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Ambitious Obligations:
Pentecostalism, Social Life, and Political Economy on the Zambian Copperbelt

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

Anthropology

by

Naomi Haynes

Committee in charge:

Professor Joel Robbins, Chair
Professor Suzanne Brenner
Professor Robert Cancel
Professor Thomas Csordas
Professor Jeremy Prestholdt
Professor Rijk van Dijk

2012

The dissertation of Naomi Haynes is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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Chair

University of California, San Diego

2012

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A Note on Bemba Orthography and Pseudonyms

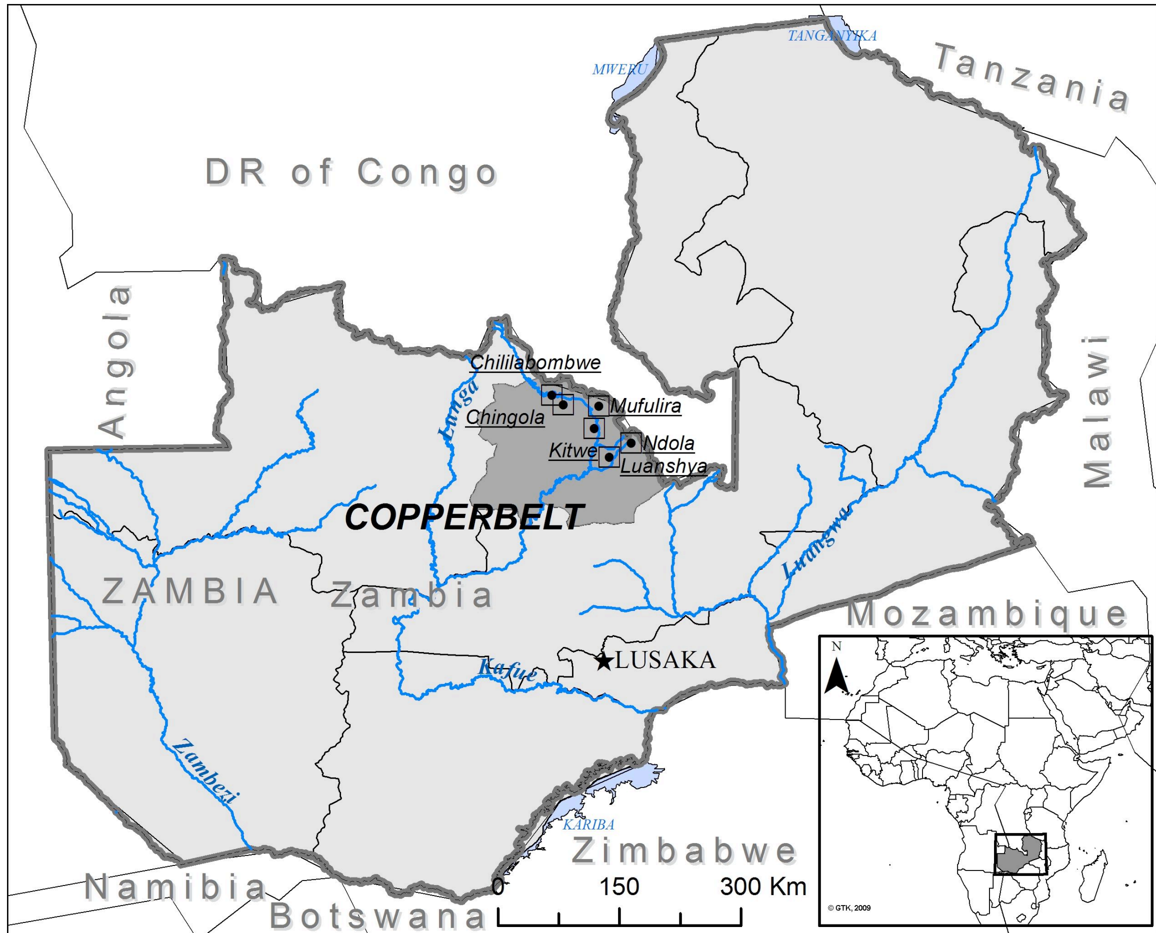
The Copperbelt lingua franca is known as Town Bemba, an urban variety of iciBemba with a large lexical input from English, as well as other regional Bantu languages (Spitulnik and Kashoki 2001). Town Bemba also has a simplified grammar. In this dissertation, I follow the Bemba spelling conventions of Rev. E. Hoch's *Bemba Pocket Dictionary* (Hoch 1960) whenever possible. Verbs are usually given in the infinitive form. Plural nouns are written without the preceding vowel, just as they are spoken (e.g. *bafyashi, fitenge* rather than *abafyashi, ifitenge*).

The International Phonetic Alphabet symbol "*ŋ*" is used for the "ng" sound (as in "sing"), in addition to the twenty-six letters of the English alphabet. Pronunciation is relatively straightforward, with the exception of the letter "c," which in Bemba always makes the "ch" sound as in "church" or "child." Bemba uses the cardinal vowels (i.e. a, e, i, o, u) and they do not coalesce.

All individuals and congregations, as well as the township at the center of this study, have been given pseudonyms. I have tried to choose individual pseudonyms that reflect the variety of names given to and used by my informants, drawing on different Zambian languages as well as English. Some on the Copperbelt use the titles "Mr." or "Mrs." as well as their Bemba equivalent of "Ba." In my writing, I also use the latter for women's teknonyms, along with "Bashi" for men's teknonyms. While others may write these as one word – e.g. Banamusonda, Bashijoshua – for the sake of clarity I have chosen to separate them. I use "Bana" rather than simply "Na" as a marker of respect, just as I did in the field. Most of my informants were older than me, whether in terms of calendrical or social age (i.e. as an unmarried, childless woman, even those who were

younger than me had attained a more mature social status), and addressing them with the respectful “Ba” was therefore appropriate.

Zambia and the Copperbelt



Map copyright Paul Zulu. Used by permission.

Acknowledgements

It's probably best to start this bit with a confession: I love reading acknowledgements. The thanks an author gives offer a glimpse of the web of relationships the surround her, something that seems particularly relevant when approaching works of social science, which are usually about social ties in one way or another. It may be that the central importance of relationality in my own work is an outgrowth of the rich network of people that surrounds me. In any case, I am grateful to have a chance to write my own acknowledgements, and grateful to have so many to mention in them.

My preliminary fieldwork in 2006 was supported by the Center for International, Comparative, and Area Studies and the Friends of the International Center, both at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD). My fieldwork in Nsofu in 2008-2009 was supported by a Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad grant and a dissertation research grant from the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. While writing up I was supported by the Harvey Fellows program. My thanks to each of these organizations for their assistance.

A version of chapter five, currently entitled "Social Seeds: Pentecostal Religious Ideas and Political Economy on the Zambian Copperbelt," has been accepted for publication in the *American Anthropologist*, pending revisions.

During my first stay on the Copperbelt in 2003-2004 I lived in the home of Jerry and Edith Kufuna. Together with their niece Joyce and their children Hannah, Daniel, Joshua, and (later) Jethro, they have since that time been a family to me. Without the Kufunas and their many friends I would not know how to cook *nshima*, speak Bemba, or

navigate the Copperbelt. Indeed, without them none of what has followed that first visit would have been possible. *Natotela sana.*

While in Zambia, many people and institutions contributed to the success of my research. Austin Cheyeka in the Religious Studies Department at the University of Zambia offered helpful feedback and opened his classroom to me for a discussion of my findings. Dinewe Musoni, Chisengo Mushipi, and Patricia Sitali worked as my research assistants and did a simply wonderful job. At various points Lisa Ratzlaff, Dana and Carolyn Belton, Masuka Mutenda, and Phalany and Mukumbi Kabesha opened their homes to me, providing friendship, conversation, and tables large enough for me to spread out my notes. I hope that one day I can offer you the same kind of hospitality you have shown me.

In Nsofu, I lived in the home of the couple I refer to here as Pastor and Mrs. Mwanza and their daughter, who I call Musonda. I am very grateful that they provided me a comfortable and quiet place to live and work. Members of their church, which I call Key of David, the two other congregations at the center of this project, known here as Freedom Bible Church and Higher Calling, as well as numerous other Pentecostal groups across the Copperbelt, always made me feel welcome. For these congregations, along with the many individuals who have shared their lives, stories, meals, and ideas with me, I am very grateful. Lastly, fieldwork would have been a much lonelier experience without Patricia and Abraham Sitali, and their son Waluna (and now Tumelo as well!). Your friendship was one of the greatest joys of my time in Nsofu. *Natasha sana!*

Throughout my education I have been fortunate to have good teachers. Brian Howell and Dean Arnold first introduced me to anthropology while I was an

undergraduate at Wheaton College and they have remained supportive mentors ever since. As a graduate student at UCSD I have benefitted from the training of Suzanne Brenner, Rupert Stasch, Nancy Postero, and Robert Cancel, as well as the rest of my dissertation committee. Rijk van Dijk has provided a second intellectual home for me at the Africa Studies Centre at the University of Leiden. My greatest intellectual debt is unquestionably to Joel Robbins, who more than anyone has modeled not only scholarly rigor, but also kindness, good humor, and generosity. It is an honor to be his student.

My education also owes a great deal to the Comparative Christianities Workshop at UCSD and to my fellow anthropology graduate students. In particular, Jon Bialecki and Katherine Miller have read large portions of my work over the last several years. They have been important interlocutors, as well as good friends. And speaking of good friends, some of the best are those who volunteer to proofread a dissertation. Thanks in this regard to Matt Hall, Peter Yong, Elizabeth Bales, John Dulin, Katherine Miller and Jon Bialecki (again!), and Leanne Williams.

San Diego has been a wonderful place to live primarily because of a network of marvelous people. Special thanks here must go to Karen, Chad, and Oliver Luttrell; Lauren Brothers; Kathleen Brumm; and Cara Baldwin. My life is more joyful, rich, and balanced because of you. Jeremy Kua and Aileen Chang have provided food, wisdom, and eleventh-hour help in organizing my references. And Quinn Riebock Cruz and Rachel McDonald Brown have been my friends across multiple continents and many years. Thank you.

Lastly, I cannot say enough to thank my family. My siblings, Joseph, David, and John Haynes, and Rachel Rueter have consistently encouraged me and reminded me not

to take myself too seriously. My grandparents, Richard and Ellen Haynes, and the late John and Ruby Kinsala have all contributed to my creativity, curiosity, and intellectual development. Finally, my parents, Neil and Toni Haynes, are simply the best that I could ask for. From my childhood they have encouraged me to reach for great things. More importantly, they have kept my eyes and heart trained toward what is true, honorable, excellent, and praiseworthy. This is, by far, the greatest of gifts.

Vita

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Anthropology, University of California, San Diego, June 2012
Dissertation: *Ambitious Obligations: Pentecostalism, Social Life, and Political Economy on the Zambian Copperbelt*
Committee in Charge: Prof. Joel Robbins, Chair; Prof. Suzanne Brenner; Prof. Thomas Csordas; Prof. Robert Cancel (Literature); Prof. Jeremy Prestholdt (History); Prof. Rijk van Dijk (African Studies Centre, University of Leiden, The Netherlands)

M.A. Anthropology, University of California, San Diego, June 2006
Thesis: "*Turn Your Radio On": Christian Broadcast Media and the Problem of Presence in American Evangelical Protestantism*
Committee in Charge: Prof. Joel Robbins, Chair; Prof. Kathryn Woolard; Prof. Thomas Csordas

B.A. Spanish, Wheaton College, May 2003
Magna Cum Laude
School of Special Studies, Pontificía Universidad Católica del Perú, Lima, Peru, Fall Semester 2001

AWARDS

Honorable Mention, Association for Africanist Anthropology Graduate Student Paper Award (2010)
Paper: *Pentecostalism and the Morality of Money: Religious and Economic Values on the Zambian Copperbelt*

Fulbright-Hayes Doctorial Dissertation Research Abroad Grant (2008-2009)

Dissertation Research Grant; Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research (2007-2009)

Harvey Fellow (2008)

George Haydu Graduate Student Essay Prize; UCSD Department of Anthropology (2007)
Paper: *The Impossibility of Individualism in African Pentecostalism: Behavior, Culture, and Human Values in the Gospel of Prosperity*

Tecle-Kidane Mariam Scholarship, UCSD Friends of the International Center (2006)

Summer travel grant from the Institute for International, Comparative, and Area Studies at the University of California, San Diego (2006)

Outstanding Graduate Research Paper; UCSD African and African-American Studies Research Program (2005)
Paper: *Anthropology, Individuals, and Change: A Methodological Look at Zambian Ethnography*

PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

"Hierarchy, Gender, and Gendered Hierarchy in Copperbelt Pentecostalism." Presented at the Comparative Christianities Conference. University of California, San Diego. April 27-28, 2012.

"Prophets, Mothers, Pastors, and Widows: Hierarchy, Gender, and Gendered Hierarchy in Copperbelt Pentecostalism." Presented at the invited workshop, "Establishing a framework for the anthropological study of Gender and Christianity." University of Bergen. April 21-23, 2012.

"How the Local Makes the Global in African Pentecostalism: An Example from the Zambian Copperbelt." Presented at the African and African American Studies Research Center Symposium. University of California, San Diego. May 27, 2011.

"Towards an Ethnography of Christian Social Life." Presented at an invited workshop on the Anthropology of Christianity, London School of Economics. May 4-5, 2011.

"Pentecostalism and the Morality of Money: Religious and Economic Value on the Zambian Copperbelt." Presented at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris, France. May 10, 2010

"Exchange, Inequality, and Social Life in Nsofu: Generalized Reciprocity and Material Hierarchy on the Zambian Copperbelt." Presented at the African Studies Centre, University of Leiden, The Netherlands. May 6, 2010

"Development, Desire, and Daily Bread: Time and Pentecostal Prosperity Teaching on the Zambian Copperbelt." Presented at the American Anthropological Association annual meeting, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. December 2-6, 2009.

"My Wealth, Your Health: Prosperity Theology and the Praxis of Care Among Zambian Pentecostals." Presented at the conference on Prolonging Life, Challenging Religion. Justo Mwale College, Lusaka, Zambia. April 15-17, 2009.

"Kin-Breaking and Kin-Making in Pentecostal Kinship: Exploring Christianity and Exchange on the Zambian Copperbelt." Presented at the PhD workshop on New Kinship Studies. African Studies Centre, University of Leiden, The Netherlands. November 26, 2007.

"Locating the Gift in an Emerging Urban Gift Economy: The Role of Prosperity Churches in the Villagization of the African City." Presented at the Society for the Anthropology of Religion meeting, Phoenix, Arizona. April 14-16, 2007.

PUBLICATIONS

Accepted. "Social Seeds: Pentecostal Religious Ideas and Political Economy on the Zambian Copperbelt." *American Anthropologist*.

In press. Review of *Ethnographic Sorcery*, by Harry G. West. *American Ethnologist*.

In press. Review of *Moral Ambition*, by Omri Elisha. *Books and Culture*.

2012. "Pentecostalism and the Morality of Money: Prosperity, Inequality, and Religious Sociality on the Zambian Copperbelt." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 18(1): 123-139.

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2010. Review of *Political Spiritualities*, by Ruth Marshall. *Books and Culture.* 16(6): 15-16.

2010. "From the Field." Society for the Anthropology of Religion Column. *Anthropology News.* 51(8): 50.

2008. "The Anthropology of Christianity" (article co-authored with Jon Bailecki and Joel Robbins). In *Religion Compass* 2/6: 1139-1158.

2007. Report on the meeting of the Society for the Anthropology of Religion. *Anthropology News.* 48(8).

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Co-Curator, Anthrocybib
Affiliated Researcher, Connections and Transformations research group, Africa Studies Center, University of Leiden, The Netherlands
Johannesburg Workshop in Theory and Criticism, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. July 2009.
Research Fellow, University of Zambia, Department of Religious Studies
Graduate Student Coordinator, Interdisciplinary Reading Group on the Anthropology of Christianity, University of California, San Diego (May 2006 - December 2007; August 2009 – June 2012)
Editorial Assistant, *Anthropological Theory* (September 2006-September 2007)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

African Association for the Study of Religions
American Anthropological Association
Society for the Anthropology of Religion

LANGUAGES

Spanish – Fluent
Bemba (Zambia) – Advanced

Abstract of the Dissertation

Ambitious Obligations:
Pentecostalism, Social Life, and Political Economy on the Zambian Copperbelt

by:

Naomi Haynes

Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology

University of California, San Diego, 2012

Professor Joel Robbins, Chair

The most striking characteristics of Pentecostal Christianity on the Zambian Copperbelt are the proliferation of small churches and the near-constant circulation of their members among them. These are the phenomena that this dissertation seeks to explore and explain. Doing so has required me to place Pentecostal practice within the broader social and political economic context of urban Zambia. Social life on the Copperbelt is organized around two parallel relational orientations that I call ambition and obligation, which are in turn structured by a hierarchy of economic success. Shocks to the Copperbelt economy, including the global financial crisis of 2008-2009, make it harder for people to maintain this traditional social model because market insecurity causes the hierarchy of success to become unbalanced.

Whereas relational hierarchy on the Copperbelt more generally depends on the market, Pentecostal adherence produces a hierarchy of charisma that is insulated from

economic concerns. This religion therefore presents the possibility that culturally important relational forms might find a more secure basis than that which is available outside the church. It is the potential of Pentecostalism to produce hierarchy, ambition, and obligation that makes this form of Christianity so compelling for people in urban Zambia. However, while the social possibilities of Pentecostalism are central to the religious participation of individual believers, it is not always easy for them to keep their relationships separate from economic concerns. The influence of the prosperity gospel, the importance of making gifts to church leaders, and the financial needs of pastors all bring material issues into religious life. When believers perceive that Pentecostal hierarchy has been compromised by these issues they will often leave one church for another that they feel better exemplifies the relational ideals of their religion. Alternately, they may form a new congregation. The social promise of Pentecostalism therefore allows us to understand not only what makes this form of Christianity so compelling, but also why its adherents move so frequently from church to church.

Introduction:

Theorizing Pentecostal Values on the Zambian Copperbelt

The problem, of course, is to uncover the rules,
regularities, and reproductive logics
that underpin our current condition—
a condition that is of necessity global,
although always global in a variety of
local ways, shapes, and forms.
So, what I have in mind here is really
the amount of labor involved in making life possible….
I am thinking of the relation between
intentionality, contingency, and routine
in the making of lives under the shadow of the global system—
shadows Africa seems to epitomize
in the most dramatic way, precisely as the kolossos *of our world.*
What is the backdrop against which
the work of production or maintenance of life
or of a semblance of life is done?
What are the materials that individuals work from,
draw on, might even take for granted, in any case, consistently use?
Achille Mbembe
Africa in Theory:
A Conversation Between Jean Comaroff and Achille Mbembe
(Shipley 2010: 659)

Two weeks after the forty-fourth anniversary of Zambian independence, Key of David Pentecostal Church held a conference with the promise-laden theme of, "There is a way out!" Anticipating a large crowd, Pastor Mwanza had borrowed chairs from another Pentecostal church next door, and as expected many members of that congregation, as well as many other Pentecostal believers, attended. Despite the rising temperatures in the church building – October is the hottest month of the year in Zambia – those who came to the event sang enthusiastically and "danced their way out," freeing their hips, lifting chairs above their heads, and swinging handkerchiefs in the air.

On the penultimate night of the conference Bana Zulu was among those in attendance. This was noteworthy, as Bana Zulu, although a founding member of the congregation and the wife of one of two church elders, had been absent from Key of David activities for more than a month. Pastor Mwanza's wife, who also served as a pastor of the church, had apparently tried to speak to Bana Zulu in hopes of reconciling, but had been unsuccessful. Rumors as to why Bana Zulu had stayed away from the church– and more specifically, people said, from Mrs. Mwanza – had been circulating through the congregation for some time. Many thought the trouble had followed a wedding held at Key of David earlier in the year, an event in which Bana Zulu had played a central role. Right up to the day of the wedding members of the church struggled to put together the necessary funds, and Bana Zulu had been caught in the middle of some nasty discussions about money. Not long after the event, she stopped coming to church services.

In the light of these tensions, many were surprised and pleased to see Bana Zulu back at church for the conference. Although she sat in the back of the room, her presence was conspicuous because the other women had arranged ahead of time to wear matching Key of David shirts and *citenge* wrap skirts. Since Bana Zulu had not been present when the decision was made, she had come dressed in a navy blue pantsuit, an outfit that emphasized her distance from the rest of the Key of David women. Still, her decision to attend the conference was clearly a gesture of goodwill, a fact that was confirmed when Bana Zulu went to the front of the church and embraced Mrs. Mwanza during the period of dancing that concluded the meeting. Seeing this display of reconciliation, others began to dance around the pair, fanning them with small towels and a bunched up

citenge. As they danced they joined the choir in singing a popular Nigerian song, which charged those listening to "Come and see what the Lord has done!" In bringing the wife of a lay leader and one of the church's pastors back together, it seemed to many that God had miraculously intervened.

Following this dramatic reconciliation, Bana Zulu remained at Key of David until after I left the field. However, the effect of these events was not permanent, and I eventually received word that both Bana Zulu and her husband had left the church to join another Pentecostal congregation in the same community. This church, which was smaller than Key of David and met in a secondary school classroom, was led by one of Pastor Mwanza's Bible School classmates, a gifted singer who had directed the choir during the conference at Key of David. While the conflict between the Zulus and the Mwanzas had apparently been resolved during the "There is a way out!" event, the church elder and his wife ultimately stopped attending the Pentecostal congregation they had helped to found.

Bana Zulu's movement into and out of Key of David illustrates a common pattern among Pentecostal believers on the Zambian Copperbelt. There, dozens of Pentecostal churches can be found in any neighborhood, with new groups springing up all the time. Most of these are small churches of around fifty people. Membership numbers are always changing, however, because believers do not usually stay in one congregation for long, but instead move between different churches at intervals ranging from a few months to a few years. On the Copperbelt, the most striking characteristics of Pentecostal Christianity are therefore the ever-increasing number of new churches and the constant

circulation of their members among them. These traits are what this dissertation seeks to explore and explain.

Introduction: Religion, Social Life, and Political Economy in Urban Zambia

The problems to which people at Key of David attributed Bana Zulu's movement away from the congregation – namely, tension between her and one of her pastors and difficult conversations with church members about money – point to two key issues in believers' movement from one congregation to another. This "circulation of the saints" (Bibby and Brinkerhoff 1973) is connected first to relationships with church leaders and secondly to the separation of these and other congregational relationships from market concerns. For Copperbelt believers, the tie to a pastor is of key importance. Indeed, I argue that hierarchical relationships in Pentecostal groups, especially those between leaders and laypeople, are both what make this religion so compelling for people on the Copperbelt and what keep people moving from church to church. This is because the social tie between a pastor and a believer reflects the relational models that people in urban Zambia consider most desirable: models of ambition and obligation. On the Copperbelt, ambition and obligation together represent the ideal, the result of everyone's efforts to produce a particular kind of social world. Pentecostal ties are not just important because they look like these highly valued social relationships, however. In the wake of economic uncertainty, whether brought on by structural adjustment measures or the 2008-2009 global financial crisis, ties of ambition and obligation have become more difficult to form and maintain because they rely on the market for the economic hierarchy that undergirds them. What Pentecostalism offers in this context is the possibility that culturally valued social relationships could be formed on the basis of something that is

not vulnerable to shifts in the economy. This is why it is so important for Pentecostal ties to remain separate from market concerns.

In order to make this argument, I draw on the work of Louis Dumont ([1970] 1980, 1977, 1986), as well as several recent applications of his theory; to a smaller extent my approach has also been shaped by Max Weber, and specifically by his discussion of value spheres (1946: 323ff). For both Weber and Dumont, value is a central concept. In employing the idea of value myself, I am referring to the ranking of cultural ideas and forms in relationship to one another. In Dumont's theory, this ranking follows from a particular social model – whether individualism, in the case of the West, or what he calls holism, in most other parts of the world.[1] To the extent that an idea or an action or an institution promotes the realization of that social model, it will be more highly ranked within the value structure of a community.

I have already noted that for people on the Copperbelt the social ideal is a matter of ambition and obligation. More specifically, ambition and obligation are two relational orientations that represent what Joel Robbins (1994: 31) refers to as the "dimensions" according to which value is measured. As we will see, relationships of both ambition and obligation require a difference in material status. The social form that structures the values of urban Zambia is therefore an economic hierarchy similar to what Jane Guyer, in her analysis of consumption survey data from Ghana, calls the "social gradient" according to which both "position" and "aspiration" are worked out (see Guyer 2004: 132). Because this hierarchy is indexed primarily through the display of consumer goods, limited access to these status-marking items as a result of currency depreciation, unemployment, or underemployment affects the shape of the structure that undergirds

relational life on the Copperbelt. As a result, social life becomes difficult to maintain according to the values by which it has traditionally been ordered.

In the context of these relational difficulties, Pentecostalism becomes significant because it offers a new way of creating hierarchy and with it the possibility of new forms of ambition and obligation. Whereas social distinction on the Copperbelt more generally is produced through consumption, the primary mode of hierarchical differentiation among believers is charisma, which is demonstrated through Pentecostal ritual practice in things like prophecy, healing, and exorcism. Ambitious believers can rise in this hierarchy, attaining lay leadership positions, ascending to the pastorate, or even becoming Pentecostal bishops. At the same time, those who are more charismatic have an obligation to assist those who are less spiritually adept. In this way, participation in Pentecostal groups opens the way for believers to purse structurally familiar relational forms in a framework that appears more stable than that which is outside of the church because it does not rely on the market.

Despite the attraction of Pentecostal relationality for people on the Copperbelt, creating a social world through religious adherence is far from easy. There are a number of reasons why this is the case. In part the difficulty stems from the way that Zambian Pentecostalism has been influenced by the prosperity gospel, which brings consumption, market concerns, and their relationship to sociality into the center of religious practice and even into definitions of charisma. Moreover, adherence to the prosperity gospel requires believers to make material gifts to church leaders, which in turn threatens the position of charismatic hierarchy as the ordering force behind Pentecostal relationships. Material gifts also complicate the role of wealthier church members, particularly if they

have formal leadership positions, as it is difficult to discern whether religious or material ambitions and obligations are at the heart of their relationships with their pastors. In short, while Pentecostalism offers the possibility of a social world protected from the vagaries of the structurally adjusted market, the separation from traditional social structures and economic concerns is difficult to maintain.

Understood in these terms, Pentecostal ritual life reveals much about the importance of relational hierarchy for Copperbelt believers. Indeed, those aspects of Pentecostal practice that appear most fraught are precisely those in which the charismatic mode of social organization risks being undermined by traditional hierarchies of economic status. Through an analysis of the relationship between urban Zambian sociality and political economy on the one hand and Pentecostalism on the other, we will therefore be able to parse some of the more complex aspects of Copperbelt religious life. We will also be positioned to understand why believers move so frequently from one church to another.

While the ritual work of Pentecostals does much to protect the relational structures of their congregations, there are many instances in which these efforts fail. When this happens, some people choose to abandon Pentecostalism, either by putting an end to church attendance altogether or by returning to the mainline denominations in which they were raised. More frequently, however, believers retain their hope in the relational possibilities of Pentecostalism. Rather than leaving this religion behind they instead go in search of a Pentecostal community that they feel is more clearly organized by charismatic hierarchy, ambition, and obligation. This is what pulls individuals away from one congregation and into another; it is also what prompts some leaders to break

away from their churches and establish new fellowships. The most striking characteristics of Copperbelt Pentecostalism are therefore best understood as part of a larger relational and economic context to which believers respond by drawing on the social and theological resources of their religion.

Before moving on to describe the particular ethnographic setting for this argument, let me be clear that by foregrounding the social effects of Pentecostal adherence I do not mean to suggest that the only significant thing believers derive from their religion is a new way to make social relationships. While I want to argue that Pentecostalism does indeed serve this purpose, and that this is one of the main reasons people in urban Zambia find it so compelling, my informants also found in their religious practice a sense of fulfillment and a meaningful way of understanding the world. My point in emphasizing the social aspects of Pentecostalism is not to diminish these aspects of religious life. Rather, my aim is to show that by themselves the meaning and fulfillment that come from religious adherence do not tell the whole story of Pentecostalism on the Copperbelt. When my informants discussed their religious practice, and especially their decision to leave one church and move to another, social concerns were consistently among the things they considered most vital. Throughout my time on the Copperbelt it became apparent that what brought believers into particular churches and what prompted them to leave were the ties they developed there. It is because relational life figured so prominently in my informants' experience of Pentecostalism that it occupies such a central position in my analysis.

