
15. Myers, 2005, pp. 114-115.
16. Peters-Berries, 1993, p. 3; p. 15; p. 18.
17. Hansen, 2004, p. 68.
18. Beveridge and Oberschall, 1979, pp. 84-86.
19. Mutale, 2004, pp. 41-42.
20. *Times of Zambia*, 28 August 2003.

21. *Zambia Daily Mail*, 18 April 2000.
22. Zambia Daily Mail, 7 April 2000.
23. *Post*, 18 April 2005.
24. *Times of Zambia*, 23 October 2006.
25. *Post*, 19 July 2005.
26. Economic Commission for Africa, 2004, p. 14.
27. Republic of Zambia, 2002.
28. Republic of Zambia, 1998.
29. *Post*, 12 March 2006.
30. *Times of Zambia*, 4 June 2009.
31. *Times of Zambia*, 24 July 2009.

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