In the remainder of this introduction I will describe the background of this dissertation, beginning with an overview of my primary field site, a township outside the

city of Kitwe that I call Nsofu. I will then move on to a discussion of Pentecostalism as it is practiced on the Copperbelt, giving particular attention to the teachings of the prosperity gospel. Finally, I will introduce the three congregations that are at the center of this analysis before concluding with a brief outline of the dissertation.

The Copperbelt, Kitwe, and Nsofu

After the capital city of Lusaka, the Copperbelt province is the most urbanized part of Zambia, a country that is largely rural and relatively thinly populated. Preliminary results from the 2010 Zambian national census show a national population of just over 13 million people, nearly 2 million of whom live on the Copperbelt (Central Statistics Office 2011: 5). The Copperbelt consists of a series of towns positioned along the line of rail that connects the copper mining sector to the rest of the country: Chililabombwe, Chingola, Chambishi, Mufulira, Kitwe, Luanshya, and the provincial capital of Ndola. My fieldwork was focused on a township on the edge of Kitwe, the commercial and transportation hub of the Copperbelt. The Kitwe district, which includes the city and surrounding rural areas, has by a small margin the largest population of the Copperbelt districts, with just over 522 thousand residents reported in 2010 (Central Statistics Office 2011: 13). I refer to the township where I carried out fieldwork as Nsofu. According to the 2000 census data about 25 thousand people lived in the entire Nsofu ward, which includes the township I studied, two adjacent townships, and a large shanty compound. That figure had doubled by the 2010 census, with population totals recorded at just over 49 thousand (Central Statistics Office 2011: 29). Not all of these individuals live in Nsofu, however, and I would estimate the population of that township to be between 15 and 20 thousand people.

Broadly speaking, Nsofu is a middle-class township – not as affluent as the low-density Kitwe neighborhoods of Parklands and Riverside, but certainly not a shanty compound. Many of the township's residents are employed. The mining sector accounts for a great deal of the available work, whether in the form of direct employment at the mine or with one of the many firms that keep it running. I also had neighbors in Nsofu who were teachers in government secondary schools, civil servants, and accountants. In addition, many residents of Nsofu, like many people in Zambia more generally, are engaged in what is usually glossed as "business": trade, often informal, in goods purchased as nearby as Lusaka or as far away as Dubai.

There are a few small businesses in Nsofu, including a guesthouse, a number of bottle shops and general stores, a minibus outfit, and several hair salons. In addition, a substantial number of Nsofu residents sell something from their homes, whether soap, tomatoes, dried fish, or second-hand clothes. In the evening, women sometimes bring their braziers out to the street to sell roasted maize or cassava to passersby; the morning has its parallel trade in fritters and scones, while in the afternoon schoolchildren buy plastic bags of popcorn or "ice block" – homemade popsicles frozen into plastic bags and that invariably drip brightly colored syrup onto their school uniforms. This business is sporadic, subject to the varying availability of capital and individual will and energy, as well as other factors. Sales at these kiosks or stands often cycle in an inverse relationship with commerce in town, which booms when those in formal employment get their monthly paychecks and tapers off as they have less money. It is then that sales in the townships increase, as people are forced to buy supplies like maize meal or oil in smaller,

"measured" (*iyakupimisha*) quantities rather than at pay for a whole bag of maize or bottle of oil.

The township is divided into three sections, some of which consist of former mine or government housing that has been privatized. In addition to these homes, many other houses in Nsofu have been built by pensioners who either occupy the property or rent it out for income. These houses are of comfortable size, and many have walls surrounding their yards, creating a horizon of triangular roofs atop cinderblock squares. In some cases a house will have a few small "cabins" on the same lot, which the landlord rents for additional income. There are also a sizable number of houses that are not complete. These may be only a foundation slab, or a building without windows or doors, or a house without a connection to basic services. Usually these properties are occupied, whether by a family living in a cabin next to the slab or several households each occupying a few rooms in an unfinished house. Landlords rent these structures out cheaply in order to discourage the theft of bricks, cement, or doorframes. In some cases, those who live in an unfinished house are also employed in its construction.

The presence of families in small cabins or unfinished houses points to the fact that, while most would rightly describe Nsofu as a wealthier community, there are a number of residents of the township who are considerably poorer than their neighbors. They are usually the occupants of these small spaces, which are often temporary – when a house has been completed the rent is raised, making it difficult for those with small or unreliable incomes to remain there. Several of my informants and their families moved two or three times during the eighteen months I lived in Nsofu, mostly within the township. In addition to these families, other residents of Nsofu, mainly pensioners and

widows, may own their homes but have little or no income in addition. What this means is that Nsofu is an economically diverse community, in many ways a microcosm of the rest of Zambia.[2]

Nsofu is a pleasant place to live. The edges of the township look out over the city in one direction and toward an open bush in the other. Trees, boulders, and waving grass surround the community with green during the rainy season (see Figure 1). In the mornings and afternoons the roads and footpaths of Nsofu are crowded people going to work or school. Evenings find children playing outside, kicking a soccer ball, flying homemade kites, or building tiny cities from bits of wood and empty bottles of *maheu* (a drink made from milled maize). Women who have spent the afternoon with church groups walk home together, stopping along the way to buy vegetables or visit with others who are walking home from work. Often, one meets friends on the road, and small groups join and split apart until evening pushes everyone home. Some stores stay open later and music from the bars along the main road drifts over the township in the evenings after most people have gone home to cook dinner.

Figure 1: A view of Nsofu

The final thing to note about Nsofu is its religious life, and in particular the presence of Christianity. Throughout Zambia, missionary-established Christian denominations, including Anglican, Catholic, and Seventh Day Adventist churches, are an important part of the religious landscape (see Taylor and Lehmann 1961, van Binsbergen 1981, Hinfelaar 1994). In 1991, as the country was transitioning to multi-party democracy, the Zambian government made a constitutional declaration that it would be a "Christian nation."[3] Within this wider religious context, those who identify as Pentecostals account for a significant portion of the Christian population (Agha et al. 2006: 552-553). Here it is important to bear in mind that there is not a sharp distinction between Pentecostals and "non-Pentecostals," as members of mainline churches regularly visit Pentecostal meetings. I use the term "believer" to refer to Pentecostal adherents, many, but not all of whom, are also members of Pentecostal churches.

Like all urban neighborhoods in Zambia, Nsofu is home to numerous churches, including at least two-dozen Pentecostal groups. Five of these have their own plots of land granted by the Kitwe city council, and three have put up permanent buildings; of these congregations, all but Key of David have some sort of transnational or denominational affiliation. The remaining groups meet either in rented schoolrooms or private homes. Some of these are not considered churches in that they do not meet on Sunday mornings, but are instead "fellowships" that hold meetings at other points during the week. Before introducing the Pentecostal congregations that were at the center of my fieldwork in Nsofu, I must first describe this religion and the way it is practiced on the Copperbelt.

Pentecostalism, Prosperity, and Practice

Pentecostalism is a form of Christianity characterized by immediate experiences with the Holy Spirit through practices such as glossolalia, prophecy, and healing (Dayton 1987: 15-33). Also referred to as "charismatic" Christianity, Pentecostalism[4] has experienced phenomenal growth over the course of the past thirty years, most notably in the post-colonial world, and stands out as "one of the great success stories of the current era of cultural globalization" (Robbins 2004b: 117; Jenkins 2002). On the Copperbelt today, as in most parts of urban Africa, Pentecostalism is impossible to avoid, particularly when one knows where to look. Every Sunday morning, schoolrooms and community centers across the Copperbelt are filled with the sounds of singing, preaching, and prayer. Some of the Pentecostal groups that meet in these spaces have purchased electric keyboards, which accompany choirs singing choruses from across Africa and elsewhere. Women with babies tied to their backs in colorful *fitenge*[5] sway and clap to the rhythm. Men sporting ties and cufflinks or T-shirts and blue jeans balance thick Bibles on their laps, underlining scriptures with ballpoint pens and sometimes taking notes in exercise books as well.

One thing that nearly all Pentecostal churches on the Copperbelt have in common is a commitment to some form of the prosperity gospel. The prosperity gospel came to Zambia through Pentecostal mass media, traveling evangelists, and Zambian pastors who were exposed to this doctrine while traveling overseas. Also known as the "faith gospel," the prosperity gospel is a theological strain of Christianity usually associated with Pentecostalism that has enjoyed widespread uptake in churches around the world. The central tenet of the prosperity gospel is that it is God's will for all believers to be rich, healthy, and successful (see Coleman 2000; Wiegele 2005; Akoko 2007). This belief

follows from a reading of the biblical text focused on the Christian God's absolute ownership of the world's resources. Prosperity gospel preachers also emphasize God's authority over all natural and supernatural powers. Because of this divine sovereignty, believers are given access both to worldly riches and to victory over malevolent spirits, including those that cause poverty and sickness (Maxwell 1998). All that is required to obtain Pentecostal "health and wealth" is faith in God's power, faith that ought to be demonstrated first and foremost through the giving of gifts. These contributions, which are usually money, are sometimes referred to as "seed offerings" – small amounts that will in time yield a miraculously increased "harvest."

The prosperity gospel has unquestionably shaped the theology of most Copperbelt believers; however its message has not been taken up without modification. One of the most important differences between transnational and local understandings of the prosperity gospel is the way that prosperity is defined. Televangelists from Accra, Lagos, Tulsa, or Johannesburg fill Nsofu living rooms with images of conspicuous consumption, proclaiming that these kinds of riches are the province of every believer. Although material wealth certainly figures in local definitions of prosperity, believers on the Copperbelt are less focused on the lavish riches they see on television and more interested in securing the resources that will allow them to effectively fulfill their social obligations without abandoning all forms of ambition. In this same vein, believers in Nsofu are also careful to emphasize that prosperity is not only a matter of wealth, but also of wellbeing, a concept that some believers described using the English word "holistic." Prosperity, in this definition, is just as much about strong family ties, personal spiritual development, and good health as it is about acquiring a car or a house.

There are several reasons that Pentecostals on the Copperbelt have modified the prosperity gospel from its transnational form. One of these, which I return to in the final chapters of this dissertation, is the simple fact that the prosperity gospel does not yield the kind of lavish results that its proponents promise. Typically, believers give to their congregations but do not receive anything like what they are hoping for in return (see Meyer 2004: 460-461). In part, the failure of the prosperity gospel presents a potent problem of theodicy: If it is God's will for all believers to experience material success, what does it mean if they do not? One of the easiest ways to respond to this problem is by retooling the prosperity gospel message (Maxwell 1998). Another reason for the redefinition of prosperity, at least among my informants in Nsofu, was that believers had sometimes been the victims of scams at the hands of people they later referred to as "false prophets." Believers would give seed offerings to these preachers in hopes of attaining prosperity, only to find that the person they had given to was, as they put it, "not straight." Here, the accusations ranged from charlatanism to satanic involvement to moral failing; in all cases, encounters with false prophets amounted to a betrayal of the prosperity gospel, which in turn prompted circumspection with regard to its message.

Beyond the prosperity theodicy and the experience of false prophets, however, the primary reason that believers on the Copperbelt have altered the prosperity gospel from its transnational form is, I argue, because they find the individualizing aspects of this message problematic. The prosperity gospel has often been connected to personalized consumption (e.g. Maxwell 1998, Gifford 2004); however, this is not exactly what people in Nsofu want. Certainly, there is an extent to which they would like to be able to invest in their own advancement. However, as we will see, material wealth on the Copperbelt,

even that which is consumed in the household, is embedded in a larger process of social reproduction that is worked out through exchange (see Bloch and Parry 1980). Put differently, Pentecostal prosperity in Nsofu, even when put in terms of the individualized capitalist consumption with which it is so often associated, is always grounded in a network of social relations (Haynes 2012). This is the primary reason that believers on the Copperbelt have altered the prosperity gospel from its transnational form and oriented it around relational concerns.

Turning our attention from theology to formal religious practice, Pentecostal meetings in Nsofu all follow a similar format. Sunday services as well as midweek or overnight prayer gatherings are preceded by a period of "intercession" that lasts between thirty minutes and two hours. During this time a leader announces a topic for prayer – for example, the wellbeing of the pastor, protection for families, or the destruction of demonic powers. After the theme is announced, everyone prays about it out loud simultaneously, creating a cacophony in several languages, sometimes including glossolalia.[6] This practice, which I refer to as "collective-personal prayer," was one of the most important aspects of Pentecostal ritual for Copperbelt believers.[7] When members of the group have prayed like this for around ten minutes, the leader will signal for everyone to be quiet by clapping his hands, shouting "Amen!," or starting a song that others quickly join in. After getting everyone's attention the leader will announce a new topic for prayer, and intercession continues in this pattern until the service begins.

Intercession is followed by a period of call-and-response singing facilitated by a small choir or praise team. As the songs move from upbeat tunes to slower, more reflective songs, singing gives way to a second session of collective-personal prayer.

During this time topics are not presented by a leader, and members of the group instead pray on their own. Some believers kneel, others pace the aisles of the church; some weep, others clap rhythmically,[8] while still others shake their fists and rock back and forth in a spiritual battle with the devil. By this point in the service even the latecomers have arrived, and the intensity of this second prayer time is therefore much greater than it was during intercession, which is often sparsely attended. Ending the collective-personal prayer that follows singing can sometimes be a tricky task. Often, things wind down more or less on their own, perhaps with the aid of a simple song sung by the praise team. Alternately, a church leader will come forward and offer a loud prayer that serves as a signal for others to quiet down. However, there are times when not everyone heeds these cues, and one or two people may continue to have ecstatic spiritual experiences while everyone else remains silent. In some such cases, singing and prayer will start up again. At other times, the pastor will go and lay hands on that person and she will stop praying or crying; if she does not, one of the leaders may usher her out of the room.

When the singing and prayer have ended people take their seats for the rest of the meeting. There are certain logistical things that must be taken care of at every Pentecostal gathering, no matter how small, and they are usually done either at this point in the service or at the very end. Announcements of church events and the introduction of new visitors, who are asked to stand, are included here. The most important of these practices is the giving of offerings, which usually involves individuals walking to the front of the room to place their contributions in baskets or bins. If the room is too small to allow people to move freely, however, the basket is passed down the rows of seats. At a small Bible study in a private home a plate may be brought from the host’s kitchen, or a

believer may offer her open Bible to receive contributions. Each of these events is surrounded by small testimonies of blessing and words of exhortation, asking people to attend midweek meetings, asking visitors to return, and asking everyone to give generously. This semi-formal preaching is usually done by an assistant pastor or lay leader, who may also serve as the meeting's "master of ceremonies."

The final part of a Pentecostal service is the sermon, which begins with a reading from the Bible and may last thirty minutes to an hour. Texts and topics vary, but pastors on the Copperbelt consistently favor the narrative portions of scripture over didactic texts (Dayton 1982: 23; Martin 1998: 130-31). Sermons are almost always encouraging, typically urging believers to remain true to their faith in the face of frustration. There are many things Pentecostals are asking God to do for them, including providing a child or a job, or intervening to repair a relationship or perform a divine healing. Most are waiting for God to "come through;" many have been waiting for a long time. It is in the light of these expectations and unrealized hopes that pastors craft most of their sermons. They encourage believers not to take shortcuts – whether going to traditional healers (*bashiŋanga*) or, in the case of women, pursuing relationships with non-Christian boyfriends – but instead to trust that God will respond to their requests and will do so very soon, provided they remain faithful to him.

After the sermon, there is sometimes more prayer or singing, but usually the meeting breaks up rather quickly. Believers always file out of the room or building where they are meeting and line up to greet each other individually with a handshake before fanning out in pairs or clusters for the walk home. There may be meetings of individual groups, such as the choir or the youth, after the main service. And a few

believers usually stay behind to speak to the pastor individually with a request for prayer or counsel.

Having described the general characteristics of Copperbelt Pentecostalism, we can now turn our attention to the specific churches with which I spent the most time during my fieldwork. While I visited nearly every Pentecostal group in Nsofu at one point, I chose to focus most of my attention on three congregations, which I describe in detail below. Because so much anthropological research on African Pentecostalism has focused on large churches (e.g. Gifford 2004), many of them with transnational connections (e.g. Maxwell 2006), I wanted to look at locally initiated independent congregations, small groups with fewer than 100 members. I therefore limited my study to groups that fit these criteria. In Nsofu I lived in the home of Pastor and Mrs. Mwanza, who had founded Key of David a little more than four years before I arrived in the township. Because I was staying with the pastor's family, and because their church met the criteria I had set out for selecting a group, I chose Key of David as one of the congregations for my study. The others, which I call Higher Calling and Freedom Bible Church, were groups I had been told about by people in Nsofu who heard that I wanted to visit Pentecostal congregations. Since one of these met in a private home and one in a government schoolroom, and since each of these groups had interdenominational fellowships attached to them, this sample gave me a sense of the variety of Pentecostalism in the township.

Three Pentecostal Congregations in Profile

<u>Freedom Bible Church</u>

My introduction to Freedom Bible Church came in the form of a visit to a deliverance "clinic" at the home shared by several of the congregations' young,

unmarried pastors. Pentecostal deliverance involves prayer to exorcise whatever malevolent spirits are thought to be causing a believer harm. Often, deliverance takes place over the course of a long period of time, involving weeks, months, or even years of prayer concerning the same set of problems. I went to the Freedom Bible Church clinic with Bana Buleti, a single mother from Nsofu, who told me that the church had become very popular largely because of the skill of its leaders in deliverance. The half-dozen women lined up outside the pastors' small house that morning suggested she was right. A few days later I joined the many women and men who crowded into another Nsofu home for the Freedom Bible Church midweek fellowship. Attendance at these events was a foretaste of the crowd I found when I finally visited one of the church's Sunday morning services a few weeks later. School desks had been crammed together to accommodate as many people as possible, but the room was still packed. While the group had no electronic music or amplification the singing could be heard far up the street.

When I first began to visit Freedom Bible Church the congregation was led by a team of five pastors. The most popular among them was Pastor Ephraim, who had trained in the Central African Methodist Church, the Pentecostal arm of Methodism in Zambia. He was known throughout Nsofu for his prophetic ability and his skill in deliverance. Pastor Ephraim told me that he founded Freedom after becoming frustrated with what he felt was a lack of Pentecostal fervor in the Methodist Church. In addition to Pastor Ephraim, Evangelist Maxwell, Evangelist Chinyama, Pastor Kabre, and Pastor Abraham took turns singing and preaching at fellowship meetings and Sunday services.

Freedom Bible Church started as a mid-week interdenominational prayer meeting in the home of a believer. When the group had grown large enough, pastors began holding Sunday morning services. When I arrived at the church six years after its founding it was by all accounts at its peak. Not only were the Sunday meetings well attended, but the numerous midweek gatherings sponsored by the church, including the fellowship I had initially attended and occasional all-night prayer meetings, were also very popular. Church members began to talk of registering with the Kitwe city council, the first step toward securing a plot of land for their own building, the great dream of every Pentecostal church.

This period of heady growth continued for more than six months after I arrived in the field. However, in September of 2008 Evangelist Maxwell and Evangelist Chinyama each left the church. The loss of Evangelist Maxwell was particularly difficult, as he was the most gifted singer among the congregation's leadership. Soon after the evangelists left, a scandal erupted that temporarily removed Pastor Ephraim from his pastoral duties.[9] While he was still present at church events, he did not preach or provide prophecy or counsel. In his stead Pastor Abraham and Pastor Kabre were left to keep the congregation going. Unfortunately, many believers felt that these pastors were less skilled than Pastor Ephraim or Evangelist Maxwell, and indeed, those who stayed at Freedom after the departure of its most popular leaders often dozed off during Pastor Abraham's sermons.

By the time I left the field Pastor Ephraim had been restored to his position, even though the situation that had caused his removal had not been completely resolved. It seemed this decision was necessary if the congregation was to continue to function, as

more and more people were leaving the church in the absence of the leaders that had been its main attraction. While Pastor Ephraim's return to ministry seemed to stem this tide, Freedom Bible Church never recovered the momentum it had when I first arrived.

Higher Calling

During my first weeks in Nsofu the name I heard most in connection with Pentecostalism was that of Bana Mfuwe. It seemed that everywhere I went people suggested that I attend the interdenominational meetings at her house. When I finally visited this fellowship I realized why she was so well known. Nearly 100 people had gathered for the midweek prayer gathering, and several dozen returned on Saturday for the weekly fast. Later, I learned that the believers meeting at Bana Mfuwe's home were part of a larger network of Pentecostal fellowships known as Higher Calling that had originated several years earlier in another part of the Copperbelt. In addition to midweek prayers and Saturday fasting, some members of Higher Calling had also started holding church services on Sunday mornings. The members of Higher Calling had constructed a chapel behind Bana Mfuwe's house by nailing timber off-cuts to a wooden frame to make a long building with a concrete foundation. The interior was filled with rows of wooden benches and decorated with curtain panels, carpets, tinsel, and silk flowers. A collection of tarps and fifty-kilogram maize meal bags covered the roof, providing protection from the sun but not necessarily from the rain; members of the group sometimes sat under umbrellas to stay dry during the rainy season.

Bana Mfuwe was unquestionably the main attraction at Higher Calling. She had no formal religious training but was nevertheless a gifted preacher and singer whose messages were usually focused on encouraging members of the group to remain true to

their faith and continue to expect that God would "come through" for them. Often, Bana Mfuwe used her own experience as proof of this notion. She would regularly tell her followers that when she first became a Pentecostal her husband criticized her for attending all-night prayer meetings and preaching in their community. At one point, he even kicked her out of their house. Despite these obstacles, Bana Mfuwe clung to her faith and God had eventually responded. Her relationship with her husband had been restored, and he not only gave her the money she needed to run the household, he also called her "sweetie" and bought her gifts. Bana Mfuwe also announced her comfortable standard of living in new clothes and fashionable hairstyles. In many ways, then, she embodied what so many who came to Higher Calling hoped to achieve, whether in terms of her spiritual power, her family relationships, or her material wealth. Bana Mfuwe was, in other words, a tangible reminder that the prayers they offered each week could be answered.

Not long after I arrived in Nsofu I learned that Bana Mfuwe's husband had been given a job in South Africa. Soon, she told her congregation, she would take her children and join him there. This information met with a mixed response. On the one hand, a move to South Africa was unquestionably a good thing for Bana Mfuwe's family. In the eyes of most people on the Copperbelt, South Africa is the most proximate point of access to the West, and relocating there would surely guarantee a higher standard of living for Bana Mfuwe and her children. In this way, the woman whose testimony already served as an inspiration for believers at Higher Calling was seen as moving to another level of blessing. At the same time, because Bana Mfuwe's presence was so central to the life of the congregation, many feared what would happen after she left.

Just before her departure Bana Mfuwe held a final service and "farewell party" in the Higher Calling chapel. Dozens and dozens of people came, filling the building and spilling out into the yard. The event lasted for hours and included not only all of the ritual components of a Pentecostal service, but also the announcement of the new leaders Bana Mfuwe had installed in her place. More than ten people were called to the front of the chapel, where they knelt before Bana Mfuwe to receive her blessing. Over all of these new leaders Bana Mfuwe installed Bana Chilomba, a widow who lived in a poorer neighboring township, as the head of Higher Calling.

The group faced several problems in Bana Mfuwe's absence. First, they needed to find a new place to meet. This was solved without too much difficulty when one couple that had been very active in the group, Mr. and Mrs. Ntembe, offered the yard of the house they rented. Higher Calling members dismantled the chapel, carried the materials several blocks to the Ntembes' home, and rebuilt it there. Second and more importantly, there was the problem of leadership. Although Bana Mfuwe had taken care to ensure that a group of leaders was in place before she left, not everyone felt that she had made the right choice in Bana Chilomba. There was no question that the new leader was a devoted Pentecostal. However, her style of preaching and leadership was different from that of Bana Mfuwe; moreover, her social position was such that she did not embody the expectations of the group in the way that the previous leader had. Attendance began to drop, and with it morale.

Higher Calling faced further problems when Mr. Ntembe lost his job and, soon afterward, his house. The dramatic economic changes that this family faced will be discussed at several points in this dissertation. Suffice it to say, however, that when

Higher Calling lost the central location provided by the Ntembes, as well as the possibility of meeting somewhere that did not require members of the church to pay rent, the congregation found itself in a difficult situation. After searching for quite some time for someone who might offer his home as a new meeting place, Bana Chilomba decided that the group would use a nearby community center for mid-week prayers and a classroom for Sunday morning meetings. For a while those who wanted to continue the tradition of fasting on Saturdays met at Bana Chilomba's small house, but that did not last long. By the time I left the field Higher Calling had experienced a significant turnover in membership – well over half of the original members had gone and new believers had joined the group, many of whom had never met Bana Mfuwe. Bana Chilomba was still at the church's helm, but a number of other leaders, including the Ntembes, were no longer part of the congregation.

Key of David Pentecostal Church

Key of David Pentecostal Church differed from the other two congregations in my study in several ways. While both Freedom Bible Church and Higher Calling held meetings either in private homes or rented spaces, Key of David had its own building – a large cinderblock structure positioned prominently on the main road in Nsofu. Pastor and Mrs. Mwanza had come to Nsofu from a rural police camp on the Copperbelt where they had started their first church after finishing Bible School in Lusaka. They had chosen Nsofu, Pastor Mwanza explained to me, because it was an economically diverse area, and more specifically because it boasted an educated and more professional population. While, as we will see, there were certainly members of Key of David who did not fit this category, this was the group that the church seemed best equipped to attract.

Pentecostals on the Copperbelt often say that wealthy people find it difficult to attend a church that meets in a classroom; "big" people, my informants noted, will not sit at school desks. While in practice I found a number of exceptions to this rule, it was true that Key of David, the only church in my study that had its own building, did indeed have a larger percentage of professionals than other Pentecostal congregations in Nsofu. This also meant that the church had a higher percentage of men than either Freedom Bible Church or Higher Calling. During church services at Key of David people spoke English far more than in the other congregations I studied. Pastor Mwanza was a native of the Copperbelt and spoke Bemba fluently, but he nevertheless preached in English, sometimes with an interpreter. Finally, unlike the other congregations discussed here, Key of David had a keyboard, microphones, and electric speakers. The load-shedding schedule that reduced the amount of electricity available in Nsofu sometimes meant that there was no amplification on Sunday mornings, but usually the church choir made use of the instruments.

Key of David had not always had a building, and at various points in the congregation's history it had met at the Mwanzas' home or in the same school were Freedom Bible Church rented a classroom. It was in learning the history of the church that I first began to realize that, although member turnover was lower at Key of David than at other churches I studied, believers nevertheless cycled through this congregation in much the same way that they cycled through others. As the example of Bana Zulu illustrates, while there were many things about Key of David that suggested its permanence – most notably its building – the composition of this congregation was in flux as believers came and left. Nearly all of those who left the church did so, again as in

the case of Bana Zulu, because of a relational problem with one of the congregation's leaders. Indeed, among all three of the churches in this study, the reason that believers most frequently cited for leaving a congregation was that they had differed (*ukupusana*) with a member of the leadership.

In attributing their departure to a problem in their relationship with church leaders, Nsofu believers provided the first clue as to the reason behind their frequent movement among Pentecostal congregations on the township. The examples of both Freedom Bible Church and Higher Calling suggest that one of the things that brings people into a particular church is a pastor's skill in spiritual services like deliverance, or the charisma of a leader as she encourages those in her church to remain true to their faith. So, a believer's tie to a pastor is as instrumental in bringing her into a congregation as it is in her decision to leave it. What is it about the relationship between a Pentecostal believer and her pastor that is so important to people on the Copperbelt? Answering this question will require us to explore not only Pentecostal belief and practice in Nsofu, but the role of hierarchy in the relational life of the Copperbelt more generally. Before moving on to these tasks, however, I will briefly lay out the structure of this dissertation.

Outline of the Dissertation

The argument that follows is divided into three sections, the first of which is devoted to an analysis of Copperbelt sociality. Chapter one begins with a discussion of the theoretical concepts of hierarchy and value, which I use to explore the two most important relational models in Nsofu: ambition and obligation. In chapter two I show how these models are worked out and enacted through exchange between households or individuals of different economic statuses. Chapter three examines the effects of

economic instability on this relational world through a discussion of the global financial crisis that struck during my fieldwork in 2008-2009. It is in the light of these effects that we are able to engage religious life on the Copperbelt.

In section two I turn my attention to Pentecostalism, and specifically to the social relationships that form in Nsofu churches. Chapter four discusses how Pentecostal practice produces relational hierarchies that parallel the structures of ambition and obligation evident in Copperbelt social life more generally. In the two chapters that follow, I explore the various ways that Pentecostal ritual life works to protect these relationships at the points they are most vulnerable to the economic difficulties that hamper social ties outside the church. Chapter five explores the giving of seed offerings, which are kept safe from market concerns by their simultaneous role as gifts to church leaders and sacrifices to God. Exchange is also at the heart of chapter six, which uses an analysis of a party held for Mrs. Mwanza to examine the problematic position of wealthy lay leaders.

The final section deals with what happens when, despite the ritual efforts of Pentecostal believers, the social structures of their congregations break down. In chapter seven I look at the way that laypeople manage their frustrations with church relational life. While these efforts sometimes allow believers to remain in a congregation despite its problems, in chapter eight I discuss those cases in which individuals have been unable to reconcile the relational values of their religious community with the relational realities of their church. In these situations, believers either leave Pentecostalism completely, break away from one group to form another, or move to a new, already existing congregation. An analysis of Copperbelt relational life in general and Pentecostal

relationality in particular therefore allows us to understand why Bana Zulu, along with many other believers, would leave one her congregation to join another. More importantly, this discussion demonstrates how religious ideas are bound up not only with social concerns, but also with the globalized political economy of a place like the Zambian Copperbelt.

Notes on Introduction:

[1] More recently, Joel Robbins has added "relationalism," which he argues shapes many communities in Melanesia, to the list of Dumontian possible social models, (e.g. Robbins 1994; Robbins 2004a).

[2] According to the Zambian Central Statistics office, in 2004 the mean monthly income for a Zambian household was K 511,377, or about $170USD. However, only about one in every three households (35 percent) had mean monthly incomes that exceeded K 300,000, implying that the majority of Zambian households, or approximately 65 percent, had incomes that were insufficient to meet their basic needs. Near the end of my fieldwork I administered an anonymous survey in nine Pentecostal congregations in and around Nsofu. The total response was 389 people over age 15 (169 males, 220 females), most of them residents of the township. Although these numbers are too small to constitute a statistically significant picture of the community, they indicate not only a wide range of economic diversity, but results that mirror those of the national survey. Among the males, 43 percent reported monthly incomes below K 250,000, while 66 percent of females reported incomes below this amount. In 2006 the minimum wage in Zambia was set at a monthly salary of K268,000 (about $50 at the current exchange rate), which means that about half of the people in Nsofu were making less than that amount, and half more (in some cases, much more).

[3] In 1996 the preamble to the newly amended Zambian constitution declared that "the Republic [will be] a Christian nation while upholding the right of every person to enjoy that person's freedom of conscience or religion."

[4] Historically there is a difference between Pentecostalism and charismatic Christianity, as the former antedates the latter in the United States and elsewhere (see Synan 1997). On the Copperbelt, however, the term "Pentecostalism," used to refer to the type of Christianity, and its Bemba parallel, *ba pente*, used to refer to its adherents, does not generally connote the older Pentecostal denominations that have been present in Zambia for decades, but instead refers to charismatic or neo-Pentecostal churches. My decision to refer to these churches by the blanket term "Pentecostal" is made therefore with an eye to both simplicity and to the name believers use for their own churches.

[5] *Fitenge* is the plural of the Bemba word *citenge*, the cotton wrap-skirt common throughout Africa.

[6] Although speaking in tongues is a practice in which some Zambian Pentecostals engage, it is not as central for them as it is for Pentecostals in other parts of the world, particularly the West (Karkkainen 2011: 235).

[7] The reason that believers found collective-personal prayer so attractive was because it allowed them to take their personal requests to God in the context of a formal religious service. This was one of the central ritual differences between mainline and Pentecostal Christianity on the Copperbelt, although that was changing as more and more mainline groups adopted (or at least permitted) the practice. Several of my informants described their initial exposure to collective-personal prayer as distressing, since they did not know how to pray the way that the Pentecostals did. In time, however, they found it to be extremely powerful. They explained to me that prayer in mainline denominations like the Anglican Church or the United Church of Zambia usually consisted of one leader speaking on everyone's behalf while the rest of the group prayed "in their hearts." In contrast, collective-personal prayer allowed each particular "burden" to be voiced. Most believers felt that this was a much better option, as it was impossible for a priest or

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pastor to know everyone's needs. In other words, the collective prayers offered in mainline services did not address their specific concerns the way that Pentecostal prayer did. Here it is also worth pointing out that the noise generated by so many people praying at the top of their voices allowed individual words to be drowned out. This noise, coupled with a strict taboo on listening to others' prayers, created a unique opportunity for people to articulate their worries or problems without much fear of being overheard. In the densely populated township, where there was relatively little chance of praying aloud without anyone listening in – including those one was praying for, about, or against – this was a valuable practice.

[8] In Zambia, clapping is a sign of respect, often used as part of a greeting. This is reflected in Christian practice, for example in a popular song that uses the expression, *kalombo*, a respectful way of answering a call, as a way of addressing God. When believers sing this chorus, they often kneel respectfully, as they would do when greeting a chief or an elderly person, and clap their hands.

[9] I discuss this scandal in chapter seven.

Section I:

The Social World of Nsofu

We calo shalapo
We calo shalapo
Ba Yesu balenjita
We calo shalapo
Ba Yesu balenjita
We calo shalpo

Goodbye, world
Goodbye, world
Jesus is calling me
Goodbye, world
Jesus is calling me
Goodbye, world
Copperbelt Pentecostal Praise Chorus

In order to understand Copperbelt Pentecostalism, we must first understand the Copperbelt. This will be our task in the next three chapters. If, as I argue, the most striking traits of Nsofu Pentecostalism are an outgrowth of this religion's capacity to produce hierarchical social relationships, we must first trace out how hierarchical ties have traditionally formed in urban Zambia. Understanding Copperbelt social life can be a difficult task, not only because neighborhoods like Nsofu are always changing, but also because of the many connections between this part of Africa and the rest of the world. Thankfully, the Copperbelt has long been a site where anthropologists have engaged these sorts of problems, and the ethnographic record provides some helpful approaches to the particular context of urban Zambia.

While the discussion that follows details aspects of Nsofu social life that are not particular to Pentecostalism, I should point out that nearly all of the individuals who figure in my analysis are believers. One of the reasons for the overrepresentation of

Pentecostals in my work is the fact that Pastor and Mrs. Mwanza were the people that first introduced me to others in the community. Living in their house meant participating in their social circle, which was overwhelmingly made up of other Pentecostals. The Mwanzas' position as church leaders, alongside my own expressed interest in Pentecostalism, together with the significant number of believers in Nsofu, all contributed to the fact that my primary informants were participants in Pentecostal groups. That said, the patterns I identify in the following chapters were evident across the population of Nsofu regardless of religious affiliation, and I am confident that what I describe here as Copperbelt relational life holds true for most people in the region.

I begin this section by laying out the structures and values that undergird Copperbelt social life. I then examine the exchange relationships that form within this socio-cultural matrix. Finally, I show how each of these elements is affected – although not completely undermined – by changes in the wider Copperbelt political economy. It is only after a careful study of Nsofu sociality that we can begin to analyze Pentecostalism in this part of urban Zambia. For, it is only after we understand the shifts in social structures and cultural values that have marked the Copperbelt in recent decades that we are able to appreciate the relational productivity of Pentecostalism.

Chapter One: Social Organization, Values, and Hierarchy in Nsofu

To-day, then, Northern Rhodesia is in process of rapid adjustment
to the conditions of world community;
a community in which impersonal relations
are all-important….
Godfrey Wilson
"An Essay on the Economics of Detribalization in Northern Rhodesia"
(Wilson 1941: 13-14)

Yet despite the apparent confusion of the urban scene,
it is equally patent that the Africans who live
[on the Copperbelt] do not compose
a mere aggregation of individuals
nor a disorganized rabble.
A. L. Epstein
"The Network and Urban Social Organization"
(Epstein 1961: 31)

People appear to be somewhat accustomed to turbulence and policy confusion.
Rising levels of what a systems scholar would see as disorder
may be familiar, may have landmarks and navigational pathways,
to those with long familiarity with this kind of condition"
Jane I. Guyer
Marginal Gains: Monetary Transactions in Atlantic Africa
(Guyer 2004: 8)

The Copperbelt has long been a central site of ethnographic engagement, thanks largely to the work of the anthropologists associated with the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute (RLI). Much of the work of RLI anthropologists turns on the notion that the situations they were observing in the new cities of the Copperbelt, along with other mining communities in what was then Northern Rhodesia, were categorically different from those that other social scientists were documenting at the same time in rural areas.[1] Physically removed from institutions understood to structure village life – whether kinship, seniority, or chieftaincy – and placed instead in a labor economy marked by shifting residence patterns and ethnic diversity, workers from throughout Central Africa

were forming new relationships informed by everything from religious affiliation to class-consciousness (Gluckman 1961). At the same time, while kin and elders remained far off in the village, it was clear from the earliest stages of urbanization on the Copperbelt that ties to these people remained important (Epstein 1981). The task for anthropologists like A. L. Epstein, Max Gluckman, and Godfrey and Monica Wilson, therefore, was not only to identify new forms of social integration, but also to put them into dialogue with previously existing relationships and modes of sociality.

An approach similar to that of these earlier anthropologists is useful in our efforts to understand what is happening on the Copperbelt today, and in this chapter and the next I will follow their example by focusing on structures and modes of sociality in Nsofu. I argue that Copperbelt social life is shaped by two complementary relational orientations: ambition and obligation. The various social ties that follow from these orientations in turn reveal a larger social structure, a gradient of material prestige. By teasing out the underlying structures of Nsofu sociality, we will be equipped to understand how social and economic life are shaped by larger shifts in the globalized extraction economy of the Copperbelt.

Spending so much time in this chapter on the topic of Copperbelt social organization without first engaging in a detailed ethnographic analysis of actual relationships may leave some readers frustrated. It is therefore worthwhile to state from the outset that my choice to frame the discussion the way I have follows from a belief that society is a whole greater than the sum of its parts. Instead of treating society as an outgrowth of so many similar actions, I choose to approach those same actions as reflective of a larger structure. What this position means for the present discussion is that

my first goal in tracing the contours of Nsofu social life will be to understand the underlying framework that orders particular relationships, rather than to begin with a discussion of those relationships. Only after I have outlined the basic structures of Copperbelt sociality do I turn my attention to the ethnographic study of actual Nsofu social ties, which will be the focus of chapter two.

My approach to urban Zambian sociality – and, indeed, my understanding of the relationship between structure and action, society and culture – has in large part been formed in response to many contemporary anthropological studies of Africa. Many such analyses, including the most recent book-length monograph of the Copperbelt, have highlighted not the ordered nature of social life, but instead the particular volatility of the continent in the neoliberal era. Given the widespread influence of these studies, it is necessary to briefly address the question of social organization against the backdrop of neoliberalism before taking our discussion any further.

A Note on Social Organization and Neoliberal Noise

In his study of Kitwe in the late 1980s, James Ferguson (1999) paints a picture of the Copperbelt at a time when the country was facing acute economic uncertainty. Many of the miners he interviewed were distressed at what they understood to be their newly demoted position in the global economy. In the light of the fact that they felt that Zambia was no longer moving forward, Ferguson argues that life on the Copperbelt during this time was marked by a profound sense of "abjection," of "not just being thrown out but being thrown *down*" (1999: 236). This analysis has been central to subsequent studies of post-colonial and post-revolutionary societies (e.g. Friedman 2007), and is helpful for the way it addresses the affective experience of economic decline. However, Ferguson's

discussion of the Copperbelt in the early years of the neoliberal period is characterized not only by a sense of his informant's disappointment or frustration, but also by a consistent undercurrent of inscrutability. He writes about his fieldwork in Kitwe as "a continuing encounter with an intractable unintelligibility," a situation in which "to understand things like the natives [was] to miss most of what was going on" (1999: 208).

In describing the Copperbelt in these terms, Ferguson is not without anthropological support. Much of the writing about African political economy over the past twenty years has focused on the particular noisiness or chaos of the neoliberal era. In the wake of structural adjustment measures and in the light of their aftereffects – whether shrinking welfare states, rising unemployment, or spurious foreign investment – anthropologists working throughout the continent have adopted language similar to Ferguson's. Life under neoliberalism is marked by an "uneasy fusion of enfranchisement and exclusion" (Comaroff and Comaroff 2000: 299), an "odd paring of dispossession and wealth creation" that creates a "constant paradox" for anthropologists and informants alike (Roitman 2005: 15). These overlapping and contradictory characteristics crystallize in a surfeit of meaning (Mbembe 2001: 145-49), an "overheating" of signs that results in a crisis of signification (de Boeck and Plissart 2004: 58). In this "generalized condition of semiotic suspension" (Apter 2005: 283), Africa under late capitalism exists as part of a "shadow" world, a world "where much is unknown, hard to make out, perhaps even unknowable" (Ferguson 2006: 15-16).

By offering this rather curt outline of analyses of neoliberal African life I do not wish to make light of the violence that things like structural adjustment have done. The long-term effects of neoliberal economic policy, which are still working themselves out

throughout the Global South, have had a deleterious effect on millions of people across the continent. However, in emphasizing the special difficulty of recent economic history, scholars often inadvertently assign an undue uniqueness to the neoliberal moment. While the human suffering that has characterized this period may sometimes defy explanation, it is not without parallel. As Ruth Marshall points out,

> In a continent whose history has been marked by fluid boundaries and the continual integration of strangers, and where intimate spaces are often the most dangerous, where economies have been structured over several centuries through at times extremely brutal forms of economic extraversion, and where radical, violent change has marked the past century and a half… Are people really more confused by globalization or neoliberalism…? (2009: 27).

Although there is no doubt that the incursion of the global market economy on the everyday lives of people who had not before been part of it brings change and, often, confusion (e.g. Shipton 1989, Taussig 1980), neoliberal capitalist expansion on the Copperbelt is better understood as a new chapter in an ongoing story of interaction between Africa and the rest of the world than a time of unprecedented disruption.

Perhaps there is nothing wrong with treating the current era in global economic history as one of special violence or misunderstanding; one of the best things about ethnography is its ability to capture the unique and particular and to treat it as such. However, a focus on the confusion of the neoliberal period becomes problematic when it is made to stand in for robust ethnographic engagement (see Sichone 2001 for a critique of Ferguson along these lines). The difference here is between "theoretical innovation" and "theoretical application," the too-quick acceptance that the parameters of neoliberal life are already known, so much so that it is possible to "bypass the stage of listening, discerning, and imagining" (Guyer 2004: 9, 14). This is probably a mistake that

everyone makes at some point in fieldwork, and I was certainly no exception. It was my informants' patient insistence that they were not really so flummoxed by the structures and effects of the neoliberal market that forced me to pay attention to the more subtle and consistent ways they organized their social life.

Like most people in most places, my neighbors in Nsofu did not always understand the complex international processes that made petroleum prices rise or copper prices fall. However, they were keenly aware of changes in the cost of foodstuffs, of the influx of certain products into the market, and of the growth of transnational investment. Informed by much of the current writing about Africa under neoliberalism, I tried to approach these issues within a framework of semantic "overheating" or confusion. When I did so, I consistently found that, while people in the township would readily acknowledge that the mechanisms behind market fluctuations or massive layoffs at the mine were opaque, and that this added another layer of uncertainty to their already complex world, these facts did not render their surroundings inscrutable or their social life unintelligible. In the fluctuating context of the structurally adjusted Copperbelt, people are not living in a state of protracted misunderstanding. Rather, they are carving out a social life in dynamic relationship with the forces of late capitalism.

My point in this brief discussion of contemporary anthropology of Africa has been to underscore the fact that ethnography in a neoliberal context requires a close-grained analysis of sociality in dialogue with the overarching movements of the global political economy. Given the challenges attendant to anthropological study in structurally adjusted urban Africa – not only the obvious complexity of these communities, but also claims about the continent's "intractable unintelligibility" – I have

found it instructive to take a step back. In setting out to understand social life in Nsofu, I begin with a discussion of interpersonal relationships on the colonial Copperbelt.

"Networks" and Colonial Sociality

A. L. Epstein studied both the cities of Luanshya and Ndola during the last decades of British rule, paying special attention to the municipal courts, to kinship, and to the lines along which social ties were forged in these dynamic urban areas (see Schumaker 2001: 175-85). In his 1961 paper, "The Network and Urban Social Organization," Epstein sets himself the task of finding order in Copperbelt sociality, arguing from the outset that despite the "random or haphazard character of much of urban social life" he is able to tease out certain "sets of regularities" (1961: 32). The patterns identified in this article remain relevant on the Copperbelt, and serve as a useful point of departure for a discussion of contemporary Nsofu.

What emerges from Epstein's study is, as promised, not a disordered social picture, but rather a carefully charted system of "networks" that maps out the disparate relationships among African residents of Ndola. Following Barnes (1954; cf. Mitchell 1969), he defines a social network as a web of relationships extending out from a particular individual. While it is possible that some of the members of the network may know one another, all that is necessary for them to be included among its numbers is a tie to the person at the center. Epstein identifies several possible sources of these relationships. Some derive from kinship or a common ethnicity, others from one of the newly formed associations, such as the African National Congress or various church groups, and still others from class identity. The picture of Copperbelt sociality that emerges from this analysis is one of an overlapping set of webs, each anchored by one

individual, and each made up of single-stranded relationships to a wide variety of other people.

Here, it is important to point out that Epstein's decision to use an egocentric network as his primary means of understanding social organization on the Copperbelt is undoubtedly an outgrowth of his methodology. Doing fieldwork in a segregated colonial town in the 1950s precluded some of the more standard anthropological research methods, so much so that Epstein was forced to rely a great deal on research assistants who lived on the location and reported back to him daily (see 1981: 8-10). His application of the network theory is worked out through an analysis of the diary of one of his assistants, Chanda, which recounts at length the different people that he meets, their relationship to him, and their conversations and interactions. Given these circumstances, it is perhaps overdetermined that the pattern of social organization that emerges is one in which a web of different relationships is mapped out based on their link to a single person.

This focus on the range of individual social ties and their multiple points of reference, while helpful in teasing out different types of Copperbelt relationships, initially feels rather incomplete. Although it is clear that Ndola residents were connected to each other in documentable ways, the regularities that Epstein identifies are hard to pin down. People seem as likely to be linked by kinship as by residence patterns, by church attendance as by ethnic loyalty. Epstein himself was apparently frustrated by the wide range of social connections on the location. Compared with his earlier study of Luanshya (Epstein 1958), he characterized Ndola – a municipal town without the structures created by mine administration – as random and "atomistic," unlike the "unitary" social world he

encountered around the mine (1961: 31). At first, I felt the same about Nsofu. Social life in the township initially appeared to me as a rather busy web of relationships, some of which were structured around kinship, others by residential patterns, and still others along ethnic lines. I found it especially confusing that, while connections occasioned by things like church attendance or school ties sometimes developed into relationships, people seemed just as likely as not to ignore such potential ties.

The question that follows from Epstein's study of urban Zambia, as well as my own ethnographic findings, is therefore whether or not we can identify any over-arching principle in the various interpersonal ties that have marked Copperbelt social life for decades. Neither Epstein's work nor my own indicate that sociality in urban Zambia can be reduced to any of the multiple rubrics – whether religion, kinship, or residency – in which every person in Nsofu is embedded. Rather than dictating the form of relational life in the province, these frameworks simply create a dense web of latent social ties around every person in the community. Through structures of common church affiliation or ethnicity, residents of the Copperbelt are surrounded by dozens of potential bonds, only some of which get picked up and turned into active relationships.

If a simple mapping out of how it is that people have come to know each other is inadequate to the task of parsing Copperbelt social life, how might we go about identifying a common mode of relationality? Here, we must return to Epstein's work, which highlights a particular theme that will be central to our study of contemporary Nsofu: status (see 1961: 57-59). Of the relationships that characterized the Copperbelt in the mid-twentieth century, those that afforded an opportunity for prestige to be augmented or confirmed were particularly significant. At the same time, as Epstein and

his contemporaries make clear, aspiration toward increased social status was always balanced against responsibilities to those without access to wage labor, particularly rural relatives. Together, these observations allow us to begin to discern an order amidst the multiple interpersonal bonds that continue to characterize the Copperbelt. Keeping the dual focus on status ambitions and obligation to others clearly in view, we can now turn our attention to the choices that transform potential ties in Nsofu into actual relationships. Such choices are, I argue, guided and structured by values, and it is to the topic of values that we must now turn.

Toward a Copperbelt Theory of Value

My understanding of the relationship between cultural values, social integration, and relational structures rests on an interpretive framework shaped primarily by Dumont, and refined by several more contemporary applications of his theory. I also draw, to a lesser extent, on Weber. Putting these ideas together allows us not only to tease out a common orientation behind the disparate relationships in Nsofu, but more importantly to produce a picture of social life on the Copperbelt that will enable us to hone in on the challenges of recent economic history and the promises of Pentecostal conversion (see Robbins 2004a: 11-13, 289-311).

One of the main arguments running through Dumont's work is that, with the exception of the "modern" West, all societies are what he calls "holist" in orientation. After tracing the contours of one holist society in his study of the Indian caste system (Dumont [1970] 1980), Dumont turned his attention to the various ideological processes through which holism was transformed into something else in the West, namely individualism (see Dumont 1977, 1986). The distinction that he makes between holism

and individualism provides a helpful starting point from which to discuss his social theory.

For Dumont, the difference between holism and individualism is one of structural orientation focused on value. Rather than simply dictating what is good, whether the person or the group, individualism and holism "determine what cultural form something has to take in order to even be eligible to be reckoned as good" (Robbins 2004a: 291). Individualist cultures are those in which "every man is, in principle, an embodiment of humanity at large" (Dumont 1977: 4). Understood in this way, the individual – that is, the "independent, autonomous, and thus essentially nonsocial moral being" (1986: 25) – becomes what Robbins (1994: 31) calls the "bearer of value," the social form capable of being recognized as good. In contrast, in holist cultures, "the ideal derives from the organization of society with respect to its ends… each particular man in his place must contribute to the global order, and justice consists in ensuring that the proportions between social functions are adapted to the whole" (Dumont 1980: 9).

Having discussed how holism and individualism structure the social life of a given community by dictating the form to which value is attached, it remains to discuss what exactly Dumont means by "values." This term refers to the whole constellation of cultural elements – actions, ideas, and the like – that are ranked and ordered in relationship to a particular social end. Just as the concepts of individualism and holism are not about asserting that one or the other social form is more important, but are rather about dictating the form to which value can be assigned, for Dumont values are not arranged according to some notion of inherent desirability, but by their superiority in the light of the structure of the whole. To illustrate this point, Dumont employs the example

of the distinction between right and left: while it is hard to argue that one hand is intrinsically more desirable than the other, when understood in relationship to the whole body, one is certainly superior (Dumont 1986: 248-250). Cultural elements ranked according to the structure of the whole, then, crystallize in a hierarchical set that orders social life. By studying the unique arrangement of this set we are able to discern the structure of a community as a network of interrelated values (Dumont 1980: 36-42).

In short, for Dumont the study of values *is* the structural study of social life and vice versa. If the values of a society are arranged hierarchically according to a certain social model, then according to Dumont the first step in understanding their special configuration is to identify what he calls a society's "paramount value," that is, "the preeminent value by which it is animated" and in relationship to which all other values are arranged (1986: 231; cf. Parsons 1996 [1953]: 151). In any community, those values that do not contradict the paramount value will be ranked more highly and "more elaborately worked out" (Robbins 2009a: 66), while those that run contrary to it will be placed in subordinate positions. This ranking under the paramount value leads Dumont to identify two concepts that will be helpful to our discussion: encompassment and reversal.

"Encompassment of the contrary," according to Dumont, is the fundamental trait of hierarchically organized values (1980: 239). He explains this concept by defining the paramount value as constitutive of the whole "set" of values; other values, in this definition, represent parts of that set. Although these other values are of a piece with the whole created by the paramount value, they are necessarily different from and, in their difference, contrary to it. However, while the paramount value "[controls] the places

and means of appearance" (Robbins 1994: 28) of other values, this does not mean that encompassed values do not occasionally dictate the nature of social life. For, in addition to encompassment Dumont identifies another characteristic of hierarchically organized values as "reversal": under certain circumstances values that are ranked below the paramount value will be those that order social action (Dumont 1986: 252-253). The effects and reach of reversal, however, are limited, as subordinate values are less well developed and positioned such that they can only structure less important "levels" of social life (Dumont 1980: 77).

The structures that Dumont identifies in individualism and holism, the ranked order of values that they produce, and the idea that the character of the latter has something to say about the nature of the former together constitute a powerful model for social analysis. Dumont's work has been central to my understanding of Nsofu, and it is for this reason that I have devoted so much time to outlining his theory. However, while I believe that this structuralist approach is extremely helpful in illuminating Copperbelt sociality, there are aspects of Dumont's work that make it hard to apply in a place like Nsofu, and it is necessary to address these before going any further.

Because he developed a wide-reaching social theory through an analysis of particular social situations, that is, the Indian caste system and the West, Dumont's framework produces categories that can feel simultaneously too small and too large. The binary distinction between holism and individualism, for example, is difficult to apply in many places, including the Copperbelt. Holism, as Dumont describes it, conjures up images of a neat, bounded society in which everyone knows his or her place.[2] There are multiple reasons why Nsofu cannot be described in these terms. Residential mobility and

the transient nature of Copperbelt households, along with shifting employment and educational structures, make it difficult to characterize Nsofu as holist. Nor, I would argue, is there a case to be made for individualism – particularly in Dumont's terms – on the Copperbelt. As we will see below, those whose efforts at self-realization cause them to ignore their relationships to those around them risk effective non-personhood. Clearly, in circumstances such as these, the individual, as Dumont defines her, cannot be the bearer of value on the Copperbelt.

Although we cannot easily classify Nsofu either in terms of individualism or holism, it is still possible for us to productively explore the relationship between larger social structures and cultural values in much the way Dumont proposes. As Robbins (1994, 2007a, 2009a) has shown, Dumont's theory can be effectively applied even in social situations that defy categorization as either individualist or holist. Rio and Smedal (2009) have recently revisited the dualist classification of holism and individualism to show its ongoing salience, albeit in terms different from those developed by Dumont. In their framework, the primary distinction between different kinds of societies is one of "totalization" and "detotalization," categories that, while roughly corresponding to holism and individualism, are better suited to clarifying the link between social action and social structures. Their concept of totalization, in particular, is useful in applying Dumont's structuralist theory to Copperbelt sociality.

For Rio and Smedal, totalization refers to the "social motion" through which broader ideas or structures – that is, society as a totality or whole – are drawn together to form "images that are composed in recognizable unitary designs" (2009: 39). In other words, through processes of totalization society is taken up and made visible in everyday

situations. Observable interactions, whether formal rituals or everyday conversations, therefore stand as so many instances of larger social patterns, as the whole structure of society distilled and actualized. Here the authors take care to point out that the object of analysis is not a specific ethnographic vignette, or even the collective weight of numerous such interactions. Instead, because a wedding or a purchase or an argument draws social elements into itself, it has something to show us about society more broadly, and the goal in engaging a particular interaction is primarily to find out just what that is (see Rio and Smedal 2009: 34-35).

Through this retooling of the holist/individualist paradigm, the substance of Dumont's argument about the relationship between structures and values remains largely intact; the accent, however, is placed much more clearly on the latter. By describing the "social motion" that is the stuff of ethnography in terms of values, we have returned to Dumont's language. However, given that our perspective on his theory has changed slightly, it is necessary to take one final step in developing a framework through which to approach Nsofu. Having laid aside a categorical distinction between holism and individualism that proves confining in the case of the Copperbelt, it remains to address the issue of value.

Dumont's definition of value, while robust and detailed, can be difficult to use: in his theory the concept has many facets but fewer analytical handholds. As we have seen, for Dumont values are embedded in, and in many ways coterminous with, structure. While this is a powerful idea, it has also led to critique and confusion. If the relationship between structure and value is so close that we can read one off of the other, it appears that we are faced with a dilemma when confronted with ethnographic data. Insofar as

values can be described as elements organized in the service of a whole, we are able to discern the patterns of action that make up a society. But, when faced with a particular instance of sociality, it becomes difficult to relate it to the idea of value without seeming to fall into the type of essentialism for which Dumont has been criticized (e.g. Appadurai 1988). If the social whole shapes actions, one is tempted to conclude that the choices and relationships of those who live in a particular society are only ever the result of its structure.

In response to this very real concern, I would suggest that we first focus on Rio and Smedal's reading of Dumont, in which structure is made clear in – that is, drawn up into – social motion. The connection that these authors make between actual relationships or events and their over-arching framework is one in which "each entity is an infinite being in a world that is a finite being" (Rio and Smedal 2009: 39). Here, the picture that emerges is not one of some essential person or type of society, but instead of the continual production of social relations that draw on a common repertoire of forms. While it is obvious that in this interpretation each instance of social interaction has something to show us about the structure and nature of the whole, there is enough flexibility to the actions and choices of each "infinite being" to effectively resist accusations that a theoretical approach informed by Dumont's structuralism is inherently essentializing.

While we have responded to one of the primary critiques of Dumont's concept of value, we have yet to lay out exactly how this concept will figure in our analysis of Nsofu. Keeping the language of totalization in mind, we must turn to two final distinctions in order to round out our theoretical toolkit. The first has already been

mentioned in the above outline of Dumont's framework; the second will require us to draw briefly on Weber's concept of "value spheres."

In an effort to get at just how we ought to conceive of value, I draw on Robbins' distinction, alluded to above, between the "bearer of value" and the "dimensions along which value is reckoned" (1994: 31, emphasis removed). In this reading of Dumont, the social form to which value is attached must be differentiated from the processes through which value is assigned. So, in the case of caste society, the metric of purity is used to evaluate the state of the social whole, while, as Robbins shows, difference is the central means through which value is given to the individual in the West (1994: 30-37). Here, I would highlight that each of these dimensions of value is relative; something is, for example, more or less pure than something else. When taken as a point of departure for ethnography, the question becomes one of sociality: How do people relate to one another? The answers we generate allow us to hone in on the axes along which value is reckoned in a particular community, and from there to an understanding of its structural composition.

Laid out in this way, the space between measuring value and identifying its object appears quite small. However, if we continue to think of the actual relations through which value is established as "infinite" instances of larger, finite social processes, then, at least in certain contexts, there may be an additional analytical step to take between identifying the form that serves as the bearer of value and tracing out the structure of the whole. This is certainly true of the Copperbelt where, as we will see, the bearer of value might be seen as a particular kind of relationship. These individual social ties, in turn, represent part of a larger chain of sociality, a hierarchy of status evident in the way that

relationships are formed and maintained. At least in the case of Nsofu, then, our task after working out the structural significance of a particular instance of valuation will be to discern the form of the social framework of which a given relationship is a metonym.

The last step in working out the precise nature of values in our analysis involves addressing how they relate to one another. In Dumont's theory, all values are ordered by the paramount value, the influence of which provides the key to understanding a society's structure. In contrast, for Weber (1946: 323ff), mutually exclusive "value spheres" vie for control of individual action,[3] sometimes taking and sometimes giving ground. On the Copperbelt, although the two values that together structure social life are complementary, they pull in opposite directions, and therefore carry the potential to contradict one another. As the following discussion will demonstrate, the terms put forward by Dumont for approaching the interplay of different values – both encompassment and reversal – do not quite capture this tension. It will therefore be helpful to keep Weber's value-spheres in view, particularly as our discussion turns in chapter three to the way that recent economic history has led to changes in Copperbelt sociality.

In the remainder of this chapter I will examine the two primary modes of Copperbelt relationality: ambition and obligation. I will refer to these modes as orientations, though it will become clear that they are what Robbins identifies as dimensions of value. Together, ambition and obligation represent the axis along which interpersonal ties are assigned value; specific relationships, in turn, serve as metonyms of a larger, stratified social world. When placed in this framework, the busy web of relationships that have characterized Copperbelt sociality for decades line up like steel

filings oriented toward a magnetic pull, and we are able to see the values that guide particular relationships in Nsofu.

Ambition and Obligation on the Copperbelt

Early studies of urban Zambian social life are shot through with references to ambition. RLI researchers reported that people on the Copperbelt and other urban areas tailored their relationships so as to enhance their status by pursuing connections with those they considered their social betters, or at least their equals (e.g. Wilson 1941, 1942; Mitchell 1957; Mitchell and Epstein 1959; Epstein 1981: 173-78, 1961: 52-57, 1976, 1992). The picture that emerges from descriptions of the colonial Copperbelt is one of a community focused on ambition and status, both in terms of material wealth and social mobility.[4] As Epstein notes, "prestige emerges as a pervasive concept in the sense that it enters into almost every social activity and into every social relationship: or, re-phrasing it more forcefully, there are very few facets of human behavior which may not be seized upon in evaluating prestige" (1961: 52). This theme persists in ethnographic studies of urban Zambia after independence, particularly in their emphasis on status-marking goods and the interpersonal implications of consumption (e.g. Schuster 1979: 84-86; Hansen 1997: 158; Raising 2001: 227-38).

My use of the term ambition follows these examples, and I take my cue from these ethnographic precedents in defining it both as a material and social phenomenon. By ambition I mean the desire for and pursuit of advancement, primarily in economic terms, but also in terms of influence and recognition in one's community. In Nsofu ambition sometimes appears individualized, as when young men try to secure a house for themselves before they marry. However, even this example illustrates that what people

are ultimately interested in is not only their own advancement, but also that of those close to them, particularly their immediate families (whether existing or, in the case of Nsofu bachelors, potential).

Ambition on the contemporary Copperbelt is axiomatic, a taken-for-granted assumption in many financial and relational decisions. Everyone in Nsofu has economic and material goals, and most people speak freely and frequently of these hopes, whether for a home, a car, or an electric stove. Throughout my fieldwork I was struck not only by the detailed nature of ambitions in Nsofu, but by the clear sense that everyone had of what was involved in achieving the things they dreamed of. Those who are hoping and saving for a refrigerator know its exact price in several different shops in town, and they regularly check to see if it has changed. Young women have visited the teacher's training college and found out about the admission policy. Others have collected the paperwork from the city council necessary for opening a business or the application for a passport that would allow them to begin trans-border trade. To the extent that they are able, people in the township are taking steps towards realizing these goals, either by purchasing a plot of land, saving a windfall, or stopping by the mine office to see about the status of an employment application delivered several weeks before.

In Nsofu, ambition is articulated in an interpersonal hierarchy that is both comparative and relational. The goals toward which ambition is oriented are fed by the examples of those who have already attained them, and it is through the display of others' wealth, whether a new Toyota sedan or high-tech cellular phone, that visions of success and metrics of advancement are developed. In this way it is possible to measure progress by changes in one's economic and social positions vis-à-vis another. More importantly,

though, it is through relationships with others in and outside of the community that many ambitions are realized.

An example of the way that an interpersonal relationship served as a means of pursuing ambition is found in the connection between the Chibale family and a young man named Jonathan. Mr. and Mrs. Chibale were among the wealthier residents of Nsofu; they wore fine clothes and drove a car. Jonathan, who had come to know the Chibale family through the Pentecostal church that they all attended, lived for a while in the Chibale's home and helped to care for their young child. After several months of this arrangement, Mr. Chibale told Jonathan that he would pay his school fees at the vocational college in Ndola, the provincial capital. Through a connection to those who were economically better than him, Jonathan acquired the means to increase his status. This is not to say that this relationship was not marked by warm feelings, mutual enjoyment, or respect; indeed, I found that everyone involved appreciated and liked each other. Nor do I mean to communicate that there was any cunning on Jonathan's part. Rather, his connection with the Chibale family was part and parcel of an accepted orientation toward his own advancement, and this relationship was, on his part, one shaped by ambition.

Despite the fact that much of the micropolitical and economic reality of Nsofu is governed by ambition, this relational orientation is not allowed to fully rule the day. As we have seen, advancement is by no means considered bad. However, it is possible in Nsofu to be too ambitious, and ambition left unchecked is potentially dangerous. The most striking example of this is found in the dominant specter of evil on the Copperbelt: the Satanist (see Blunt 2004, Marshall 2009: 245-264 for similar cases from Kenya and

Nigeria). I will have more to say about Satanists in the next chapter, but I bring them up briefly now to illustrate the circumstances under which ambition is seen not as a positive part of everyday life, but as a source of evil. The stories that circulate about Satanism in Nsofu consistently portray those in the service of dark powers as overcome by economic ambition to the point of greed. One such story, repeated frequently in Nsofu, was replete with references to the wealth one young man attained in exchange for the lives of his friends and family – four-wheel drive vehicles, houses, and groceries from the Shoprite franchise stores found across the Copperbelt. In this case, the familiar language of material ambition was used to describe a person whose interpersonal relationships had become destructive.

Even in the absence of Faustian pacts, unfettered ambition is socially dangerous. Lisa Cliggett (2003) has described in detail the way that migrants from Zambia's Southern Province to other parts of the country, including the Copperbelt, respond to the economic needs of their rural relatives. For these wageworkers, the demands of those who remain behind in the village wait at every turn, and constitute a considerable financial burden. However, refusing to respond to these needs in an effort to improve one's own economic position – that is, in the uninhibited pursuit of ambition – constitutes a risk that most people are unwilling to take. Doing so is tantamount to severing a tie with kin, and ending a relationship on which migrants must be able to depend when they return home. Similarly, the miners in Ferguson's (1999) analysis frequently found themselves caught in an uneasy balance between their own "cosmopolitan" aspirations and the ever-present needs of their kin and neighbors. Failure to provide assistance, at least insofar as they were able, meant weakening or breaking a relational tie. The

demands and needs of those around them, then, functioned as a check on their financial aspirations.

As these examples illustrate, on the Copperbelt ambition is constantly reined in by another relational orientation: obligation. By obligation I am primarily referring to the responsibility of those with greater access to material resources to assist those who are less well off. Obligation is strongest in the case of kin, both those living in town and those living far away in rural areas. To a slightly lesser extent, obligation also extends to neighbors, friends, and co-parishioners. The help given those in comparative need is imperative in times of crisis, such as a funeral or illness, but poorer people also depend on those who are better off to assist them with more routine necessities like school fees or rent money.

In Nsofu, while relational and economic decisions were always made with one eye to ambition, these same choices were also subjected to the weight of economic obligations to poorer relatives or friends. My informants were constantly aware of their actual and potential obligations to others, and frequently found that their ability to act on their economic goals was checked by these responsibilities. When relatives arrived from the village, when a cousin died in another part of Kitwe, or when neighbors knocked on the door asking for maize meal, people in Nsofu responded by giving as they were able, even if that sometimes meant incurring debt in the process. Failure to live up to the responsibilities of one's position meant risking a relationship, or worse, putting oneself in danger of gaining a reputation for stinginess, with all the social danger that might entail.

The relationship between ambition and obligation on the Copperbelt is, at least ideally, one of flexible give and take. It is tempting to categorize these dimensions of

value, to return to Dumont, in terms of "encompassment." Put this way, we might say that ambition is encompassed by obligation and only realized insofar as it does not contradict it. As our discussion has shown, this portrayal of the relationship between the two dimensions of value is not inaccurate, and ambition in Nsofu is indeed allowed to flourish and function so long as it does not compel people to abandon their obligations. However, the problem with this categorization lies in the possibility that because obligation is more highly ranked it may eclipse ambition altogether. When this happens – and my informants would argue that it does – social life is put under considerable strain. For, just as unchecked ambition is dangerous, unending obligation is oppressive. I will return to this topic in chapter three, but it is helpful to note it from the outset in order to clarify the relationship between the two primary relational orientations on the Copperbelt.

Ambition and obligation, then, are the dimensions along which Nsofu social relationships are assigned value. By this metric, the relational life of each person or household ought to allow for the possibility of ambition without ignoring obligation. In order for this to be the case, social relationships must join individuals or households of unequal economic status. To see why this is so, we need to return to the disparate nature of the ties with which our discussion of Nsofu social organization began. While the various connections in the township are, as we have seen, occasioned by any number of institutional commonalities, I found that most of the time they also linked people of higher economic status to people of lower economic status. By identifying the pair of values according to which social life is organized, we are therefore able to tease out a common mode of relationality on the Copperbelt. In the next chapter, I will show just

how relationships form across the Nsofu economic gradient and examine several such ties in detail. First, however, we must make one final move in our effort to chart out the contours of Copperbelt social organization. Before going on to discuss interpersonal relationships in Nsofu, let me first point out a few of their structural characteristics and provide a description of the larger social frameworks that these connections reveal.

Of Social Structures and Strata

In her interpretation of survey data on household expenditure in Ghana, Jane Guyer notes that all decisions involving the use of resources reflect "both the upward and the downward glance: to ambition on the one side and responsibility on the other," (2004: 132). This observation gestures toward two central traits of Nsofu social relationships. The first of these is their bivalence. Because ties of *obligation* obviously link people of higher and lower status, each such relationship simultaneously serves as a means of *ambition* insofar as it represents a connection that people of lower status have with those above them. In this way bonds between people of unequal economic status are colored by responsibility on the part of one party and aspiration on the part of the other (see Figure 1). The story of Jonathan's tie to the Chibale family illustrates this well. From Jonathan's perspective, the relationship was oriented towards a better economic or social position, that is, toward ambition. In the case of the Chibale family, the opposite was true. Their tie to Jonathan was structured not by an orientation toward their own betterment, but rather by an obligation to assist a fellow church member who was in need of money to go to school.

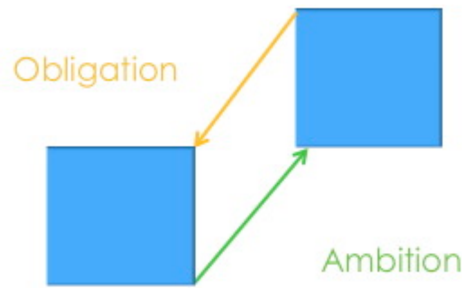

Figure 2: An individual tie of ambition
and obligation

Beyond the bivalence of Copperbelt social relationships, we must also note that in making connections no one is limited to only one position relative to his neighbors and friends. Most people in Nsofu do not have ties only to people of higher or lower economic status than themselves. Instead, virtually everyone in this community has multiple relationships, some with those of higher economic status and some with those of lower economic status. Because everyone is part of several relationships of obligation and ambition, and because every such relationship is simultaneously oriented up and down, the same person will be both a higher and lower participant in her relationships, both economically better and worse off than some of those to whom she is connected.

Relational life in the township, then, is indeed characterized by "networks." Rather than a simple collection of overlapping webs, however, these various sets of connections form a social world organized around economic success, a gradient in which everyone has someone above and below her. This wider structure of Copperbelt social life is, as we would expect, evident in the pattern of individual relationships of ambition and obligation. Even a brief glance at the two characteristics of these ties that we have

just identified – bivalence and multiplicity – suggests how this might be. We have already established that each relationship of obligation is simultaneously a relationship of ambition, and that each person or household is part of several such links, sometimes as the higher party and sometimes as the lower. When we map out the various social bonds of Nsofu along these lines, what emerges is a stair-stepped hierarchy of economic achievement that is revealed as individual relationships are lined up end-to-end (see Figure 2).

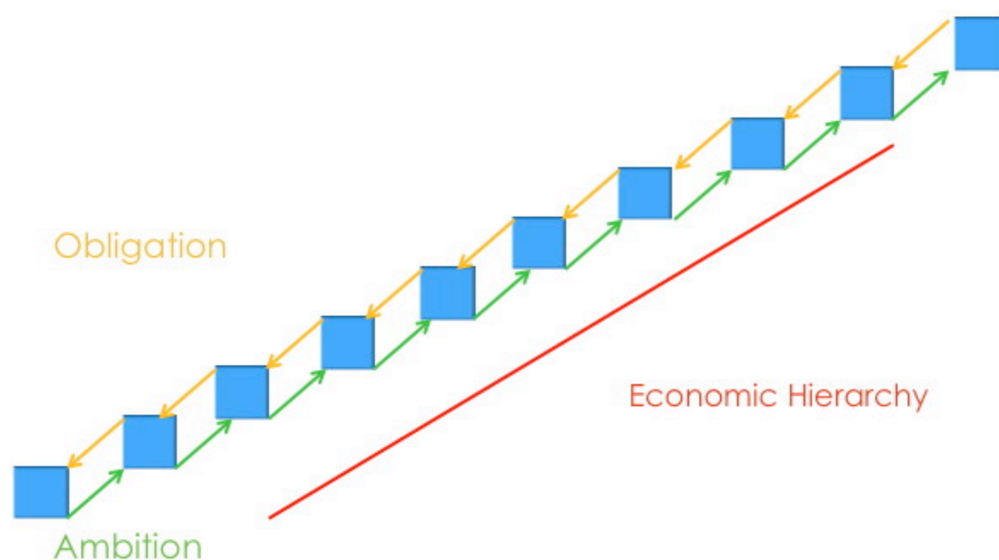

Figure 3: The Copperbelt Social Gradient

The larger structure of economic hierarchy behind urban Zambian social life is therefore evident in ambition and obligation, relational orientations that require material hierarchy. As we have seen, the relational cues indicated in a society's metric of value – that is, in how people connect with and treat one another – tell us something about the

structure that orders that community. In the case of the Copperbelt, the way that various relationships are accorded value indicates the presence of a larger framework of material hierarchy. For, in order for people to have relationships of obligation there must be people in their social world who are poorer than they are; conversely, relationships of ambition require there to be members of the community who are comparatively wealthy.

While the larger framework of material hierarchy is primarily seen in local interpersonal relationships, its ordering reach is also evident beyond the boundaries of the township.[5] People in Nsofu had a very strong sense of themselves as residents of a middle-income neighborhood, which they articulated through comparisons with nearby shanty compounds on one hand and the low-density Riverside neighborhood of Kitwe on the other. Similarly, people could easily rank Kitwe on a gradient of relative wealth in comparison with other Copperbelt cities, just as they would rank urban areas of the country in relationship to impoverished rural villages. For residents of Nsofu, then, social life on both a small and large scale is understood in terms of graded relationships organized by relative wealth.

An analysis of the structure of Copperbelt relationships and the values that order them, as well as the way that people in Nsofu characterize their community's relative status, demonstrate that social life in this part of urban Zambia is ordered by a hierarchy of economic status. By identifying this underlying structure, we have moved closer to our goal of mapping out Nsofu social life so as to better understand how it interacts with Pentecostalism. By highlighting the importance of economic status in Copperbelt sociality, we have also opened the way for a discussion of how changes in the economy bring about social shifts as well. Exploring each of these issues will require us to have a

clear picture of *both* the structures of Copperbelt social life *and* the various relationships that characterize Nsofu. Before addressing Pentecostalism or economic liberalization, therefore, we must turn our attention to how it is that the over-arching structure of material hierarchy works itself out in Copperbelt relationships. In urban Zambia, as in many places, social ties are formed and maintained through the giving and receiving of gifts. Understanding Nsofu relationality therefore requires us to understand exchange, and it is to this topic that we must now turn.

Notes on Chapter 1:

[1] For a survey of the major themes and developments in RLI research and the Manchester School, see Werbner 1984, Schumaker 2001.

[2] Indeed, one of the primary critiques of Dumont's theory – that it is totalizing and essentializing (e.g. Appadurai 1988) – often follows from this aspect of holism. I address this critique more fully below. Here, however, it is worthwhile to point out I would argue that his understanding of a social whole shaped and structured by interrelated, hierarchically arranged values does not preclude an analysis of change (see Robbins 2009a for an example). Rather, it is precisely his careful attention to the relative relationship of values to one another that allows Dumont to develop a theory of those cultural transformations that he argues produced the unique model of sociality found in western individualism (Dumont 1977, 1986).

[3] For Weber, individual social actions in aggregate create society (see 1978: 13). Such a reading of the relationship between specific instances of sociality and larger social structures may very well be in conflict with the theory we are employing – here, to return to Rio and Smedal's language, finite beings create an infinite social world, and not the other way around. Despite this clear difference between Weber's and Dumont's approaches, however, it is still possible to use the notion of value spheres to highlight the dynamic interplay of Copperbelt values; values that, while fundamentally complimentary, are frequently in conflict.

[4] Certainly, class was a central political concern for RLI anthropologists, whose various commitments to Marxism and the rights of African workers consistently led them to highlight the issue. Even despite this position, however, it is clear in Epstein's and others' ethnography that economic status was a perennial concern on the late-colonial Copperbelt.

[5] An example of what Dumont, drawing on Evans-Pritchard, refers to as "segmentation" (1980: 41-42).

Chapter Two: Relationships, Exchange, and Exchange Relationships

"*The connection between reciprocity and rank*
is brought to bear in the first case
in the form, 'to be noble is to be generous,'
and in the second case, 'to be generous is to be noble.'
The prevailing rank structure influences economic relations
in the former instance;
the reciprocity influences hierarchical relations
in the latter"
Marshall Sahlins
Stone Age Economics
(Sahlins 1972: 207)

I first noticed that the vast majority of relationships in Nsofu cut across social status when I conducted surveys of household consumption and inter-household exchange. Over the course of two separate weeks my research assistants and I documented the items that went into and out of roughly two dozen homes across the township.[1] During this time we noticed that many households seemed to have a small number of other families with whom they primarily exchanged; typically those families were of a different economic status. Through follow-up interviews and ongoing interaction with a number of the households I surveyed, I began to piece together a simple pattern: individuals or families typically had strong ties to just a few others in the community, almost always to people in a different economic position. The fact that these relationships presented themselves to me while I was looking specifically at the flow of resources between households underscores the importance of exchange to these ties.

In the previous chapter I argued that social life on the Copperbelt turns on relationships of ambition and obligation, which represent so many instances of a larger gradient of economic prestige. In identifying this underlying structure we have taken a step toward understanding social organization in Nsofu; our task in this chapter will be to

fill in this basic sketch. Through a study of Copperbelt exchange I will show how ties are formed between people of different economic statuses. I will then describe four such relationships in detail. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the way that exchange foregrounds ambition and obligation and therefore causes certain kinds of relationships to be more valued than others. The analysis provided in this chapter will set us in good stead to discuss the connection between Nsofu sociality and the political economy of the Copperbelt, which we will do in chapter three. First, though, we turn our attention to the role of exchange in urban Zambian social relationships.

***Wilatana!*: On the Primacy of Exchange in Nsofu Social Life**

Throughout my fieldwork I would often ask about the kinds of transactions that went on among households in Nsofu. I was particularly interested in finding out the extent to which exchange was expected and who in the community would be considered an appropriate exchange partner for whom. While everyone I talked to knew of those in Nsofu that seemed reticent, even unwilling, to give to or receive from their neighbors, my informants saw this as an untenable and even dangerous choice, one that most of them would not make. For people in Nsofu, exchange is a central component of social life. Indeed, for my friends Bana Junior and her husband, giving to and receiving from their neighbors was axiomatic: ‘That is the way we are,’ they explained, ‘we are Africans!’

On the Copperbelt, even before people establish enduring exchange relationships they give and receive the words that are the first sign of an interpersonal connection and a central part of daily social interaction in the township. One of the first sights after dawn on the streets of Nsofu is that of a woman wearing a brightly colored *citenge* wrap-skirt and bent over a hand broom, sweeping the yard in front of her house. While she works

others will pass by bound for kiosks and shops in search of breakfast: bread, sweet potatoes, or sugar for tea. Children in school uniforms, men in pressed dress shirts or mining coveralls, and young women in polyester cashiers' blouses also make their way through the winding streets to the asphalt road that slices Nsofu in two. Along this main street, women in headscarves and shapeless wool sweaters unload produce brought from one of Kitwe's main markets for resale in the township; nearby, young men arrange brightly colored cell phone airtime cards across the front of ramshackle plywood stands. All the while, minibuses painted a uniform blue and white wind their way along the road, sometimes leapfrogging each other in the race for customers. The cries of conductors working hard to attract passengers are loudest in the morning, echoing over the rooftops of Nsofu homes as people begin their day.

By noontime there is less pedestrian traffic, save for groups of churchwomen, sometimes dressed in the uniforms of one of Zambia's mainline denominations, who work their way through the township calling on co-parishioners, checking in on the sick, and visiting new babies. As evening approaches, people again fill the streets, often carrying colored plastic bags of vegetables or beans to cook for dinner. Children play outdoors, their school uniforms washed and dripping on the clothesline. Once again there is church traffic as people come and go from the dozens of prayer services, choir rehearsals, and Bible studies meeting throughout Nsofu. Those who have received visits from neighbors are sure to see them off properly, "escorting"[2] (*ukushindika*) them the better part of the way home and stopping frequently to talk with others along the way.

In this neighborhood, where so many people live behind high walls, morning and evening interactions like these are a crucial part of social life. When they walk to work

or church, when they stop to buy tomatoes or eggs, or when they escort a friend, people have an opportunity to see, recognize, and know their neighbors. They also have an opportunity to greet them. Exchanging greetings (*ukuposhanya*: to greet one another) is a central part of Nsofu sociality. Proper greeting is one of the first things children are taught; even before they can speak, adults will shake children's tiny hands and greet them by asking, 'How are you?' (*Uli shani?*). Pentecostal meetings, no matter how small, always close with a carefully organized receiving line, which ensures that everyone greets everyone else with a formal handshake. Members of a household greet one another each morning after they wake up, and in passing people on the street or in the market it is polite to greet most people, at the very least those with whom one has some connection, whether through work, school, or church.

Exchanging greetings, then, is one of the first markers of connection in Nsofu. Conversely, a refusal to greet someone (*ukukana ukuposha*) is tantamount to a rejection of a potential or actual relationship. If people in the community had disputes, their narrative of the experience would always include the other party's refusal to greet. When Bana Edna was angry at my friend Bana Sinkala after she borrowed her brazier and was too long in returning it, her feelings were most clearly expressed when she would not return Bana Sinkala's greeting. Over the course of several weeks whenever they passed each other on the street (which was quite frequently, as they were neighbors) Bana Sinkala would wave and call out a greeting to Bana Edna, whose stony gaze let my friend know that she was still angry.

The dozens of potential relationships that people have in Nsofu by virtue of their various institutional, familial, or residential connections therefore take the first step

toward actualization through the exchange of greetings. Another aspect of these conversations further underscores the importance of exchange in the relational life of this community, while also paving the way for items other than words to move between parties. Greetings in the township are routinely peppered with offers of hospitality, and anyone eating outside would call to those passing by to join him. Alongside these invitations to receive were injunctions to give. A woman walking down the street in a nice dress or a man sporting new shoes may be asked to pass the garment along to a neighbor. Similarly, anyone passing by or stopping to chat while carrying a parcel, particularly one that obviously contained foodstuffs, would be greeted by the question, 'Are we receiving?' (*tupokelele?*).

I personally found these demands very jarring, especially at first, and spent quite a bit of time casting around for examples of how to respond. Initially, because I was so taken aback, my response was either flat-out refusal or even criticism, each of these aimed at sidestepping the request. Over time, however, I observed that when faced with similar demands some people would simply laugh and reply that they would make good on the request another time. I adopted this approach, but still had not resolved the issue, as I was not at all sure if a verbal gesture toward an eventual gift was all that was required or whether people were serious in asking for a dress off my back or a cabbage out of my hands and expected me to give them these things at some point. It was only much later that several of my closest friends in the field helped me realize that these requests were often made in earnest and that, more importantly, I ought to be giving what was asked of me whenever possible. Gradually I learned the lesson taught to all small

children in Nsofu, who are frequently asked to break off a piece of their candy or roasted cassava and give it to someone else: *Wilatana!* (Don't deny/refuse [requests]).

As a social tie develops from the level of verbal exchanges it may expand to include the sort of material prestations alluded to or demanded in words. Giving and receiving of material goods, however, is typically not something that happens in the street, but is instead part of another kind of exchange, namely that of hospitality. Over time, a relationship between people who have come to know each other through church or work, for example, eventually leads to a visit. By calling on one another's homes people strengthen the tie between them and add another level of reciprocity to the relationship. Hospitality is offered in exchange for the honor of one's company, which is in itself a gift. A visit provokes a gift of food or drink, and occasionally something for the visitor to take with her, such as uncooked sweet potatoes or a blouse. It also opens the door for the visit to be reciprocated.

Beyond the increased interpersonal closeness that comes as the exchange of words passed in the street develops into sharing tea in another person's house, reciprocal visits are significant because they allow people to more accurately suss out one another's economic position. Here we must recall that, although the display of certain kinds of wealth is important to people in Nsofu, many of the status-marking goods in a household's possession are hidden from the sight of passersby. Certainly, clothing, handbags, and the occasional motor vehicle index one's economic position in a very public way. However, other markers of status are kept out of sight, usually because their owners are wary that thieves may see them and be enticed to rob the home. Many

consumer goods are therefore only displayed behind the walls and curtains of Nsofu homes.

In the context of a visit, then, friends are allowed greater access to the visible wealth of others, whether a wall clock or a shiny new "display" – a set of shelves from one of the import shops in Lusaka or Ndola. Through these items, residents of Nsofu send messages about their relative social statuses (also see Hansen 1997: 158-160; cf. Sahlins 1976: 166ff). Again, by emphasizing the importance of access to another's house in establishing his position, I do not mean to imply that wealth is not visible outside the home. Rather, what I hope to demonstrate is that as a social relationship grows knowledge of another's economic position grows as well. When social ties develop in this way – that is, when a potential connection occasioned by residency or church attendance grows through the exchange of words, visits, and gifts, while at the same time affording those involved an ever-clearer picture of their relative social status – the relational orientations of ambition and obligation quickly come into play. Specifically, awareness of the difference in wealth between neighbors or co-parishioners who have become friends eventually provokes a particular pattern of material exchange.

When someone finds herself in a relationship that presents an opportunity for personal advancement and ambition she may begin to make requests that, because they follow from a knowledge of her friend's economic status, "are adjusted quite precisely to [the giver's] means" (Guyer 2004: 147). As her friend responds to these requests, gifts of money, of food, or of other goods will begin to move toward the person in comparative need. By providing this assistance, the other person is acting in accordance with the cultural value of obligation, which requires her to respond, at least insofar as she is able

(see Sahlins 1972: 204-215). As we have seen, failure to make good on these requests is socially dangerous, not least because perceived stinginess can lead to charges of Satanism. Examining how the social relationships of those said to be Satanists are described will shed a bit more light on the role of exchange in Nsofu.

The Asocial Alternative, or What we Learn from Satanism

Throughout urban Africa, lurid tales of those who enter pacts with the devil are commonplace (e.g. Blunt 2004, Smith 2001). Such stories were repeated with quiet relish in Nsofu, and I heard many of them over the course of my fieldwork. In exchange for riches and power, Satanists are said to sacrifice the lives, livelihoods, and bodies of others. Sometimes those who are sacrificed are kin; often, though, they are perfect strangers, a notion that adds a layer of urban anonymity to more familiar discourses of witchcraft. There are several aspects of these stories that are relevant to our discussion of exchange relationships in Nsofu.

In most cases, Satanists and witches are said to possess large quantities of visible wealth of the sort that would index high economic status, yet they do not share that wealth with anyone else, and therefore live a life removed from the kind of exchange relationships that are central to Nsofu social life. There are sometimes said to be restrictions on the way a Satanist uses his ill-gotten riches – only being allowed to spend it in small amounts, for example – that limit his ability to use that wealth in relationships of exchange. Finally, when one does hear of exchanges being initiated by Satanists or witches, they are without fail nefarious and relationally destructive. Children and adults alike are warned about accepting gifts or loans from suspicious people, lest they be killed, or worse, find themselves inadvertently "initiated" (the word is always used in English)

into Satanism. Over and over again friends and informants in the field urged me to be careful who I accepted gifts from, the clear relational import of exchange in the township notwithstanding. Tales of ice cream cones or frilly dresses concealing harmful substances were ubiquitous in Nsofu – each of these an example of a gift bent on harm and a warning of the perils of exchange with those who are in some senses no longer human.

In Satanism, then, we find the perfect inversion of healthy exchange. Social integration on the Copperbelt depends on the movement of words and things between individuals and households. However, the only exchanges that Satanists are capable of are perversions of those found in normal Nsofu social life: instead of drawing the recipient into a relationship, satanic prestations always bring about the end of the receiver's humanity, either through death or initiation into the cohort of servants of the devil. What we learn from Satanism is just how central exchange in general – and enduring ties of exchange in particular – are to Nsofu sociality. Where the potentially fatal gifts of a Satanist are relationally destructive, the flowering of a social connection on the Copperbelt is marked by an established mode of exchange over time.

Returning to normal exchange in Nsofu, once people have established a tie of ambition and obligation, the movement of tangible and intangible goods settles in to a pattern. Gifts in the form of cash, business, or foodstuffs flow from those whose position higher on the social gradient provides them with greater access to material resources, while the recipients of these items typically respond by giving intangible items, especially labor.

This pattern of exchange is evident in the following descriptions of friendships between women positioned at different points on the social gradient. Although I describe these cases in terms of the tie between individuals, each of them represents a situation in which a bond between women was in many ways a bond between households, at least insofar as the resources they shared were also those of their children or spouses. In examining these accounts, we must be sure to bear the theoretical work of the previous chapter in mind – what we are after in teasing out a common mode relationality in Nsofu is a clearer picture of the structures that shape social interaction. Taken together, these four examples underscore the importance of material hierarchy, both to interpersonal relationships and to the exchanges that generate them.

Bana Kazempe and Bana Sinkala

Bana Sinkala was one of the first people I met in Nsofu and from the very beginning of my fieldwork she was one of my best informants. She also became a good friend. Bana Sinkala lived in the front portion of an unfinished house with no indoor plumbing or electricity. Mud bricks filled the gaps where the masons had left room for windows, which meant that if my friend was home her door was open to let in whatever light might find its way to her narrow sitting room. The house belonged to Bana Sinkala, and she rented the back portion of it out to several different families, which gave her a small but relatively regular income. For a brief period Bana Sinkala worked cleaning the flat of an expatriate woman who lived in town, but this lasted only a few months. Occasionally she would sell sweet potatoes or charcoal from her home. Despite her meager resources, Bana Sinkala was a generous woman and a lenient landlady who did her best to fulfill her financial obligations to her church and her extended family.

Bana Sinkala had not always lived so modestly; she had married at a young age and enjoyed a comfortable life with her husband, who had a good job with the mine power company. More than once she pointed out the house where she used to live and where her children were born, and we often called on her former neighbors. In photographs from this time Bana Sinkala appears heavier, dressed in elaborately tailored outfits and wearing makeup and earrings. Her hair is sometimes plaited, sometimes woven into a fashionable wig. All of this changed when her marriage ended. Bana Sinkala was fortunate to have been legally married, which was not the case for most of my informants, and therefore received some assurance of financial provision for her sons after the divorce. She was also awarded some of her former husband's assets, including the unfinished house she occupied. Nevertheless, her financial situation was stressful, and she didn't have the resources to complete construction on her home or even to start selling in the market, which she had done at other points in her life.

Early on in my friendship with Bana Sinkala I met Bana Kazempe. The two women were about the same age and frequented Pentecostal prayer meetings, although they were not part of the same church, and Bana Kazempe was not a Pentecostal. Bana Kazempe's husband worked for the same company that employed Bana Sinkala's ex-husband, and her lifestyle suggested a bit of what my friend had lost with her divorce. Bana Kazempe and her family lived in a large house. Her children attended private schools. When her oldest daughter got very sick she was able to see the best doctors in the city before traveling to the teaching hospital in Lusaka when they were unable to address the problem.

Bana Kazempe and Bana Sinkala's friendship spanned a large gap in economic status, which even a cursory glance at their visible assets made clear. At Bana Sinkala's house an aging, empty deep freezer sat in a corner, useless in a home without electricity; across the room, Bana Sinkala cooked her meals on a charcoal brazier. In contrast, Bana Kazempe's house was full of appliances and electronics, connected to satellite television and regularly stocked with food.

In the light of the visible status difference between the two women, certain material responses followed from their relationship. For example, although Bana Kazempe lived on the opposite end of the middle section of Nsofu, and there were certainly many places closer to her house where she could have purchased things like sweet potatoes, she would sometimes send one of her children to Bana Sinkala's house to buy from her. When Bana Sinkala's brother got married, Bana Kazempe served as one of the most reliable members of the "committee" of people whose pooled money helped pay for the event. Similarly, Bana Kazempe was among the few women from other congregations who attended the party that the women in Bana Sinkala's church threw for their pastor's wife, and she was sure to come with a gift in hand. While I do not know of specific instances in which Bana Kazempe gave or loaned Bana Sinkala money, I am quite sure that this happened on several occasions. In response to the steady and consistent support that she received from Bana Kazempe, Bana Sinkala was not without opportunity to reciprocate through gifts of loyalty and help. On the many occasions when Bana Kazempe's daughter was ill, for instance, Bana Sinkala would be summoned to her friend's home to help her pray for the girl, sometimes well into the night.

This example is helpful first in the way that it shows the many potential sources of social ties on the Copperbelt. In this case, the relationship between these women was occasioned by a number of common connections, including attendance at prayer meetings and their husbands' employment by the same company. While these links served as occasions for the friendship between Bana Sinkala and Bana Kazempe, however, the primary structuring characteristic of their relationship was not common affiliation, but economic difference. This is seen not only in the way that visible assets like homes or appliances indexed the relative wealth of each woman and her household, but more importantly in the way that Bana Kazempe's higher status necessitated and facilitated particular types of exchange. A similar, steady stream of reciprocity was also evident in the tie between two young mothers in Nsofu, Bana Sam and Bana James.

Bana Sam and Bana James

While Bana Sinkala and Bana Kazempe were women with school-aged children who had married years before, Bana Sam and Bana James were both young and newly married, each with a small son. Bana Sam was slightly older, but did not have a child until she had been married for several years, and Bana James' son was already walking and talking by the time baby Sam was born. Bana Sam and Bana James knew one another from Key of David Church, where they were both regular attendees. The tie between these women was also occasioned by the fact that they lived quite close to each other, which enabled them to see each other frequently, not only at church events, but also in regular visits to one another's houses.

Bana James' husband was the groundskeeper for Key of David Church and had some erratic income from carpentry work. Her family lived in three rooms at the back of

the church sanctuary. In the center room, where Bana James would always receive me, they kept a sagging upholstered chair and an electric stove that required whoever was cooking to kneel on a wooden chair before touching whatever was on the surface, lest they receive a nasty shock. Bana James occasionally helped to clean one of the many small private schools in Nsofu, and was therefore sometimes able to matriculate her son in the nursery school for a reduced price. The child was not always in class, however, and even when he was enrolled Bana James didn't always have rice or bread to send with him for a snack and so kept him home.

Compared with Bana James and her family, Bana Sam's situation was much more financially secure. Her husband had worked for a number of years as a medical officer in the mine. However, when he tested positive for tuberculosis he was dismissed from his position. With his severance pay the family bought several computers and opened an internet cafe. In addition to the revenue from this business, Bana Sam's husband found another job at a private clinic. For her part, Bana Sam was finishing her training to be a primary school teacher and would eventually find work in the government system. The family rented a small house in an area that had once been owned by the mine. While their home was not elaborately furnished, the family had a television, a deep freezer, a stove, and an old desktop computer that Bashi Sam used to for the correspondence courses he was taking from the University of South Africa. Just before I left the field they were the recipients of a new set of furniture that Bana Sam's father imported from Dubai.

As with Bana Sinkala and Bana Kazempe's friendship, the tie between Bana Sam and Bana James was marked by exchange. Bana James would frequently call on her

friend to ask for (*ukulomba*) foodstuffs or soap. Bana Sam, who was proud of having been well trained (*ukufundwa*) before her marriage, also took it upon herself to help her friend with basic household skills. In that way, she served as something of a mentor, despite the similarity in their ages. Although the flow of material exchange was largely one-way, with most gifts moving from Bana Sam to Bana James, there were ways in which Bana James reciprocated. Sometimes she would bring cooked food to her friend, which was primarily a gift of labor rather than one of foodstuffs. Bana James would also sometimes do favors for Bana Sam, such as keeping her house keys when she went out and needed to leave a way for a guest to get in.

When the time came for Bana Sam to deliver her baby, she traveled to her parents' home in Northern Province, where she stayed for nearly two months. During that period, Bana James began to spend more and more time with another friend, Bana Veronica. Although these women were closer in status, at least in terms of their visible assets, Bana Veronica could be counted on as a reliable source of the kind of material gifts that Bana James was used to receiving from Bana Sam. When Bana Sam returned from the village with her new baby, the exchanges and friendship between her and Bana James resumed.

Together, these two examples illustrate different aspects of the flexibility of relationships in Nsofu. As Bana Sinkala's story makes clear, people can easily rise and fall along the social gradient as their circumstances change. Throughout my fieldwork I heard numerous stories of such shifts. Similarly, Bana James' fluid movement between different friends illustrates the subtle changes and "mundane charisma" (Guyer 2004: 98) of everyday life on the Copperbelt. Just as Bana James had to rely on a new connection

during the time that her friend was away, residence patterns in Nsofu required people to regularly form new relationships when existing connections were severed by relocation. The rapidity with which this can happen is clearly illustrated in the next example.

Bana Vincent and Bana Taida

Bana Vincent was a petite, pragmatic woman, a relatively new convert to Pentecostalism and recently married. She hoped to bring her son, a child from a previous marriage, from the village to stay with her and her husband once their financial situation stabilized. In her efforts to manage the small income that her husband received from his work cleaning at a restaurant in town, Bana Vincent was meticulous. The couple lived in Nsofu throughout the entirety of my fieldwork, although they moved frequently. At various points they rented rooms in several different unfinished houses, but those situations were always temporary. Whenever construction was completed they would have to relocate when the owner either moved into the house or rented it out at a rate they could no longer afford. Eventually, they settled in a two-roomed cabin behind another house in Nsofu. Soon after relocating, Bana Vincent developed a strong relationship with the woman who moved into the newly finished home that she and her husband had just left.

Bana Vincent's new friend, Bana Taida, was also a Pentecostal, and soon began to attend Freedom Bible Church, where Bana Vincent was also a member. I do not know whether the connection between the two women was made at church or when one moved into the other's former home, but whatever the impetus the friendship that developed was intense. It was rare for a day to go by without Bana Vincent calling on Bana Taida, and she often visited her friend more than once in the same day. The two women started

praying together frequently, so much so that they began to be absent at formal gatherings out of preference for their private prayer meetings. Bana Vincent regularly ate at her friend's house, and the two women spent quite a bit of time watching Pentecostal television programs in Bana Taida's sitting room.

Bana Taida's husband had a bachelor's degree and worked in information technology. There were always computer parts lying around their nicely furnished house. The couple had two children. Bana Taida was a teacher by profession, but for most of the time that I knew her, did not work outside the home. When she was employed for a brief period she asked Bana Vincent to spend the days at her house while she was at work. In exchange for minding the baby and doing some light cleaning and cooking, Bana Taida had promised Bana Vincent K120,000[3] a month. Bana Vincent hoped to use this money to travel to her home village in Northwestern Province to buy potatoes that she could resell in Kitwe at a potentially large profit. However, Bana Taida did not stay in her position very long, and consequently this chance for Bana Victor to save some extra money was short-lived.

Soon after Bana Taida stopped teaching her family was robbed. Thieves broke in and took computer equipment and a number of other valuables from their house. Bashi Taida was sure that because the robbers had seen everything in the home they would be back for more, so he decided that the family should leave Nsofu, and within a few days he had found housing in another part of Kitwe. According to Bana Victor, Bana Taida's husband forbade her to tell anyone where they were going, lest word get out and the robbers find their new home. The women were unable to say a proper goodbye, and, since Bana Vincent didn't have a cell phone, she had no idea where her friend had gone

or how she was doing. Obviously, the loss of Bana Taida's friendship was a blow to Bana Victor, and she often spoke of how much she missed her.

While the circumstances under which Bana Taida and her family left Nsofu were rather unusual, it was not uncommon for someone to quickly leave the township and move to another part of the city, another part of the Copperbelt, or even further afield. This high degree of residential mobility effects people at every point on the social gradient. Those in formal sector employment, who are economically more secure, may be transferred to another city. Those with fewer economic resources may no longer be able to afford the rent in the house they are living, particularly if, as Bana Vincent's case illustrates, they have been staying in an unfinished house that is completed and ready for its owner or for tenants who can afford to rent a finished home.

In highlighting the relative impermanence of friendships like these it is important to emphasize that even though they might only last a few months, as was the case with Bana Vincent's friendship with Bana Taida, these relationships are nevertheless central to the social world of the Copperbelt. Even if they are cut short by the inevitable contingencies of urban Zambian life, ties between individuals or households of unequal status are a primary mode of social integration in Nsofu. As the final example will make even clearer, while these connections may come through any number of common affiliations, what brings friendships like that between Bana Vincent and Bana Taida or Bana Sinkala and Bana Kazempe to life is difference governed first and foremost by economic status.

Mrs. Mwanza and Bana Ilunga

Bana Ilunga and her husband had five children, the oldest of whom had finished secondary school and dreamed of attending the University of Zambia. Bana Ilunga was among the first women to be ordained by the Pentecostal Assemblies of God, one of the largest Pentecostal denominations in the country. She had years of experience in Pentecostal churches, and had been involved in establishing several congregations throughout Zambia. Her years of marriage, many children, and position in a common religious network all pointed to differences in status between Bana Ilunga and her neighbor, Mrs. Mwanza. The latter, also a Pentecostal pastor, was much younger, newly married, and without a child in that marriage. In addition, although Mrs. Mwanza also had formal religious training, she lacked the years of experience that her neighbor had in this regard.

Despite the ways in which Bana Ilunga was Mrs. Mwanza's superior, however, the Mwanzas' economic position was better than that of Bana Ilunga's family. Ilunga, the oldest child, usually stayed with relatives in another part of Kitwe, but the rest of the family was crowded into a few rooms of an unfinished house that was not connected to basic services. Bashi Ilunga worked for a local non-profit organization, but with so many children in need of school fees, not to mention the family's other expenses, his salary was insufficient. To make matters worse, his employer, like many on the Copperbelt, could not be counted on to pay him on time, and the family would routinely wait weeks for a paycheck only to find that they had spent it all by the time it arrived. Both Bana Ilunga and her husband were involved in church work as leaders, and this would sometimes bring in money in the form of offerings or gifts from parishioners, but these were sporadic and unreliable.

While Bana Ilunga had a dense web of connections to a number of people in Nsofu, the relationship that her family had with the Mwanzas was especially intense. At least one person from either household, myself included, visited the other virtually every day. Typically, those members of Bana Ilunga's family who called at the Mwanzas' did so with a specific request: a pen, an onion, a bit of curry powder, or some soap. Since there was no electricity at their house, members of this family would keep things in the Mwanza's deep freezer, charge their cell phones, and use the pressing iron. If one of the children was preparing for a school exam, she would come to the Mwanza's to study in the evening by the electric light. Bana Ilunga routinely came to pick cassava leaves from the plants growing behind the Mwanza's house, which she would pound at home to eat with *nshima*[4] in the evening. Sometimes she or one of her children would ask for cash.

In this way, exchange in this relationship followed a familiar pattern, with material goods flowing from the Mwanza household to Bana Ilunga's family, whose members reciprocated with non-material gifts. Occasionally, Bana Ilunga would bring us food she had prepared, and especially things that Mrs. Mwanza found difficult to make. She also helped in the kitchen from time to time. Sometimes she or one of her daughters would plait Mrs. Mwanza's or her daughter Musonda's hair. When Musdona went to visit relatives in Lusaka, one of Bana Ilunga's children slept at the Mwanza's house so she could get up early to sweep. And, Bana Ilunga regularly rendered religious services and advice to the family, praying for Pastor Mwanza's mother when she was sick and providing marital counsel to Mrs. Mwanza. She sometimes attended events at Key of David and would always show her support for the congregation through verbal affirmation and occasional gifts to the church.

The pattern of exchange between Mrs. Mwanza's and Bana Ilunga's families is by now familiar, as the status distinction around which the social relationship is structured is not one of seniority or religious authority, but rather economic achievement. Here again, while there were several common threads that brought about the connection between these two households, the friendship turned on material hierarchy that led to an established mode of exchanges.

Having illustrated what social ties look like when they are ordered by ambition and obligation, as well as how such relationships develop in the first place, we are now in a position to return to the framework laid out in the previous chapter. When exchange, the relational orientations it represents, and the ties it creates are understood as instances of a wider structure, what emerges is a picture of the social world of Nsofu.

Nsofu Networks, Cultural Values, and Social Structures

Our discussion of Copperbelt sociality began with a problem: In an urban context where people appear to be connected by any number of common links, is it possible to find an underlying pattern of social organization? The answer to this question has been identified in the relational orientations of ambition and obligation. In keeping with the distinction between bearers of value and dimensions along which it is reckoned, ambition and obligation represent the primary dimensions of value in Nsofu social relationships. The ties that best exemplify these orientations are, as we have seen, those that are forged between individuals or households of unequal economic status. Given that relationships that reach across economic position are those that most clearly exhibit ambition or obligation, it is not surprising that this type of social bond is the most common in Nsofu.

What we have seen in this chapter is the role that exchange has to play in all of this. While it is hardly surprising that gift-giving is central to the process of creating social ties on the Copperbelt, exchange figures here in more than just a classic anthropological approach to relationality. Rather, in Nsofu the movement of words and things that characterizes lasting social relationships is significant because of what it tells us about values, and therefore about the structure of Copperbelt society more broadly. Just as Robbins (1994: 39) describes the way that equality as a value is made manifest in the equivalent exchanges of many Melanesian societies, relationships in Nsofu reflect both ambition and obligation first and foremost in exchange. When individuals or households form a connection in which material goods flow in one direction and intangible goods another, it becomes clear that this bond conforms to the central cultural values of the Copperbelt. Put differently, those on the ambition end of a relationship confirm their position in the receipt of tangible goods, while those for whom the relationship is one of obligation indicate that this is the case in the gifts that they give. The intangible returns that follow material contributions further underscore the difference between the two participants, and therefore also confirm both the structure of the relationship as part of a larger gradient of hierarchy and its value in terms of ambition and obligation.

When exchange is understood as an indicator of value, the problem of Nsofu relationality appears much less troublesome. While the means through which people on the Copperbelt come to be connected are, as we have seen, extremely varied, the clear orientation of each of these relationships around ambition and obligation helps us tease out how it is that people in Nsofu negotiate the decision to develop some ties and allow

others to lie fallow. It is not every schoolmate who becomes a friend, nor every fellow church member, neighbor, or member of one's extended family. Rather, those latent links that get picked up and turned into the kinds of relationships that are most central to social life in Nsofu are those that, by virtue of a connection between people of different economic statuses, serve as channels for obligation or ambition.

In addition to responding to one of the persistent questions of Copperbelt ethnography, an analysis of what Hansen (1985) refers to as "cross-class" exchanges in Nsofu has two more things to tell us about social life on the township. The first is found in relationship between the values that this pattern of exchange illustrates and the wider structures of which they are a part. Recall that our goal in identifying the values that order particular social ties was to be able to understand social life on a larger scale. In cementing the link between ambition and obligation on the one hand, and economic hierarchy on the other, our study of exchange has strengthened the connection between social life and material hierarchy. What emerges from the pattern of exchanges that we have identified is, once again, a relational world ordered by a gradient of economic success.

The picture of social life in both this and the previous chapter is therefore one in which enduring relationships stand as images of a larger, hierarchical world. Economic hierarchy, in turn, is worked out in the cultural values of ambition and obligation, and seen most clearly in material exchange. As we turn our attention to shifts in the Copperbelt political economy and to Pentecostal Christianity, we will continue to engage these key characteristics of Nsofu sociality.

Finally, in addition to the way that exchange reveals both cultural values and social structures in Nsofu, the process through which relationships of obligation and ambition are established and maintained underscores the importance of the wider Copperbelt political economy to local social life. This is evident on several fronts. First, because social status is established largely on the basis of visible material wealth, and because people position themselves by assessing one another's resources, the gradient of economic achievement that we have identified as the underlying structure of Nsofu social life depends in large part on consumer goods. Second, the pattern of exchange that characterizes ties of ambition and obligation is one that involves a particular connection to the wealth of the mining economy, as it is the direct or indirect source of the material goods that move from wealthier to poorer people. Because social life in Nsofu is so closely linked to the Copperbelt political economy, changes in the latter necessarily produce shifts in the former. These parallel economic and social movements will be the topic of the next chapter.

Notes on Chapter 2:

[1] A copy of the survey forms can be found in the Appendix.

[2] Several of my informants would refer to this practice by saying in English, 'Let me give you a push.'

[3] At that time $25 USD

[4] The maize meal porridge that the staple of the Zambian diet.

Chapter Three: Copperbelt Patronage and The *Global*

"I've sold my car," he said.
"That's where I was on Tuesday when you came.
I'd promised to deliver it."

I knew how proud he was of that little Morris,
how, to him, it was part of the modest stake in civilized living…
"But why? What was wrong with it?"

"My brother had to have some money.
Ella's got two sisters who want to go to school.
Oh, a dozen different reasons,
all boiling down to the same thing – cash."

"That's a damned shame."

He smiled, to put me at ease.
"…No matter how much you manage to do for yourself,
it's not enough.
If you've got a decent job with decent money,
it can't do you much good, because it's got to spread so far.
You're always a rich man compared with your sister or your brother
or your wife's cousins.
You can't ever get out of debt while there's
one member of the family who has to pay a fine
or get sick and go to the hospital.
And so it goes on.
If I get an increase, what'll it help me?
Someone'll have to have it to pay tax or
get a set of false teeth."

"Suppose you don't?"

He shook his head at me, knowing better.
"You can't. You always know yourself what it's like
not to be able to finish school."

Nadine Gordimer
A World of Strangers
(Gordimer 1958: 299)

This conversation between Sam and Toby in my favorite of Nadine Gordimer's novels mirrors many of the interactions I had in Nsofu during my fieldwork. While

everyone in the township felt that obligation and ambition together were key relational values, I frequently heard remarks similar to Sam's: on the Copperblet, my informants agreed, obligation was unending. In fact, many in Nsofu felt that it had gotten out of hand and become too great (*yacilamo*).

Having established the centrality of social ties that connect individuals or households of different economic statuses to the relational life of Nsofu, it may sound strange to hear critiques of obligation from the same people who recognize its importance. In the light of the previous chapters' discussion, we might guess that such comments indicate that there is something wrong with the ambition as well. Moreover, because we understand the cultural values of both ambition and obligation to be a reflection of larger social structures, statements that the former are somehow problematic should prompt us to examine the latter for signs of trouble or transformation. Our task in this chapter will be to identify shifts in both the dimensions and bearers of value in order to demonstrate how changes in the Copperbelt political economy affect the social life of Nsofu. I argue that shocks such as privatization or recession transform material hierarchies in such a way as to leave a larger number of people at the bottom of the social gradient, thereby making relationships of ambition and obligation difficult to manage. When this happens, exchange relationships become increasingly tense, and alterative modes of relationality more important.

My discussion begins by relating ties of ambition and obligation to patron-clientism, which will in turn allow me to underscore the fact that Nosfu sociality is dependent on the wealth of the mining economy. I then move on to identify some of the ways that the Copperbelt has been transformed by recent economic history. My analysis

is focused on the 2008-2009 global financial crisis, but is applicable in many ways to the process of economic liberalization more broadly. Having discussed some of the effects of the recent recession, I then turn to several ethnographic examples that illustrate how these larger economic processes have caused the material hierarchy that orders Copperbelt social life to become increasingly bottom-heavy. When the structures that undergird both ambition and obligation are imbalanced, these relational orientations in turn become the subject of cultural critique. After outlining the various ways that people in Nsofu express their frustration with the current state of ambition and obligation, I conclude this chapter by briefly returning to the connection between these relational orientations and overarching social structures. This final discussion will set us in good stead to understand the social potential and problems of Pentecostalism.

Patron-Clientism in Nsofu

While those familiar with the literature on patron-client relationships will already have noticed some similarities between this type of social tie and those I have described in Nsofu, to this point I have deliberately refrained from discussing Nsofu sociality in terms of patron-clientism. There is reason for circumspection here, as framing ties of ambition and obligation in the language of patron-clientism from the beginning would arguably have occluded some of the dynamism that is so central to social integration on the Copperbelt. Beyond the potential to mask the give and take between ambition and obligation in Nsofu social relationships, care is also required because the concept of patronage has been used in enough different ways to create the potential for confusion. Before discussing how patron-clientism relates to Nsofu relationality, then, let me first specify what I mean by this term.

My understanding of patron-clientism has been shaped by the work of Eisenstadt and Roniger (1980), who, through an extensive review of the literature on this topic, identify some of the key characteristics of patron-client relationships. For these authors, the central component of patronage is a particular arrangement of generalized and specific exchanges that defines what they refer to as the "clientelistic" model (1980: 55). What they mean by this is that patron-client relationships are an outworking of one person's access to economic or political power and the use of that power in relationships of inequality within his or her community. In other words, patrons are those who, by virtue of their social position, are able to access the resources of the wider political economy, which they then use locally to secure the loyalty of their clients. For their part, clients depend on their patrons to act as channels for wealth to which they would otherwise not have access.

Discussions of patron-clientism in Africa fit quite well into Eisenstadt and Roniger's definition. For example, Newbury's (1988) historical analysis of Rwanda in the pre-colonial and colonial periods emphasizes the dynamic quality of patronage and connects shifts in these relationships to changes in access to and control over resources on the part of powerful elites (1988: 17). This pattern is also clear in Cohen's (1969) study of Hausa migrants in Yoruba towns, in which he highlights the vulnerability of patrons, who must entrust at least some of their business interests to those below them, thereby connecting them to outside sources of wealth (Cohen 1969: 83; cf. Bascom 1951).[1]

Having briefly outlined what I mean by patron-clientism, we can now return to the relationships of ambition and obligation that I have described in Nsofu. These ties

are, as we have seen, occasioned by hierarchy and constituted by exchanges that connect clients to outside wealth through relationships to local patrons. Here, it bears mentioning that this does not simply mean that patrons are those involved in formal-sector employment or that clients are those who are not. As the above examples illustrate, even the families of those who are formally employed, like Bashi Ilunga or Bana Victor's husband, become clients. Moreover, while all of the patrons in these examples work in the formal sector, many of those whose economic status puts them in positions of patronage have become wealthy not through wage labor, but through informal trade. Patronage in Nsofu, then, is not simply an outgrowth of certain people's employment in salaried positions. Rather, the relationship to the wider political economy that puts them in positions of patronage is the result of a complex set of interpersonal connections, educational opportunities, access to capital, and, at least sometimes, pure happenstance (see Pritchett 2011: 123-153 for a comparable example from rural Zambia).

In each of the examples provided in the last chapter, those who have comparatively greater access to economic resources – resources that often extend beyond the boundaries of Nsofu – are brought into relationships of patronage through various institutional connections, including religious or professional ties. In this way, they become channels through which others in the community are able to access resources that would otherwise be difficult to obtain. These clients, in turn, demonstrate their ongoing loyalty to and dependence on their patrons by contributing small, usually intangible gifts or labor. So, when a member of Bana Ilunga's family charged a cell phone at the Mwanza's home; when Bana Taida hired Bana Vincent to clean her house; when Bana Sam gave Bana James a few pieces of chicken to cook with dinner; or when Bana

Kazempe sent her children past a dozen other homes selling charcoal to buy some from Bana Sinkala, the wealth of patron homes was passed along to clients. In return, Bana Ilunga's children would sweep the Mwanza's yard; Bana Vincent would call on Bana Taida when she or one of her children is sick; Bana James let visitors into Bana Sam's home when she was away; and Bana Sinkala stayed up late into the night praying for Bana Kazempe's daughter.

As we have seen, those who serve as patrons in some relationships are simultaneously clients in others. This is clear not only in the cases from Nsofu, but also in the literature on Zambia. For example, Hansen has shown how the cash resources that domestic workers have access to through their employers, whether in the form of wages, loans, or pay advances, are put to work in their communities. Through dyadic credit arrangements known as *chilimba* (see Wilson 1942: 77; Mukuka et al. 2002) or, in rare instances, through loan-sharking (e.g. Roeber 1995), those who had access to cash or rationed goods because they were clients of better-off employers became patrons of those who lacked such connections (Hansen 1985: 67-68). The same is true of migrants from rural areas to Lusaka and the cities of the Copperbelt, whose status among the lowest-paid wage laborers in urban communities, often security guards, means that they are dependent on relatively better-connected relatives or neighbors for professional opportunities, housing, and cash loans (Cliggett 2003: 545-546). Meanwhile, they also function as suppliers of the resources available to them as urban wage laborers for clients in the village (also see Piot 1999).

A similar multiplicity of roles is evident in the examples of patron-client relationships between women in Nsofu. Bana Sinkala, in addition to being a client of

Bana Kazempe, served as a patron to her tenants, who would not only come to her to ask for small favors, but who were also dependent on her good graces during periods when they did not have the money to pay their rent. In this case, her comparative access to resources in the form of rooms in the house that she owned positioned Bana Sinkala to serve as a patron. Similarly, just as Mrs. Mwanza was a patron to Bana Ilunga, she was also client to others in the community, whose larger salaries or ownership of assets like cars made them people on whom she depended for cash loans and gifts, or transportation to work or to the market.

What we see in these examples, then, is both a discernable pattern of patronage and a simultaneous flexibility and multiplicity of position. While some discussions of African political economy have interpreted this kind of fluidity in terms of disorder or unreadability, it is clear that in the case of Nsofu these dynamic positions operate within a framework whose parameters are not undone by neoliberalism. Nevertheless, it is also evident from our discussion of patron-clientism that this form of sociality is bound up with the wider economy. It should come as no surprise, then, that shifts in the Copperbelt political economy, including those that have come with the implementation of neoliberal policies, have resulted in parallel social changes. Whereas the primary challenge that economic liberalization has presented to patron-clientism in some parts of the world has been the reduced power of patrons as a result of democratization and the expansion of the market (e.g. Ansell 2010), in structurally adjusted urban Zambia the neoliberal period has left scores of clients in search of patrons. As the following survey of economic insecurity on the Copperbelt will show, when the mine or the market is shaken, the number of

would-be clients exceeds the capacity of their potential patrons. As a result, the social world of Nsofu becomes unbalanced.

The *Global* on the Copperbelt

Over the course of the last thirty years, the Zambian economy has been transformed by numerous shocks. Because the country depends on copper for so much of its export revenue, the mining economy of the Copperbelt has been at the center of these changes. My goal in engaging certain aspects of recent economic history in Zambia is not to outline the numerous effects of structural adjustment, privatization, or the 2008-2009 financial crisis; in each of these cases, others have taken up this task far more thoroughly than I could (Saasa 2002; Larmer 2005; Chikulu 2000; Osei-Hwedie 2003; te Velde et al. 2010; Ndulo et al. 2009; Fraser and Larmer 2010). Instead, my primary concern is to show how some of the changes that have followed the sale of the mines to foreign multinationals or the global recession that drove copper prices down during my fieldwork interact with the pattern of social organization that we have identified in Nsofu. Having established that the material exchanges that characterize relationships of ambition and obligation on the Copperbelt are dependent on the wider political economy, we are now in a position to outline how shifts in the latter have affected the former.

I was in Nsofu during the period in which the country experienced the worst of the fallout from the global financial crisis (see te Velde et al. 2010: 14) – an ominous phrase that people on the Copperbelt quickly shortened to the simpler English term, "*global*." Because I have firsthand experience with this period, my ethnographic emphasis will necessarily be on the effects of the *global* in the longer story of the Copperbelt economy. However, given that layoffs, inflation, and currency devaluations –

all of which occurred during my fieldwork and which will be my focus here – have also characterized other periods, much of my analysis can be applied to the recent economic history of Zambia more broadly.

When the price of copper on the international market fell precipitously in 2008, one of the ways that Copperbelt mines sought to offset their potential losses was through layoffs. In 2008 the number of mining jobs in Zambia was reduced by 27% (Ndulo et al. 2009: 21). This number does not include those who were employed on a contract basis, who represent a significant number of those working in the mining sector; since contract labor was greatly reduced during the crisis, even a conservative estimate of the number of contract jobs lost dramatically increases the number of people left unemployed by the economic changes of 2008 (Ndulo et al. 2009: 19). To make matters worse, many of those who were laid off had outstanding debt of some sort; when the balance of that debt was deducted from their termination benefits, most were left with little or nothing at all (Ndulo et al. 2009: 21).

One of the contract workers who lost his job during the recession was a young man from Nsofu, Bashi Mutinta. Together with his wife and their youngest daughter, Bashi Mutinta lived in an Nsofu cabin with two rooms and a corrugated steel roof. Their landlord occupied a larger house on the same plot and did not charge Bashi Mutinta's family rent, but rather extended a familiar pattern of assistance to his tenants. In return, as we would expect, Bana Mutinta plaited the landlord's daughter's hair and Bashi Mutinta performed general maintenance around the yard.

Bashi Mutinta had been happy to find employment as a contract worker when he did, even though the pay was extremely low (K300,000[2] per month). Bashi Mutinta was

not employed directly by the Nkana mine corporation, but instead by another company that subcontracted some of the mine labor. He was assigned to a processing plant where he worked with a team of laborers operating a coal-powered heater used to dry processed copper. Like many contract workers, Bashi Mutinta hoped that his initial employment would serve as a leg up to a more permanent position at the mine. However, he was skeptical about his prospects: according to Bashi Mutinta, making the step from contract to permanent worker typically required a bribe that amounted to more than three months' salary.

In November of 2008 Bashi Mutinta, like many of his co-workers, lost his job. Most if not all of those in his department at the mine whose positions were terminated were contract employees. Around the time of the layoffs and retrenchments there was talk of eliminating this group altogether and instead moving production 45 kilometers up the road to the Nchanga mine in Chingola. Upon finding himself unemployed, Bashi Mutinta began looking for piecework wherever he could find it. Over the course of the next year Bashi Mutinta occasionally had work, whether digging a trench for a waterline or drawing visual aids for a friend who was a teacher. Bashi Mutinta was also briefly employed at one of the shops in Nsofu, but this position didn't last long. For a time his wife had a job cleaning one of the private schools in Nsofu, though the pay for this position was even lower than her husband's had been.

Workers like Bashi Mutinta were not the only ones impacted by layoffs at the mine. The Copperbelt economy is dependent on the extraction industry more than on any other source of revenue, and a loss of jobs in this sector therefore sent shock waves through the entire region, affecting retail, education, and many other areas. For example,

near the end of 2008 Mrs. Mwanza, who had only recently secured her position at the private school where she was teaching, went many months without pay. The school administration blamed the *global*, saying that because people had been laid off they had not paid their children's school fees. As a result, teachers' salaries also went unpaid. Over time, Mrs. Mwanza calculated that even if she did receive her back pay she would be unable to keep most of it, as she had been borrowing against her expected salary. Her eventual paycheck would therefore mostly have to be used to clear the debt her family had incurred in the interim.

An additional factor in the global financial crisis in Zambia was inflation, the rate of which doubled over the course of 2008 (Ndulo et al. 2009: 9). This was mostly due to a sharp increase in the price of foodstuffs, which was in part the result of the high cost of fuel. The food shortages that I heard reported each morning on the BBC were evident in Zambia, and it was not uncommon to come across people lined up outside one of the milling company depots in Kitwe waiting for maize meal. My friend Mrs. Sichone, who worked in the deli at Shoprite, the South African grocery store chain that has half a dozen shops throughout the Copperbelt, routinely reported that the store ran out of maize meal as soon as it could stock it.

Finally, the value of the kwacha fell dramatically during the crisis, depreciating by roughly 40% against the dollar between October 2008 and April 2009 (te Velde et al. 2010: 52). This would potentially have benefited the export market; however, the fall in the price of raw materials likely prevented this happening. The primary effect of the change in the value of the local currency on many Copperbelt residents was an increase in the price of imports. A sizable number of those employed in the informal sector –

which has always served as a safety net for people laid off by the mine (Larmer 2005), in addition to providing a livelihood for thousands of others – purchase their wares outside of Zambia, whether in the nearby Democratic Republic of Congo, or farther away in South Africa or Botswana. Others purchase imports cheaply in border towns or in the capital of Lusaka for resale on the Copperbelt. A few travel outside of Africa, perhaps to Dubai or Hong Kong. As the kwacha lost value, much of this trans-border trade ground to a halt; where it did continue, increased expenses on the supply-side meant much higher costs for customers. Sales on the Copperbelt, already hurt by layoffs, were further hampered by rising prices.

This brief sketch of the *global* has provided us with the necessary context to be able to discuss the local social transformations that follow economic upheaval. While I argue that neither the financial crisis, nor neoliberalism more generally, has completely undermined urban Zambian social life, the series of changes that have characterized the past thirty years have made the process of creating social relationships of ambition and obligation much more difficult. Specifically, structures of material hierarchy, exchange relationships, and cultural values are destabilized in situations of economic uncertainty. The following example demonstrates the relationship among all of these elements, and provides a helpful starting point from which to discuss the social transformations of the neoliberal period.

Negotiating Sociality Alongside Uncertainty: Hierarchy and Exchange

When Mr. Ntembe lost his job with the parastatal power company midway through 2008, his position as a patron for neighbors, relatives, and fellow church members was compromised. In this case, Mr. Ntembe's dismissal was not due to the

recession, but rather to accusations of misconduct. As a result, he was released without any benefits, including the sizable pension he had accumulated in his many years of service to the company. Although we cannot attribute the situation of the Ntembe family to the *global*, the loss of work without compensation within the wider context of economic recession that we witness in this example is gives us a sense of the circumstances that other patrons faced during this period and is therefore helpful to our discussion of the crisis.

Mr. Ntembe and I met in the early stages of my fieldwork while riding the minibus from town to Nsofu. I struck up a conversation when I heard him and another man talking about their church. It was Mr. Ntembe who first brought me to Higher Calling, and it was through this congregation that I got to know his family. In fact, Mr. Ntembe's sudden regular attendance at midweek prayer meetings, where he had usually not been present, was the first indication that my informants and I had that he had lost his job. Released from the demands of formal employment, Mr. Ntembe increasingly devoted himself to preaching at Higher Calling.

As time went on and Mr. Ntembe remained jobless, his family's circumstances became more and more precarious. His children stopped attending school, the power company disconnected the electricity, their landlord wanted them out, but they had nowhere to go. Stress and a reduced diet took their toll on Mr. Ntembe's body: gradually his church suits began to gap at the neck and shoulders, his baggy trousers held in place by a slowly tightening belt. Mrs. Ntembe, who earlier in her life had been a marketer, tried her best to generate some cash by selling fritters, sweets, and second-hand brassieres. Her husband pounded the pavement looking for work and rumor had it he was

preaching on the public buses, taking up a collection at the end of each message and using that money to meet the family's daily needs. Eventually, Mrs. Ntembe even attempted to sell some of her fine home furnishings, a decision that others in Nsofu took as a clear indication that she had grown desperate.

After Mr. Ntembe had been out of work for more than six months, his family moved out of Nsofu and into a few rooms of an unfinished house that was not connected to basic services. Blankets and plastic tarps divided the various rooms of this structure from one another, demarcating the respective areas of the different families that lived there together. Tarps also covered the gaps in the walls that the masons had left for windows. Mrs. Ntembe's health continued to decline, and not long after I left the field I was told that she had died. After Mrs. Ntembe's death the children went to stay with various relatives and Mr. Ntembe moved in with the Sichone family. By that point he had left Higher Calling, where most of the parishioners had effectively ended their relationships with his family; instead, he began to attend Pastor Sichone's church, Bethlehem Pentecostal.

The story of the Ntembe family is indicative of how the structure of the Copperbelt social gradient is affected by unemployment. Without income, people obviously lose social status over time; as workers are laid off and experience a change of position, the number of people at the lower end of the Nsofu material hierarchy increases while the number of potential patrons is simultaneously reduced. As a result, the material hierarchy that we have identified as the underlying structure of Copperbelt sociality becomes more and more bottom-heavy (see Figure 3).

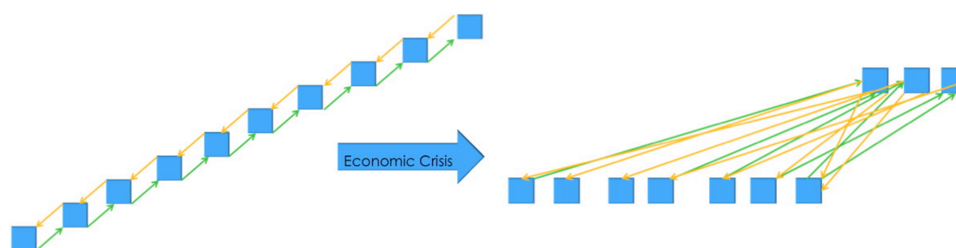

Figure 4: The Effects of Economic Crisis on the Copperbelt Social Gradient

In addition to illustrating the often-dramatic physical transformations that follow a change in social position, the example of the Ntembe family also demonstrates how a loss of status influences exchange relationships. As her family's economic situation worsened, Mrs. Ntembe reported that many of their social connections had changed. When her husband was employed and their income was both steady and large, friends and kin often came to visit. Mrs. Ntembe explained to me that during this time people counted on her family to supply them with various material contributions, as well as things like school fees or travel expenses. Once they were no longer in a position to make such gifts, she said, these relationships more or less dried up.

One of the few connections that the Ntembe family retained throughout their economic decline was to a woman from Higher Calling named Bana Ngoma. Though this friendship endured the Ntembe family's struggles, its structure and pattern of exchange reversed. The relationship between Bana Ngoma and the Ntembe household was initially one in which the latter had a higher economic status and made gifts accordingly. However, after Mr. Ntembe lost his job Bana Ngoma took on the role of

patron for the Ntembe family, frequently bringing them food and other things that they needed.

Not surprisingly, Mrs. Ntembe found the loss of so many of her relationships extremely painful. For her, the change in these relationships was a sign that her economic status had a central role to play in her connection to others. In the light of the wider relational framework of Nsofu, Mrs. Ntembe's observation is certainly accurate. While it would be wrong to say that social ties in Nsofu are not characterized by care or mutual understanding, the exchanges that index ambition and obligation are central to these relationships. When the pattern of exchange that characterized the patronage links that Mr. and Mrs. Ntembe had to friends, kin, and co-parishioners dried up, these ties withered as former clients sought new patrons who would create the possibility of ambition for them. Job loss and other economic changes that accompanied the *global* therefore altered both the hierarchical structure of Nosfu sociality and the exchanges through which relationships are formed in the township.

What we learn from the story of the Ntembe family, then, is that when economic changes mean that fewer people have access to the material wealth that facilitates relationships of ambition for others, the social world of Nsofu becomes harder to maintain. That interpersonal ties are strained by circumstances of economic uncertainty is evident not only in the stories of those who lost their jobs during the *global*, but also in the experiences of those who maintained their positions of patronage through the crisis.

Mr. and Mrs. Zulu

Mr. Zulu was a skilled worker with a good job as a boilermaker at the mine. His family had financial resources – not only his salary, but also assets, including a plot of

land where they hoped to build a house one day. Mr. and Mrs. Zulu did their best to respond to the requests for assistance that followed from their social position. However, the number of relatives, friends, and neighbors who needed and asked for their assistance often exceeded the family's ability to help. Frequently, a steady stream of requests for money or other goods threatened to overtake the family's opportunities for advancement. On one of my first visits to his home, Mr. Zulu described his financial responsibilities, which extended well beyond his immediate family. His comments suggest some changes in the Copperbelt material hierarchy over the past several decades.

> With the salaries people make, Mr. Zulu went on, they are usually able to manage, though there are hard times. For their family, January was particularly difficult, as all of their children required school fees… In addition, even though people are looking out primarily for their own (immediate) families, extended family members still come to you with a number of demands. However, this particular phenomenon has changed from the way it was in the past. During the Kaunda era, said Mr. Zulu, one man's salary could support a huge number of extended family members. Now, that's no longer the case. He has personally had some difficulties with his father and the family of his brother-in-law in this regard…. This desire to receive and receive is a problem in Zambian "culture," according to Mr. Zulu…[3]

During this visit, Mr. Zulu contrasted the hierarchical exchange relationships of obligation that he remembers from his childhood with his experience as an adult. Doubtless his memories reflect an idealized vision of the past and must be taken with a grain of salt. However, even if Mr. Zulu's remarks about the way that obligation has changed were filtered by time, they nevertheless communicated something about what he understood to be the proper relationship between ambition and obligation. In this regard, Mr. Zulu was not alone in his sense that something had changed on the Copperbelt. While there is certainly no love lost for the food and transportation shortages of the post-

independence welfare state, the fond memories people do have from the early years of Zambian independence are typically expressed in the language of a graded social world in which those with access to wage labor were able to support many dependents. In other words, many people feel that in the past large networks of obligation were possible.[4]

Images of a former, functioning hierarchy stand in stark contrast to the Zulu family's experience. For them, even those household goods that signal their position on the social gradient are difficult to maintain. During a particularly rough stretch for the Zulu family, about six months after Mr. Zulu told me how difficult school fees had been to come by, their good friend Bana Sam pointed out that the large stereo system that used to sit in the Zulu's sitting room was no longer there. Mr. Zulu had sold it. Bana Sam explained to me that a member of Mr. Zulu's extended family had needed help, and that he was therefore forced to part with an important marker of his household's social standing. Here, as in the fictional dialogue between Sam and Toby in the epigraph to this chapter, the obligation to respond to the needs and demands from kin and neighbors positioned lower on the social gradient required items central to one's social position to be sold. When this happens, ambition has been drowned out by obligation.

When the Zulu family became especially overburdened by the demands of their extended family, some of those who had previously relied on them for material assistance were compelled to appeal to others. I saw this happen one blustery Sunday afternoon around the same time the Zulus had sold their stereo. That day, Mrs. Daka approached me after church and asked if we could speak in private. Mrs. Daka, whose husband was sporadically employed as a contract worker in the mine, explained that she needed K200,000[5] to pay her rent. Normally, she continued, she would have asked Mrs. Zulu or

Bana Sam. However, for different reasons, neither of her regular sources of support was able to help her; while Mrs. Zulu had a number of extra expenses, Bana Sam's husband had not received his salary for several months. In the absence of these usual avenues of material assistance, Mrs. Daka wondered if I might be able to lend her the money.

This final aspect of the Zulu family's story points toward the larger structural changes that accompany economic decline. As patrons like Mr. and Mrs. Zulu are stretched further and further by the demands of others, clients like Mrs. Daka in turn find themselves with fewer people to turn to for material assistance.

The disproportionate number of clients and patrons – or at least the disparity between the capacity of the latter and the needs of the former – is the crux of Mr. Zulu's lament about the current state of the Copperbelt political economy. His comments, like Mrs. Ntembe's feelings about her changed social world, represent part of a wider critique of Copperbelt cultural values. When social life is undermined by economic crisis as ambition becomes more illusive and obligation more pressing, these relational models become the topic of public debate.

The Burden of Obligation, The Impossibility of Ambition, and The Problem of *Jealous*

According to Mr. Zulu, the desire to "receive and receive" was a "problem" with Zambian "culture." Before going any further let me emphasize that, like the majority of my informants, Mr. Zulu did not feel it was unreasonable that those who were comparatively wealthy should be expected to give to others. Indeed, as our discussion of obligation in chapter one makes clear, the imperative to do so forms one of the primary modes of relationality on the Copperbelt. Nevertheless, throughout my fieldwork I

routinely heard comments like Mr. Zulu's, statements that obligation had gotten out of hand, and that the demands of neighbors and kin had become too great.

Beyond remarks that obligation had increased to an unmanageable level, people's actions also indicated their feelings on the issue. This was true of people across the social gradient – most of whom, we have seen, are simultaneously patrons and clients. For example, Bashi Mutinta's family lived in three homes over the course of my fieldwork, moving the first time into Bana James' tiny quarters when Bana Mutinta felt she could no longer tolerate the demands of the relatives with whom they were staying. Others in Nsofu avoided visiting extended family, particularly in rural areas, because they knew that doing so would require them to play the role of urban patron. Since the obligations of nearby social relationships were already significant, many people allowed more distant ties to atrophy rather than let them become too financially burdensome.

In addition to complaints and altered relationships, other components of Copperbelt life provide further evidence that many felt the demands of those around them had burgeoned to an unmanageable size. As indicated in my initial description of the built environment of Nsofu, the majority of people in the township live behind high cinderblock walls fitted with heavy metal gates. Not everyone in the township has a "wall-fence" surrounding his house, but most have some sort of demarcation between their home and the one next door, perhaps a chain-link fence or a hedge. Heavy security is on one hand an index of status on the Copperbelt and is primarily meant to prevent theft. At the same time, barriers between the status-marking wealth of the household and the rest of the community also suggest the overwhelming weight of potential obligation;

for, by keeping their assets out of sight, people close off the possibility of unwanted visits and the exchange relationships that would likely follow from them.

Wealth in Nsofu is hidden in other ways, most notably the preference for those with the greatest number of status-marking goods to move house during the night. The reason people give for this practice is the desire to hide their wealth from others, particularly would-be thieves. Given the indexical importance of consumer items to relationships of obligation, the choice to hide one's status-marking goods by moving under the cover of darkness represents a step away from certain kinds of social ties, specifically those that have become too demanding or too numerous.

In the light of the way that wealthier residents of Nsofu feel about excessive obligation, it is no surprise that poorer members of this community had developed parallel responses to what they saw as a reduced possibility for ambition. On the Copperbelt, accusations of Satanism against the wealthy, both those in the neighborhood and those in seats of national power, often hinge on the failure of those with excess resources to remember those below them. Here, the problem is not hierarchy as such, but rather that in ignoring obligation the wealthy have closed off the possibility of ambition for others.[6] So it was that Bana Ilunga did not hesitate to speak ill of her sister who lived in the United Kingdom but rarely remembered to send back remittances to her family in Zambia. Similarly, Mrs. Sichone frequently expressed contempt for her wealthy brother-in-law. In this case, even though he was a close relative and made a very good salary, Mrs. Sichone felt her brother-in-law had neglected his obligations to his family by failing to contribute to their financial needs. Again, in each of these examples the sentiment

expressed was not that family members ought not to be ambitious, but rather that they should do so in a way that also provided for the ambitions of others.

That people felt the possibility of ambition had been limited in Nsofu was also evident in the experiences of small business owners in the township. On several occasions I heard shopkeepers, tailors, hairstylists, or marketers complain that the wealthy people who lived in Nsofu typically chose not to shop there, but instead did most of their business in town. Certainly, there were logical reasons for this – most of the well-to-do members of the community held formal-sector jobs that required them to travel to town to work each day. Shopping in town was therefore not only made possible by their schedules, but was also desirable because things were usually cheaper there than on the township. Although most Nsofu entrepreneurs were doubtless aware of these various factors, they nevertheless described local elites as too proud to do business in the township. By shopping in town rather than closer to home, would-be patrons failed in their obligations to other members of their community, making it more difficult for the latter to nurture their ambitions.

These various critiques of imbalanced ambition and obligation crystallize in the pervasive notion of *jealous*. Urban Zambians use this English loanword to describe those who destroy (*ukuonaula*) the material advancements of those around them. More than simply sentiment or verbal critique, *jealous* is active, taking the form of witchcraft, theft, gossip, or social sanctions. It is a commentary on hierarchies that fail to accomplish their social task: against the burgeoning number of urban working poor and the widening gap between them and the rich, *jealous* is relentlessly leveling.

According to my informants, *jealous* is what motivates most Copperbelt social ills. For example, Bana Chite explained to me that the frequent theft of merchandise from the small kiosk she sometimes operated in her front yard – which extended even to the boards that held it together – was the result of *jealous*. If her neighbors saw her progressing, she said, they would deliberately act to foil her success by robbing and destroying her stand. Bana Chite's tenant Bana N'gambe joined us as we were discussing how *jealous* worked against economic advancement and quickly chimed in with stories of *muti* (traditional medicine) left in a business she had once operated. People around her wanted to keep her from prospering, Bana N'gambe asserted, and had therefore decided to ruin her business with witchcraft. Similarly, Grace, a young woman who lived with her widowed sister's family in Nsofu, routinely complained to me that *jealous* led many urban Zambians to bewitch their relatives and neighbors, making it impossible for people like her to get ahead.[7]

Although *jealous* differs from accusations of Satanism made against those who have wealth but do not share it, these two forms of social critique represent mirror images of each other. When someone in Nsofu accuses his neighbor of being a Satanist, he is making a statement about the relational destructiveness of the other's accumulation. In this case, because hierarchy has not produced the social ties and exchanges that it ought, a wealthy person is subject to critique. Accusations of *jealous*, on the other hand, are made against those who would pull down their betters, often through witchcraft. The problem here is also a social one, as leveling the economic gradient of the Copperbelt through *jealous* deals exchange a heavy blow. Essentially, accusations of *jealous* are made against those who would undo economic hierarchy, whether through witchcraft,

theft, or ostracizing their neighbors, while accusations of Satanism are aimed at those who do not engage in relationships across that hierarchy.

When people in Nsofu complain about *jealous* in their community, they are not primarily expressing a wish to be free of the demands made on their resources, though I am sure that the weight of obligation has a part to play in their sentiments. Rather than yearning for a social world without obligation, what my informants were after in accusing their neighbors of *jealous* was a set of circumstances in which ambition was possible – one in which advancement along the staggered gradient of material prosperity that orders relational life on the Copperbelt was an option for everyone.

The frequency with which people on the Copperbelt invoke the notion of *jealous*, along with the other ways they indicate that obligation has become too great and ambition too difficult, illustrate how economic crises like the *global* impact social life. Having demonstrated that both the structures and exchanges of Nsofu social life have been challenged by things like unemployment and inflation, and that ambition and obligation are subject to critique in the light of these changes, I will conclude this chapter by returning briefly to the topic of social forms and values.

Values and Relational Changes on the Copperbelt

As we have seen, so long as ambition and obligation are able to work together – that is, so long as everyone is able to balance their goals for advancement against the needs of others – social life on the Copperbelt works in much the way we have described to this point. People reach up to those who are able to help them realize their ambitions, while at the same time reaching down to those to whom they have some responsibility. However, when circumstances change so that potential and actual obligations outweigh

any possibility of ambition, it becomes difficult for people on the Copperbelt to negotiate their social lives. To be sure, balancing ambition and against obligation has, as the Copperbelt ethnographic record makes clear, never been easy. However, when changes to the economic structure of urban Zambia – even small ones – leave more Zambians comparatively poor, negotiating ambition in the face of obligation becomes even more fraught. Relationships are more costly, exchanges more strained, hierarchy more problematic.

In the light of these circumstances, Mr. Zulu's complaint that there is something wrong with Zambian culture appears painfully apt. This is not because Mr. Zulu and his neighbors feel that the responsibility to provide for one's extended family is wrong, nor would they would disagree that individual advancement alongside these obligations is a good thing. The problem, rather, is that ambition and obligation reflect a larger social structure, one that we have identified as a hierarchy of economic achievement. Shifts in that structure represent shifts in values, and the parallel changes in the gradient of economic success and the relationship between ambition and obligation on the Copperbelt therefore ought to come as no surprise.

Watching people in Nsofu negotiate their social lives calls to mind Weber's discussion of competing value spheres, in which values take and give ground, sometimes threatening to overtake each other completely. When the social structures that undergird relationality on the Copperbelt are arranged in such a way that it is possible for everyone to simultaneously pursue obligation and ambition, when there is real potential for personal advancement alongside the responsibility to create similar opportunities for others, then the values that order social life are also kept in productive tension. However,

when economic shocks, or even the threat of crisis upset this balance, conflict arises between ambition and obligation.

When the established modes of relationality in places like Nsofu become difficult to maintain, as they have in the neoliberal period, several things happen. First, as this chapter has shown, people describe their social lives, especially the exchanges that anchor them, as somehow disordered. Second, in addition to the various discursive and relational strategies that residents of Nsofu employ in response to the imbalance between ambition and obligation, many in this community have sought to develop social ties that are ordered by different hierarchies. Such relationships appear to be insulated from the fluctuations of the Copperbelt extraction economy and future shocks like the *global*. Here, because Pentecostalism offers the possibility of a different kind of hierarchical relationship, this religion represents a social space that is potentially more secure than that of the township more generally. Keeping our discussion of Nsofu sociality clearly in view, we are therefore now in a position to turn our attention to Copperbelt Pentecostalism.

Notes on Chapter 3:

[1] More recently, Shipton (2007) has addressed the issue of patronage in his discussion of "fiduciary culture" among the Luo of western Kenya (2007: xi), though in a way that is less clear-cut: essentially, a Luo patron is simply someone who has the upper hand in a particular economic arrangement (see Shipton 2007: 104).

[2] At that time, $60 USD

[3] Excerpt from my fieldnotes, 5 March 2008

[4] This was also made clear in the comments of an older woman who, while sitting with me at a funeral in Nsofu, began to tell me about her Copperbelt childhood and early adulthood. One of her primary

recollections of the post-independence period was that during this time, as she put it, if your uncle worked at the mine, every child in your family went to school.

[5] At that time, $40 USD

[6] Critiques of the wealthy who neglect those below them are not unique to the Copperbelt, or to the *global*. In many ways they represent part of a longer tradition of social policing aimed at ensuring that those with wealth and power do not forget their dependents (Smith 2007, Bayart 1993). However, when paired with the frequent comments from people of many different economic positions that the demands placed on their resources have become overwhelming, accusations against those who do not distribute their wealth appropriately become part of a larger Copperbelt discourse on the breakdown of the balance between ambition and obligation.

[7] Frequently, discussions of *jealous* would include comparisons between 'Africans,' or 'blacks' and 'Americans' or 'whites.' Many of my informants insisted that *jealous* was a trait of their society alone, one that kept them from enjoying the wealth they knew existed in other places. It appears that this type of racial or national discourse is not unique to Nsofu (see Ferguson 2006; Vigh 2006) and I note it here for the sake of ethnographic comparison.

Section II:

Pentecostal Sociality on the Copperbelt

Turn to your neighbor and say,
'Neighbor, I see you in the future
and you are looking much better than you are now!'
Pastor Kufuna
Copperbelt Pentecostal Preacher

Having described the social world of the Copperbelt, we can now turn our attention to the way that Pentecostal practice interacts with that world. In this section I will show how the ritual life of Pentecostal believers both produces social relationships and works to protect those ties. When certain individuals display a special facility with Pentecostal ritual forms, such as prophecy and prayer, they distinguish themselves among their religious peers. The result, as we will see, is a hierarchy of charisma across which relationships of religious ambition and obligation are able to form. Much of Pentecostal religious practice on the Copperbelt is aimed at keeping these relationships separate from the comparatively unstable pattern that we have identified in Nsofu more generally. This, I argue, is why the material offerings that are so central to the prosperity gospel are always tied to the idea of sacrifice. So too, the unique and dangerous role of lay leaders – Pentecostals I refer to as "super-members" – is an outgrowth of their ambiguous position in their congregations, and specifically of their potential to shift the relational hierarchy of these groups away from charisma and toward material wealth.

Before proceeding to examine Pentecostal sociality in Nsofu, it is important to keep two things in mind. First, much of what I describe in this section, particularly in chapter four, represents the Pentecostal relational ideal – what, under the best of circumstances, Pentecostalism is able to accomplish for people on the Copperbelt. Even

in this analysis it will be clear that this ideal is precarious, that at any moment Pentecostal social life may slip back into the unstable realm of economic ambition and obligation. And indeed, as we move on to the final section of this dissertation, we will see that for all their efforts to maintain the integrity of their religious social life, believers often fail.

Second, one of the most important themes in this section is the prosperity gospel. This doctrine has been a vital part of the growth of Pentecostalism on the Copperbelt. However, as I noted in the introduction, believers have altered the prosperity gospel from its transnational form. While material wealth is certainly a key component of what believers in Nsofu mean by divine "prosperity," the scale of these riches is much smaller than what is usually associated with the prosperity gospel – that is, "billions of currency in any country" (qtd. in Gifford 2004: 151). In the light of what we know about how wealth is bound up with social life on the Copperbelt, as well as how economic circumstances have complicated traditional relationships, it should come as no surprise that material riches are an especially tricky component of Pentecostal practice. On one hand, believers expect that God will grant them prosperity in response to faithful religious adherence, and that this will enable them to more effectively live out the relational norms of the Copperbelt through ties of ambition and obligation. At the same time, because social relationships in Pentecostal congregations reflect these same relational ideals without being subject to the unpredictable movements of the market, they represent a form of prosperity in their own right – one that must be protected from economic concerns. As we will see, ambivalence about wealth haunts Copperbelt Pentecostalism at every turn, simultaneously fueling believers' faith and arousing their suspicions.

<u>Chapter Four: Pentecostal Hierarchy</u>

…I would suggest that the compensatory promises made by Pentecostalism – promises on which many other religions and, for that matter, developmentalist and good governance doctrines also claim to be able to deliver – would not be so attractive if Pentecostalism was not better than its competitors at setting up thriving institutions in which people can participate in a world shaped around those promises. It is Pentecostalism's social productivity that makes its promises credible, not the credibility of those promises that makes Pentecostalism socially productive."
Joel Robbins
"Pentecostal Networks and the Spirit of Globalization: On the Social Productivity of Ritual Forms"
(Robbins 2009b: 58)

A few days after my arrival in Nsofu Mr. and Mrs. Zulu invited me to their house. I made my way over the sun-baked roads to the far edge of the township where the Zulu family occupied a small square home with whitewashed concrete walls and a corrugated roof. Beyond me the city ended and the land fell away in a vast expanse of rainy season green dotted with low trees and occasional boulders. Just below me the Kafue River snaked along on its way south, where it would jump the Kafue Gorge Dam before eventually joining the Zambezi. I found the Zulu's house without difficulty thanks to the familiar sight of a low wooden table full of small mounds of tomatoes for sale, a landmark I remembered from an earlier visit to the family. Upon hearing my greeting, Mrs. Zulu ushered me through the kitchen and into a sitting room where she left me sitting with her husband while she returned to the kitchen to see about our lunch.

Mr. Zulu was an elder at Key of David church and he was eager to recount to me the story of the early days of the congregation. When Pastor Mwanza first came to

Nsofu, Mr. Zulu began, he had been affiliated with a group called Revival Power Ministries, but that connection had become strained when the bishop of the larger group accused Pastor Mwanza of asking him for financial support. Mr. Zulu said that this wasn't what the pastor or the new church leadership had been after at all; what they wanted, he explained, was simply spiritual accountability, a "covering" from a larger Pentecostal body. Since the relationship with Revival Power Ministries had grown sour, Pastor Mwanza and the Key of David leaders were in the process of looking for a new Pentecostal group with which to affiliate. This type of spiritual covering was important, Mr. Zulu added; indeed, if a church was "under" bad leadership the blessings that Pentecostals would normally expect might be hindered.

I did not realize at the time of this conversation how central hierarchy was in the lives of Copperbelt Pentecostals. Over the course of my fieldwork, however, I began to see that, just like everyone else in Nsofu, the kinds of relationships that believers consider most important are hierarchical relationships. When Mr. Zulu pointed out how much the leaders of Key of David were concerned with developing connections to Pentecostal bodies outside their community, he was indexing a much larger relational pattern, one that sits at the heart of a discussion of religious sociality on the Copperbelt. While the preference for structured hierarchies will be familiar after our analysis of Nsofu social life in the previous section, it will soon be clear that Pentecostal hierarchy differs from that of the rest of urban Zambia. Where the gradient that underlies social relationships on the Copperbelt more generally is one of economic status, believers organize their ties on the basis of a difference in religious charisma.

In this chapter, I demonstrate how Pentecostal adherence produces hierarchy. After describing how ritual practice differentiates Pentecostal leaders from laypeople, thereby producing a hierarchical relationship organized by charisma, I then move on to show how finer grades of distinction are established among believers through the creation of lay leadership posts. I also discuss how hierarchy is extended beyond specific congregations to include external authorities whose spiritual power exceeds that of local leaders. In these ways, Pentecostal congregations in Nsofu create relatively institutionalized, hierarchical structures. These, in turn, produce relationships that parallel those of the wider Copperbelt social world, a fact that makes Pentecostalism particularly compelling in relationally challenging context of late-capitalism.

While I will address Pentecostal hierarchy on the Copperbelt largely in terms of the distinction between leaders and laity, I should note at the outset that the separation between these two groups is largely artificial. Because of the relative ease with which ordinary church members become lay leaders and lay leaders become pastors, the gradient of position in most Nsofu congregations, and within the Pentecostal community more broadly, is effectively contiguous.

Charismatic Authority and Religious Hierarchy

It will come as no surprise to those familiar with Pentecostal Christianity that hierarchy in this religion is tied up in charisma. In Weber's famous treatment (see Weber 1946: 245-264; 1947: 358-386), this term refers to extraordinary gifts or abilities understood to originate not with a particular charismatic person, but instead with an external supernatural force. For Nsofu believers, charismatic power comes from the Christian God (*Lesa*) through the Holy Spirit (*umupashi uwamushilo*) and is evidenced in

displays of extraordinary spiritual power such as prophecy or healing, as well as other phenomena, especially ecstatic experiences.[1] For Weber, the potential of such demonstrations to confer charismatic authority depends on the recognition of others. Here too Copperbelt religious life reflects aspects of the Weberian model; as members of a community whose understanding of the supernatural has been shaped by Christianity, many find the powerful displays of Pentecostal leaders compelling (Marshall 2009: ch. 2).

Building on Weber's analysis, Thomas Csordas (1997) has developed a theory of charisma based on his study of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in North America. Laying aside the question of charisma's origin, Csordas argues that the *locus* of charisma lies not in the personality of a particular leader, or even in others' recognition of her special giftedness, but instead in the rhetorical space that is created through ritual practice (Csordas 1997: 135-140). By this he is referring to the possibilities for creativity found in a shared set of ideas and forms through what he refers to as the "mobilization of communal symbolic resources" (Csordas 1997: 141). Here, charisma is sometimes identified on the basis of facility with a set of ritual forms, at others in the light of how well someone has absorbed the rhetoric of another (also see Coleman 2004: 436).

Csordas' theory grounds charisma in action, removing the possibility that it exists in an external, nominal form. While he acknowledges that one could make a similar argument in Durkheimian terms, Csordas chooses not to do so, but instead emphasizes the phenomenological aspects of the performances that create charisma as a means of wrestling with the paradox of embodiment (1997: 152-153). While this way of reading charismatic practice works well in the western context that Csordas is analyzing, it is

harder to apply to a place like Nsofu (Werbner 2011: 195-207). Nevertheless, it is not necessary to follow his argument all the way to its conclusion for it to be useful for our understanding of charisma on the Copperbelt. For our purposes, the location of charisma in shared ritual practice opens the way for us to analyze not only how Pentecostal authority is created in Nsofu, but more importantly how charisma produces hierarchical structures.

The movement from charisma to institutionalized hierarchy takes us away from Weber, as his description of these two ideas is primarily one of unidirectional development from the former to the latter. Weberian charisma stands outside of, but is ultimately transformed into, bureaucratic authority. In his analysis, charisma produces stable administrative offices or institutionalized structures only when it is routinized – that is, when it has ceased to be charisma (Weber 1947: 364-372). Against this interpretation, Kirsch (2008) argues that charisma and bureaucracy need not necessarily be understood as part of a one-way process, but might instead co-exist in an interdependent relationship. Kirsch shows how the Spirit Apostolic Church, an African Independent Christian group in the Southern Province of Zambia, is marked not by pure charisma or its routinization, but by a careful blending of the bureaucratic and the charismatic. Together, these elements produce a ranked structure of leadership through which spiritual potency and administrative capacity coalesce in religious authority, what Kirsch (2008: 184) calls "bureaucracy in the Pentecostal-charismatic mode."

What these various analyses suggest is that, for charismatic Christians of all sorts, ritual practice can produce charismatic authority and with it stable, structured hierarchy. In this vein, Robbins (2009b) has argued that the institutional productivity of

Pentecostalism is rooted in the ubiquity of ritual – in the ease and alacrity with which believers engage in prayer, Bible discussion, or other forms of religious practice whenever they gather together. Here, as in Csordas' analysis, Pentecostals draw on a common set of ritual forms to create a space for demonstrations of spiritual power. As we will see, this shared religious repertoire is central to the creation of charismatic authority on the Copperbelt. Through familiar modes of religious practice, especially prayer and prophecy, believers quickly assess the relative power of a particular preacher. This process of demonstration and recognition in turn results in relationships of hierarchical authority and lays the groundwork for larger religious structures made up of similar ties. In discussing charisma in Nsofu, then, we will move from display, to hierarchy, to institutionality in order to tease out how Pentecostalism produces social structures in the township.

"This woman is a woman of God:" Charisma on the Copperbelt

Before going any further, let me point out that charisma is my term and not one that my informants used. In speaking about a particular pastor or preacher that they considered charismatic, Nsofu believers instead spoke of his or her power (*amaka*) or of having felt the presence of "Holy Ghost fire" during a meeting. This latter sensation was taken as an indication that a certain man or woman "of God" was especially "powerful." Sometimes believers simply described a person as someone who prayed (*balapepa*) and prayed fervently or tirelessly (*balapepesha, balapepa sana*). Other indexes of a preacher's charisma were found in the signs understood to accompany exorcism – vomiting, convulsions, and physical movements that believers explained were the manifestation of evil spirits, such as a woman crawling on her belly like a snake.

While Pentecostal ritual is incredibly uniform across the Copperbelt – a prayer meeting always consists of the same activities, such as singing and preaching, often performed in exactly the same order – there are occasionally personalized components, including styles of prayer or the use of elements like water or oil that evokes African Independent Christianity. These unique additions to established Pentecostal formats are another way that preachers can set themselves apart and gain a reputation for spiritual power. However, such practices are risky, as believers are typically wary of anything resembling syncretism, and most preachers rely on their ability to perform conventional Pentecostal rituals with charisma rather than employing novel components.

When believers found themselves at a prayer meeting where powerful manifestations or compelling practices took place, they were sure to tell others about the experience. They would also share stories of answers to prayers that they had heard with regard to a particular preacher, including reports that someone had found employment or been able to conceive a child after receiving prayers. If through such tales a Copperbelt preacher or prophet became known (*ukwishibikwa*) as powerful, dozens would flock to hear his sermons and request private prayer or personal counsel. Over the course of my fieldwork I was occasionally able to attend the meetings of an up-and-coming Pentecostal preacher. These opportunities provided a glimpse of how displays of spiritual potency established charismatic authority. In addition, visiting these meetings demonstrated the dense network of communication that characterizes Copperbelt Pentecostalism, as I would typically hear about a preacher from one person and ask to accompany her to this pastor's prayer gatherings, only to find other informants from various congregations also attending the new group.

Bana Junior was among the best connected of Nsofu believers, typically one of the first to know about new figures on the Pentecostal scene. One day in June of 2009, Bana Junior told me about a preacher whose meetings she had just begun to attend. She had been inspired to visit the new pastor, known by the humble moniker of Bashi Jethro, after she heard tales of his powerful and insightful prophecy. Bana Junior told me that Bashi Jethro had divined the cause of her various health problems, including her inability to conceive: a relative of her husband's had bewitched (*ukulowa*) her. As a result, the prophet told her, she needed to spend time in prayer and fasting to break the power of witchcraft. In the light of this revelation, Bana Junior was happy to continue attending Bashi Jethro's meetings. When I asked if I could tag along, she readily agreed.

The house where Bashi Jethro had established his impromptu headquarters belonged to a well-to-do widow. It was located among several rows of identical white homes with peaked roofs and sturdy green hedges in a township adjacent to Nsofu that had once been employee housing for the mine power company. Although finding our way through this uniform neighborhood might have been difficult, as we neared the meeting it became clear that anyone who wanted to locate it would have no trouble doing so. In addition to the familiar cacophony of Pentecostal prayer, which was audible from far up the street, the dozens of women who spilled out the front door of the house and crowded at the windows let us know not only that we were at the right place, but also that we had come too late to get a seat inside.

I visited several of Bashi Jethro's meetings, always finding the tiny house bursting at the seams (see Figure 5). These meetings ran according to a familiar Pentecostal format – prayer, singing, more prayer, offering, and a sermon. Despite the

exuberance with which everyone participated in these activities, it appeared that most of those who came to see Bashi Jethro were not interested in the content of the service per se, but rather in his gifts as a prophet, counselor, or healer. When the formal meeting ended after several hours, virtually everyone remained behind in hopes of meeting with Bashi Jethro in private. Indeed, his fame as a prophet had spread so widely that the owner of the house, along with a few others who served as Bashi Jethro's assistants, developed a system to manage the crowds. People were divided into groups based on where they lived, and then within those groups asked to take a number from an empty hair relaxer box set aside for this purpose (see Figure 6).

Figure 5: The house where Bashi Jethro held his meetings was filled to overflowing

Figure 6: The number system used by people waiting to see Bashi Jethro

It was not uncommon for some of my informants to travel outside of Nsofu to visit a Pentecostal leader whose reputation had reached the township. One evening I joined Bana Vincent and Bana Charles on a long quest to the other side of the city to visit Pastor Msiska, whose prophetic gifts and powerful prayers had become the subject of much discussion between the two women. Together we clambered from one minibus to another in the bustling Kitwe station and then watched the mine drop behind us as we climbed to the sprawling compounds on the north side of the city. We had been instructed to ask the driver to let us off at “the boutique,” which proved to be a small shop selling second-hand shoes and handbags. Bana Charles was familiar with the pastor’s house, and led us through the winding streets of the township until we finally arrived at a mud brick building with a corrugated roof and a frightening network of electric wires slung along the ceiling. The prophet’s wife, balancing her infant son on her

hip, showed us into the living room, where we were instructed to wait until her husband came back from running errands.

Eventually, Pastor Msiska returned home. Each of my friends had particular issues about which they were seeking council; Bana Vincent had been trying for many months to have a child, while Bana Charles was considering the possibility of a second marriage. Bana Vincent, Bana Charles, and I waited while Pastor Msiska prayed for each of us in turn. As he prayed for Bana Charles, the prophet said he had a vision of her in a wedding dress, which Pastor Msiska took as confirmation that she would indeed marry soon. Bana Victor's results were less dramatic, but she had already been given much in the way of prophetic guidance from Pastor Msiska and others. Not only had someone else recently had a vision of her carrying a "fat" baby, but Pastor Msiska had, in a previous consultation, revealed that her husband had a girlfriend "on the side." Bana Victor told us that she had already suspected this, and the prophetic confirmation gave her the courage to confront her husband about the affair.

When Pastor Msiska had finished praying, he left again. The three of us remained at his house for a while longer and visited with his wife while she bathed the baby in a plastic tub in the living room. Finally, we excused ourselves and made our way through the thickening twilight to the bus stop to start our journey back to Nsofu. As we walked, both Bana Vincent and Bana Charles expressed dismay that Pastor Msiska's church was so far away from Nsofu – were that not the case, they said, they would certainly start attending regularly.

As the examples of Pastor Msiska and Bashi Jethro illustrate, displays of spiritual power in one-on-one consultation often lead believers to develop, or at least consider, a

longer-term relationship with a particular pastor. This was certainly true in the case of Bana Mfuwe, the charismatic leader of Higher Calling, who moved to South Africa soon after I arrived in the field. Like the meetings at Bashi Jethro's house, Higher Calling gatherings were often filled to capacity during Bana Mfuwe's tenure. Of the dozens who crowded into the tiny chapel erected in her back yard, many had come to Higher Calling as a result of an initial, personal encounter with this powerful "woman of God." One of these believers was Bana Sinkala.

Bana Sinkala had been a Pentecostal since coming to the Copperbelt from Northwestern Province as a teenager. When she began to face problems in her marriage, Bana Sinkala did what many Pentecostal women do in similar situations and sought spiritual help in hopes of resolving the conflict with her husband. She had heard people in Nsofu say that Bana Mfuwe was particularly powerful in prayer, so when a friend offered to introduce them Bana Sinkala was happy for the opportunity. Bana Sinkala began her account of these events with her first visit to Bana Mfuwe's house.

> BS: ….That's how we started. We prayed. And in my heart I was saying, 'This woman is a woman of God, a woman of God.' She prayed, and prayed, and prayed. And then she told me, 'We have prayer meeting on Wednesdays'… So I said, 'Alright, no problem, I will come.' So, early in the morning – *mayo*![2] We had bathed. Now, the one who brought me [to prayers] didn't go [to the meeting]. But I was there early… I arrived to find around three people. We started praying. We started praying, we started intercession, intercession, intercession.
> NH: Was that intercession different than what you were used to in your church?
> BS: Intercession was the same
> NH: Just the same?
> BS: The very same.
> NH: OK
> BS: …there was a time for praying for burdens, whatever problems one might have, they told us to pray for these things. You pray and

pray and pray. OK, it was powerful when I first started.
NH: Really?
BS: Mmmm.
NH: More powerful than what you were used to?
BS: …It hit me hard (*yaleumfwika sana*). Since, when you [started] praying for your burdens, maybe with other people, maybe they would instruct us to join hands. Everyone pray for his or her friend [i.e. the person next to him or her].
NH: That's what Bana Mfuwe likes to do (*ifyo batemwa Bana Mfuwe*)
BS: Yes, everyone prays for someone else. Then, it feels like that burden just, just loosens. We prayed, we prayed, we prayed, and I got interested. I said that I would begin to attend regularly.
NH: Just because of the prayer; not the preaching or anything?
BS: Uh-ah, just the prayers, the prayers are what I really loved.
NH: Yes
BS: … but even then that message – OK, even the message touched me… In our church [i.e. another Pentecostal congregation] you got used to [people just saying], 'O God, O this, we children of God are living in sin.' But with her [Bana Mfuwe], she mainly touched on people's burdens, said things like 'God can deliver you, God can whatever.' So that way anyone who has a burden will perceive that God is working right there…
By then I was interested. Every Saturday –
NH: You went
BS: I went to… prayer and fasting
NH: By that time had the problems with your husband started?
BS: Yes
NH: So that was what caused you to go to prayers?
BS: Yes, that was what caused me to go; for the most part, for the most part. That's how we started praying. Saturday, 9:00 I was already there, sometimes I was the first one to arrive. Sometimes Bana Mfuwe hadn't even had her morning bath, and I would already be there. The person who first brought me to Bana Mfuwe never came back.

[People would say], 'You are strong.' And Bana Mfuwe loved me. She loved me. If she was preaching she might yell out 'Bana Jack' – she loved to say 'Bana Jack, Bana Jack!' Just like that, 'Bana Jack. If we had to make [monetary] pledges, I was the first to bring mine. We made pledges and things like that. By the time we put up the building I had already been attending for a long time.
NH: OK
BS: When we made the benches I was there.
NH: So you go way back (*muli bakaya*)
BS: For sure (*sana*)! And in those days there were many people

NH: Yes, that's what I found
BS: Mmmm
NH: When I came
BS: There were so many people and the place was packed. So people got there very early, because if you came late you had to stand outside.[3]

Bana Sinkala's account of the first heady days of Higher Calling provides a glimpse of the process through which Pentecostal fellowships form in Nsofu. When she first met Bana Mfuwe, Bana Sinkala was already familiar with Pentecostal rituals, including preaching and prayer. What set Bana Mfuwe apart in Bana Sinkala's initial experience, then, was not so much that her practices were unique, but rather that she performed them in a way that felt especially "powerful." That is, she effectively mobilized the ritual tools of Copperbelt Pentecostalism a way that Bana Sinkala experienced as meaningful.

It was because of this potent personal prayer that Bana Sinkala decided to attend Bana Mfuwe's meeting. In other words, once a relationship of charismatic authority was established between the two women, Bana Sinkala took steps towards joining Bana Mfuwe's followers. Many of the members of Higher Calling told similar stories of their incorporation into the group. Typically, they had been drawn to the fellowship not by their exposure to other laypeople, but instead through an encounter with Bana Mfuwe. This may have happened in the context of a formal meeting when someone was compelled by the content or tenor of Bana Mfuwe's preaching. More often, however, believers first came to appreciate Bana Mfuwe's charisma when meeting with her privately as Bana Sinkala had done.

The way that Bana Sinkala describes the particular power of Bana Mfuwe's services also highlights how helpful it can be for Pentecostal leaders to set themselves apart through unique religious practices. Although much of what she found at Higher Calling was structurally and aesthetically indistinguishable from Pentecostal meetings in other churches, Bana Sinkala felt a special efficacy in the practice of joining hands and praying with another person during the intercession time. Here it is important to point out that, while this style of prayer is rather unique among Copperbelt Pentecostals, what made it powerful was not so much the brief lateral connection between two believers as the additional opportunity in which to articulate one's "burdens."

For Nsofu believers, the space in which to verbally state one's troubles before God is a key component of what makes Pentecostal ritual practice compelling. Saying and praying aloud what it was that troubled her would therefore have been the most important aspect of the new form of prayer Bana Sinkala encountered at Bana Mfuwe's meeting. At Higher Calling, after everyone had shared her prayer request with the person sitting next to her, the two of them would then join hands and pray aloud together at the same time, each praying for the other's problem. This simultaneous prayer, coupled with a strict prohibition against listening to anyone else's prayers and the fact that the same two people rarely prayed for each other two weeks in a row, kept this practice from providing much in the way of a connection between laypeople. While I am sure that it served in some way to create a bond among those who attended Great Commission, these prayers did far more to set the group and its leader apart as especially powerful.

By establishing herself as more charismatic than other believers, Bana Mfuwe created a form of hierarchical authority structured not by collective status – not, that is,

by a difference between various groups of people – but instead by individual evaluations of her spiritual potency. In other words, hierarchy in this fellowship consisted of so many strands of religious distinction as individual believers began to follow Bana Mfuwe after having judged her to be a powerful "woman of God." Gifford (2004: 108) has noted similar patterns in much larger Pentecostal groups in Ghana. He describes pastors in these churches as "famous figures" who command a following because of their charisma. Members of these churches, Gifford observes, "flock to them for their gifts, not to form communities with other believers." In these churches, therefore, "the [social] links are all vertically towards the prophet, rather than horizontally between followers." It is clear in Bana Sinkala's account of her involvement in Higher Calling that her relationship to the powerful figure of Bana Mfuwe remained central throughout her tenure in the group. By recalling how Bana Mfuwe used to refer to her by name during the sermon, using a teknonym different than the one she typically employed, Bana Sinkala highlights one way in which she felt that her connection to the leader was made manifest even in the context of collective worship. In so doing she indicates the ongoing salience of Bana Mfuwe's personal position and influence in her participation in Higher Calling.

From the examples of Bashi Jethro, Pastor Msiska, and Bana Mfuwe, we learn how differences of charisma create hierarchical relationships as spiritually potent leaders bring individuals into their groups and develop a following. Although Nsofu believers do not describe the ties they have to church leaders in terms of charisma, they do speak of the distinction between themselves and preachers or prophets in terms that indicate their hierarchical quality. On the Copperbelt, the relationship between preachers and laity is often expressed in the idioms of kinship or gender. By drawing on existing models of

social stratification, these discursive frameworks demonstrate the hierarchical nature of Pentecostal ties.

Parents and Children, Men and Women, and the Making of Pentecostal Hierarchy

Discussions of Pentecostal kinship have often focused on the use of fraternal language to describe relationships among believers (e.g. de Boeck and Plissart 2004: 56). While Pentecostal laypeople in Nsofu occasionally referred to one another as brothers and sisters, it was far more common for them to employ kinship terminology to speak of church leaders. Specifically, they often described certain preachers as their "parents" (*bafyashi*), a term that both pastors and parishioners agreed denoted the appropriate relationship between leaders and laity. Some believers also addressed their female leaders using the English word "mother" or the Bemba word "*mayo*" (my mother). By using this terminology, Nsofu Pentecostals placed their relationship with their pastors in an established hierarchical framework, namely that between generations. Because the tie between elders and juniors is one of the most important forms of hierarchy in many parts of Zambia (see Pritchett 2001; Crehan 1997), referring to church leaders as *bafyashi* represents a gesture towards an enduring structure of stratification.

While it was most common for Nsofu Pentecostals to describe the difference between leaders and laypeople in terms of a parental tie, gender also played a part in characterizing charismatic hierarchy. Like Pentecostal communities in other parts of the world (e.g. Austin-Broos 1997), most Copperbelt churches are comprised of a largely female laity and an overwhelmingly male group of leaders.[4] There are a number of reasons for this gender imbalance, especially where mid-week meetings are concerned. First, women are more likely to be home during the workweek. Secondly, the pastorate

represents an accessible option for those men who are unable to find employment and who are therefore on the township on weekdays instead of at work.

Beyond these obvious logistical factors, however, most of my informants maintained that there were certain traits particular to men and women at play in the gendered hierarchy of Pentecostalism. When asked why more women were found in Pentecostal groups, believers responded that women were more "sensitive" or "vulnerable" than men. They were therefore more likely to require the services of spiritual leaders, especially deliverance or prophecy. In addition, their sensitive nature meant that women were simultaneously quick to convert to Pentecostalism and quick to lose interest in spiritual things; in contrast, while men may take a long time to decide to become believers, once they had done so they were not likely to "backslide."

Both male and female informants expressed this understanding of the difference in religious commitment and spiritual vulnerability between men and women. Bana Mfuwe, for example, explained to me that although she believed her ministry was to both men and women, the latter made up the vast majority of regular Higher Calling attendees. This, she said, was simultaneously the result of the initial stubbornness of men – which, Bana Mfuwe added, was often a harbinger of commitment – and the spiritual flightiness of women. Similarly, while walking together to a meeting in another township led by a well-known female pastor, Bana Veronica told me that she felt it was particularly important for women to frequent prayer meetings, as they were especially prone to sin.

Just as speaking of the difference between pastors and parishioners in terms of a parental tie connects the former relationship to established structures of hierarchy, the gendered discourse around Pentecostal leadership also draws on existing cultural models

of stratification. It is true that throughout Zambia, especially in the many matrilineal groups, women have typically enjoyed a high degree of social and economic freedom and important positions in traditional spiritual life (Pritchett 2001: 169-204; Hinfelaar 1994: 1-18; Raising 2001: 52-54). However, as Audrey Richards' (1982) work on female initiation rites among the Bemba makes clear, the relative autonomy and status afforded to women in matrilineal societies in no way indicates a negation of patriarchal authority. Rather, studies of gender relationships in Zambia clearly indicate that, despite gains in education and an increase in legal representation, women are structurally inferior to men, especially within the household (e.g. Raising 2001; Parpart 1986; Schuster 1979; Crehan 1997). By expressing the difference between men and women in terms of their spiritual commitment and fervor, then, discussions of gender among Nsofu Pentecostals reinforce the hierarchy between male leaders and female laity as stemming from a difference of religious capacity – that is, charisma.

We have seen how spiritual power creates distinctions between pastors or prophets and their followers. However, this process represents only the first step in the institutionalization of Pentecostal hierarchy on the Copperbelt. As the groups that form around charismatic leaders crystallize into identifiable religious structures, other levels of hierarchy develop. Specifically, the elaborate leadership structures of Pentecostal churches, which involve both pastors and laypeople, are an important part of any congregation. In addition, many pastors work to form relationships with those of even higher position, and thereby to integrate themselves in a religious hierarchy that extends beyond the boundaries of their congregations. As the following discussion demonstrates,

efforts to install lay leaders and to connect to more powerful preachers add increasingly fine degrees of gradation to the Pentecostal hierarchy of charisma.

Of Secretaries, Treasures, Apostles, and Bishops

The hundreds of tiny Pentecostal congregations meeting throughout the Copperbelt employ a common aesthetic. Church members will raise money for a curtain to hang across a blank wall, a rug or vinyl mat to cover the floor, and perhaps some silk flowers to adorn the pulpit. One of the primary purposes of this décor is to create a place of honor for pastors and other leaders. At Freedom Bible Church, for example, pastors sat on identical plastic garden chairs arranged around a coffee table where the women of the church served them bottled water, soda, and cookies. The group that formed around Bashi Joshua, which only had use of a private home, had carefully lined up the hostess' dining room chairs along the wall and reserved them for the prophet and his attendants. Similarly, the chapel that the members of Higher Calling had erected in Bana Mfuwe's yard had a dais at the front, covered in a rug and ringed with lacey curtain panels, ropes of artificial and real flowers, and tinsel. While the rest of the congregation sat on narrow wooden benches, the leadership – including lay leaders – sat in garden chairs on the dais. If a visiting pastor came to preach, he was immediately ushered to the front of the room, where one of the lay leaders who had been given a seat of honor would hastily give up his chair for the guest.

Aesthetic arrangements like these reveal the levels of Pentecostal hierarchy that develop both above and below a church pastor. After earning a reputation for charisma and gathering a group of believers around her, a pastor will quickly begin to appoint leaders, including elders, deacons, secretaries, treasurers, and heads of men's or women's

groups. These roles, while still lower than the pastorate, place certain church members over the rest of the laity. As in Pentecostal groups around the world, there is virtually no limit to the number of positions that may be available in a Copperbelt congregation (see Robbins 2004b: 130): in small fellowships that boasted fewer than two-dozen members I often found that more than half a dozen of them occupied some formal leadership post. When Bana Mfuwe left Higher Calling to follow her husband to South Africa, she ordained numerous members of the group as leaders in an elaborate public ceremony. All told, about one out of every five laypeople at Higher Calling held a formal position in the fellowship.

Lay leaders of Nsofu Pentecostal churches are sometimes chosen because they possess certain skills. In the case of secretaries or treasures, for instance, I was usually told that it helped if the person selected for the position had some formal education, and perhaps some experience with recording minutes or keeping a budget. However, the primary criteria for posts such as deacon, secretary, or head of women's ministries were religious. The spiritual status of a layperson might be assessed through studies of personal character, or, more commonly, in the context of public worship. Anyone who displayed a notable level of religious fervor – whether by arriving early, singing enthusiastically, or sharing a testimony or brief biblical exhortation – was quickly funneled into a position of leadership. Just as the Pentecostal pastorate represents a comparatively accessible form of Christian employment, then, leadership positions within a Pentecostal congregation are not difficult to achieve (Robbins 2009b: 57). In Nsofu, it was not usual to see someone installed in a formal leadership role just a few months after he or she began attending a fellowship.

One such example of quick movement into a position of Pentecostal authority is found in Mavis, a young woman who came from Northern Province to live with relatives in Nsofu and began attending Higher Calling. By that point Bana Mfuwe had left and the group was experiencing a serious crisis of identity. The loss of the founder's charismatic presence had been a massive blow to the congregation, and in the wake of Bana Mfuwe's departure weekly attendance fell from nearly eighty people to fewer than thirty. Those who remained were discouraged. When Mavis arrived, then, it was easy for her to make an impression with her unflagging prayer and enthusiastic singing. In addition to exhibiting clear markers of Pentecostal fervor, Mavis was able to read aloud from the Bemba Bible, something that many people in Nsofu say they find difficult to do. As soon as church leaders became aware of this skill, she was routinely called upon to read scripture during Higher Calling meetings. Within weeks she was leading prayer and singing times as well, and had begun to join the remaining leadership on visits to backslidden believers and potential new members.

Mavis' journey from first-time attendee to trusted leader in Higher Calling illustrates the various ways that believers can attain positions in their congregations. While she clearly possessed several skills that drew the attention of those in charge at Higher Calling, including Bemba literacy and musical ability, these capacities only guaranteed her a place among the group's leaders because she possessed Pentecostal fervor and dedication. These latter traits should be understood as instances of charisma, particularly in contrast to the behavior of others who were irregular in their attendance, unenthusiastic in their prayer. By comparison, Mavis demonstrated a high degree of facility with those shared ritual practices that we have identified as central to the creation

of charismatic authority. In both her faithfulness and zeal Mavis distinguished herself from those around her and transitioned from ordinary churchgoer to someone of position in the congregation.

As preachers in Nsofu gained a reputation and a following, they were typically quick to install more and more of their church members in leadership positions. The result was an increasingly nuanced hierarchy of charisma with interstitial steps between casual church attendees and pastors. This hierarchy is dynamic, nearly always expanding, and, as we shall see, open-ended. These qualities stem partly from the fact that, just as ordinary laypeople that exhibit special dedication stand to move into positions of lay leadership, these same church leaders sometimes go on to become pastors. Moves to the pastorate from lay leadership are more common for those without other professional opportunities. However, even people like Mr. Chibale, an elder at Key of David who had a very good job at the mine, were routinely said to be bound to become pastors eventually. Whether or not this would ever turn out to be the case, such opinions indicate that in the minds of Nsofu believers the internal hierarchy of most churches was one along which people had a chance to move forward.

Church hierarchies expand in many ways, not only through the numerical growth of the congregation, but also through the simple addition of more positions by both pastors and lay leaders. When a young man is appointed to be the head of a church youth group[5], for example, he will in turn select a cluster of leaders to work under him: a youth secretary, treasurer, praise leader, and vice chair. The same is true of home fellowship groups (*fitente*) that meet under the auspices of a church; each will have a leader, who will then choose officers to work under her. As with other church leadership positions,

these roles will also be assigned largely on the basis of demonstrated religious commitment and ability as people volunteer to read scripture aloud, lead prayer, or visit absentee members. Through this ongoing multiplication of roles, the internal hierarchies of Copperbelt Pentecostal congregations grow more and more complex, resulting in a stair-stepped gradient of charismatic authority that runs from the occasional church attendee all the way to the pastor. Indeed, this structure does not culminate in the pastorate, but often extends beyond it to include others of even greater charismatic capacity.

Tiny, independent Pentecostal congregations like those I studied can appear rather decentralized in their religious organization when compared to other types of Christian churches, and even to other Pentecostal groups (e.g. Maxwell 2006). Unlike denominational churches, congregations like Key of David or Freedom Bible Church are not part of regional or national organizational structures. Nevertheless, the leaders of each of the churches in my study, like most pastors in Nsofu, were actively pursuing relationships with other Pentecostal groups or leaders. Without exception the connections that pastors were after were not lateral links to pastors of similar churches, but instead relationships with those they perceived to be religiously superior.

The most striking instance of an effort to connect a local Nsofu pastor to an external leader came when Key of David hosted the “There is a way out!” conference, which featured a Nigerian preacher who was working as a pastor in South Africa. Pastor Mwanza hung a banner announcing the event and the guest on the plank fence that divided the church from the main Nsofu road. During the weeks leading up to the conference, Pastor Mwanza told his congregation that they would be receiving a visit

from a “general” in the “army” of God. Through these promises, the Nigerian preacher, Bishop Paul, was established in the minds of members of Key of David as a man of high spiritual position, someone whose charismatic authority was greater than that of any local church leader.

Central to the processes of establishing the expected visitor as someone of great religious status was the use of the term “bishop.” This title clearly evokes the bureaucratic structure of Catholicism or Anglicanism, and has gained wide acceptance among Zambian Pentecostals. Some believers feel that the title of bishop is awarded too indiscriminately; those who are bothered by the ease with which it is employed feel it should be reserved for those leaders who officially oversee several churches. Others are not so strict in their use of the term, however, and employ it freely to communicate a sense that a particular preacher ranks more highly than a mere pastor. Either way, the title of bishop represents an additional step in the Pentecostal hierarchy. Indeed, there are some who have found the need to create a rank higher than bishop,[6] and one occasionally hears of someone on the Copperbelt who is known as an “apostle,” though this is still rather rare.

When, after weeks of preparation, Bishop Paul finally arrived, Pastor Mwanza and the other Key of David leaders made sure to treat him in a manner befitting his status. Rather than staying with church members he boarded in the guesthouse in Nsofu, and throughout his visit was fed carefully prepared meals made according to his rather discriminating tastes. Bishop Paul’s position as an honored outsider of high status was indicated not only in the way that Pastor Mwanza and others received him, but also in proclamations and displays of the former’s charismatic authority throughout the

weeklong crusade at Key of David. Bishop Paul preached at roughly half a dozen meetings, all of which were very well attended despite rain, power outages, and a presidential election. Throughout the conference people were treated to ecstatic singing and dancing, enthusiastic sermons, and dramatic exorcisms. Such displays of charisma established Bishop Paul's position as an extremely powerful man of God. In addition, Bishop Paul's Nigerian nationality afforded him an even greater claim on spiritual superiority. In the eyes of many Nsofu Pentecostals, Nigeria is home to some of the most powerful preachers in Africa; indeed, Bishop Paul touched on this notion at several points during his visit when he said that people in Zambia were not as "serious" in their prayers as people were in Nigeria.

Those who had attended the "There is a Way Out!" conference did not soon forget the event or Bishop Paul's charisma. Nor did they forget his promises that he would return to Nsofu in six months' time (and that when he did he would surely find many lives improved as a result of his prayers). For his part, Pastor Mwanza made a point to regularly remind his congregation of things that Bishop Paul had said and done, especially the idea that Zambians were spiritually inferior to their Nigerian counterparts. In so doing, he continually reinforced the idea that the visiting preacher was more charismatic than anyone in the township. Bishop Paul did not return to Nsofu when he said he would, nor did he visit again during my fieldwork. However, just before I left the field Pastor Mwanza traveled to South Africa to spend three weeks at a training seminar hosted by the bishop. Though he was careful not to make too much of the visit, the rumor among many Nsofu Pentecostals was that Pastor Mwanza hoped to affiliate his church with Bishop Paul's congregation in South Africa. In the light of Mr. Zulu's

comments that Key of David was looking to establish such a relationship, these rumors were not unfounded.

Clearly, Pastor Mwanza and the members of his congregation put an extraordinary amount of energy into forging a connection with Bishop Paul. Initially, I suspected that Pastor Mwanza hoped to secure some financial support from Bishop Paul's church, but when I broached this subject with Pastor Mwanza he denied that his motives were economic. Whether or not they were – and I doubt he would have told me if they had been – the relationship that Pastor Mwanza was pursuing was never described to me in terms of financial assistance. Instead, the connection to Bishop Paul was typically expressed in the language of spiritual superiority. An association with someone widely considered to be more powerful than he was would enhance Pastor Mwanza's credibility in the community (cf. Kirsch 2008: 197), since pastors are also understood to receive spiritual impartations through a connection to someone possessed of even greater charismatic power. This is why Mr. Zulu told me that it was good for Pentecostal congregations to have a "covering," a spiritual connection to a larger group.

What Pentecostal leaders like Pastor Mwanza are trying to do when they pursue relationships with people like Bishop Paul is extend the hierarchical structure that already exists in their churches. They are trying, in other words, to build levels above them to complement the levels they have created below. Often, these efforts are successful; Freedom Bible Church, for example, regularly received visits from one of the leaders of a prominent national Pentecostal prayer group. As fledgling fellowships grow, their hierarchical structure therefore develops both internally through the creation of congregational leadership positions and externally through connections to larger

Pentecostal bodies. In each case the primary metric by which positions are established and assigned is charisma demonstrated through the use of common religious forms – whether seen in the fervor and commitment of lay leaders, or the power of preachers and prophets.

Bureaucratic church structures in Zambia have their roots in both the British colonial administration and in the organizational models of mission churches (Kirsch 2008: 183), and contemporary mainline churches, where virtually all Pentecostals have religious roots, continue to operate according to the bureaucratic models of their missionary predecessors (van Binsbergen 2004). Part of what Pentecostal pastors are doing when they create hierarchical structures within and beyond their congregations, then, is making a claim of legitimacy within the wider context of Zambian Christianity by adopting established models of church government. In addition, church organizational frameworks are also a means of relating to the state insofar as charters outlining the leadership structure of a group are required for registration with the government, though not all congregations can afford to take this step.

Although it is clear that there is both historic precedent and current incentive for churches to develop hierarchical structures of leadership, I would argue that these do not represent the primary reasons why Pentecostal congregations choose to do so. While Pentecostalism is clearly not the only type of hierarchically organized Christianity, it stands apart in the comparative accessibility of its hierarchy. Unlike other Christian leaders, who typically must undergo formal theological training, Pentecostal pastors are, as we have seen, awarded their positions primarily based on how well they engage in ritual practices. Not only does this initial hierarchy between leaders and laypeople

therefore develop quickly as Pentecostal congregations spring up around new pastors, but the small size of these churches also ensures that a greater proportion of church members are able to access and participate in this hierarchy, since so many people will hold formal positions. In contrast, large mainline congregations, while certainly characterized by hierarchical organization, incorporate a much smaller percentage of their membership into the church bureaucracy.

In Pentecostalism, then, leaders and laity are quickly incorporated into emerging and growing hierarchical structures in which everyone has the potential to be able to participate and to rise. Having laid out how these structures are created, we can now turn our attention to what they mean for the social lives of Nsofu believers.

Pentecostal Hierarchy and Copperbelt Sociality

In the previous section I argued that the dimensions of value in Nsofu social life are ambition and obligation, and that these in turn reveal the gradient of economic status that is the bearer of value on the Copperbelt. Here, the social ideal is a world organized around material hierarchy, one in which everyone has ties to people above and below them. Similarities between this traditional pattern of social organization and the Pentecostal hierarchy of charisma that I have described in this chapter are not difficult to find. First, just as relationships that span differences in economic position on the Copperbelt are governed by ambition and obligation, so too we find religious analogues of these dimensions of value in Pentecostal ties. In the same way that material obligation follows from material wealth, spiritual obligation follows from spiritual superiority. The role of the pastor is, as we have seen, defined by his charismatic capacity as demonstrated in his extraordinary performance of ritual acts and rendering of religious services. The

latter are a result of the disparity in spiritual power indexed in the former, and the help that pastors give to laypeople therefore represents a natural outgrowth of their charismatic position. In this way, the relationship of pastors to their parishioners parallels the ties of obligation that characterize Copperbelt social life more broadly.

At the same time, the spiritual guidance and services that they obtain from pastors provide a means for laypeople to develop their own charismatic capacity. This is partly because movement up the church hierarchy affords them greater access to powerful church leaders. For example, while the members of Key of David who did not hold leadership positions rarely, if ever, visited Pastor Mwanza in his home, people like Mr. Chibale called on him several times a week. Often, the two men would have breakfast together in Pastor Mwanza's sitting room. The closeness that lay leaders enjoy with their pastors puts them in a better position to experience the blessings that believers say are associated with spiritually powerful preachers. In addition, relationships to pastors provide the possibility of advancement in the church hierarchy because they create more opportunities for believers to demonstrate their charisma. The possibility of advancement – that is, of the realization of religious ambitions – are an important part of membership in a Pentecostal group.

Once a believer is appointed to a congregational leadership post, she will often begin to perform some spiritual duties, such as visiting backslidden members or praying for the sick. Doing so puts the ambitious lay leader in a position of obligation that mirrors that of her pastor. Pentecostals who are actively involved in their churches therefore find themselves in relationships of both ambition and obligation. Similarly, because pastors also pursue relationships with people of greater charismatic authority

who have the potential to promote them from positions of local leadership to positions of wider influence, ambition figures in the religious social life of pastors just as much as obligation does. Pentecostal relationships in Nsofu are therefore marked by bivalence, as they are simultaneously ties of ambition for one party and obligation for the other. They also concatenate, as believers are often involved in relationships of both spiritual ambition and obligation. In addition, there is a further element of density in Pentecostal sociality because laypeople often have ties to more than one church leader at a time. The large number of congregations and fellowships in Nsofu means that Pentecostals are not limited in their pursuit of charismatic power, but are instead free to pursue relationships of religious ambition with several preachers at once.

In short, the hierarchical ties of charisma that join Pentecostals to pastors and pastors to influential religious leaders bear a notable resemblance to the social structures that order relational life on the Copperbelt more broadly. While it is certainly appropriate here to underscore the social productivity of Pentecostalism more generally (see Robbins 2009b), I would like to suggest that the parallels between economic and charismatic hierarchy indicate that this form of Christianity carries social possibilities in urban Zambia that are unique to this setting. Specifically, the relational world created by Pentecostal adherence is especially important in the light of the challenges the economic shocks of the last several decades have presented social life on the Copperbelt.

Because the hierarchical bonds of Pentecostal churches are by definition separate from the metric of distinction that orders social life on the Copperbelt, it is possible that Pentecostal ties will remain intact even in the face of economic shocks that undermine traditional relationships of ambition and obligation. For, although the connections that

form as churches are established are structurally similar to those we have identified with the relational context of the township more generally, their reliance on charisma as opposed to material wealth means that they are not dependent on the Copperbelt economy in the same way that other ties are. Pentecostal hierarchy therefore represents a social framework that is insulated from the unpredictable ebbs and flows of the mine and the market.

The comparative stability of its relational structures is, I would argue, a large part of what makes this form of Christianity especially compelling to people in Nsofu. One of the primary questions behind any study of Pentecostalism in the contemporary Global South is why people would choose to align themselves with this religion in the first place. Many of the proposed answers to this question have highlighted the “compensatory promises” (Robbins 2009b: 58) of this religion, whether the hope of riches in the prosperity gospel or healing through Pentecostal deliverance. To this list we may add the possibility that familiar social forms might find a structural basis outside of an economic order that has become increasingly unstable.

When discussing the relationships that formed in their congregations, believers were quick to separate the Pentecostal hierarchy of charisma from the material stratification that orders sociality outside of the church. In particular, they were emphatic that pastors ought to have no regard for the economic status of those they appointed to leadership positions, but instead should focus only on a person’s spiritual status. While this preoccupation with religious hierarchy over any sort of economic differentiation draws on ideas that might be found in any Christian community anywhere in the world, it takes on special meaning in a time when the economic hierarchies that structure sociality

on the Copperbelt have become unbalanced. Under these circumstances, the consistent appeal to a strictly spiritual hierarchy among Nsofu believers does not simply represent a religious commitment to intangible qualities over tangible ones. Rather, because social relationships ordered by material hierarchy are so difficult, Copperbelt Pentecostals are very concerned with keeping economic issues separate from the ties they form within their religious communities in an effort to maintain their stability.

Despite believers' emphatic insistence that ties between pastors and parishioners ought not be based on a person's economic status, however, this issue nevertheless finds its way into the relational hierarchy of Pentecostalism. As a result, much of the ritual life of Nsofu believers is tied up in efforts to protect charisma as the primary ordering mechanism of Pentecostal sociality, and to ensure that the hierarchy of charisma is not corrupted by the economic hierarchies that undergird social life more broadly. As we will see in the next chapter, the continued encroachment of material hierarchy on Pentecostal social life is not simply a result of the former's power of precedent. Rather, the influence of the prosperity gospel on Zambian Pentecostalism has contributed to this development by opening the way for material success to be interpreted as religious charisma.

Notes on Chapter 4:

[1] Pentecostal charisma on the Copperbelt is a result not of a difference of kind but of a difference of degree. One of the hallmarks of this form of Christianity is the belief that the Holy Spirit is, at least in principle, accessible to everyone (Karkkainen 2011: 227-229; cf. van Dijk 1992). Although in this respect Pentecostalism is a famously democratic religion, hierarchy among believers is continually reestablished through demonstrations of special impartations of the Holy Spirit that enable certain people to perform miracles while most others are unable to do so.

[2] Here, "*mayo*" – "my mother" – is an exclamation.
[3] Transcript of a conversation recorded 16 March 2009.
[4] To a slightly lesser extent, this overrepresentation of women characterized many non-Pentecostal churches on the Copperbelt as well.
[5] "Youth" in Zambia is a more capacious category than it is, for example, among North American Protestants. In Zambian Pentecostal churches youth groups include all unmarried individuals below the age of 35.
[6] One of my friends at a church in Congo has joked that soon people will begin using the titles "Trishop" and "Quadrishop," since "Bishop" is no longer grand enough.

Chapter Five: Gifts, Sacrifices, and the Problem of Prosperity

But the servant replied,
'Look, in this town there is a man of God;
he is highly respected, and everything he says comes true.
Let's go there now. Perhaps he will tell us what way to take.'

Saul said to his servant,
'If we go, what can we give the man? The food in our sacks is gone.
We have no gift to take to the man of God. What do we have?

The servant answered him again.
'Look,' he said, 'I have a quarter of a shekel of silver.
I will give it to the man of God so that he will tell us what way to take.'

(Formerly in Israel, if a man went to inquire of God, he would say,
'Come let us go to the seer,'
because the prophet of today used to be called a seer.)

'Good,' Saul said to his servant.
'Come, let's go.'
So they set out for the town where the man of God was.
1 Samuel 9: 6-10

A distinction must be drawn between
the idiom in which a direct relationship between
the giver and god predominates
and the idiom in which the relation of giver to god
is manifestly a vehicle for the expression
of relations between men.
Chris Gregory
"Gifts to Men and Gifts to God:
Gift Exchange and Capital Accumulation in Contemporary Papua"
(Gregory 1980: 244)

After the second round of household consumption surveys that I conducted in Nsofu I decided that I would express my appreciation to participants by giving them something in return for their efforts: a bag of sugar and a bottle of cooking oil. While everyone was grateful for these gifts, I did not realize the spiritual implications of some of these humble contributions until a conversation I had with Bana Ilunga a few weeks

later. Seated together on the low stoop of the house her family shared with several others, Bana Ilunga explained to me that gifts like the one I had given her carried the promise of divine blessing. This concept was not by itself unfamiliar; indeed, I had regularly heard similar ideas expressed in pastors' exhortations to contribute money to their churches. But Bana Ilunga added a layer to the connection between giving and prosperity that I eventually realized was crucial to Pentecostal social and ritual life. Gifts like the oil I had brought her would bring me a blessing, Bana Ilunga explained, because whenever she used it she prayed for me. In other words, oil and sugar in the home of a Pentecostal leader carried the promise of prosperity for the giver because they left the recipient with an obligation to pray for the one who had brought these items.

I have argued so far that one of the most compelling things about Pentecostalism for people on the Copperbelt is the possibility that this religion might create social structures and relationships that are insulated from the unpredictable movements of the neoliberal market. In the last chapter, we took a step toward outlining what this might look like. While sociality in urban Zambia more broadly depends on economic hierarchy, Pentecostals have replaced this underlying gradient with a hierarchy of charisma. As we have seen, charisma is typically demonstrated through facility with ritual practice, whether in the form of fervent prayer or accurate prophecy. To these markers we must add a final index of divine favor and religious power: prosperity.

In this chapter, we will explore how the prosperity gospel shapes Pentecostal relationality – and more specifically exchange – as well as how Pentecostal ritual life works to manage the challenges that the prosperity gospel presents. Because this form of Pentecostalism connects wealth to divine favor and personal faith, it is theologically

possible that those who rank more highly on the Pentecostal gradient of charisma will also be those who are materially better off. Indeed, according to most believers, this ought to be the case. During a sermon at Higher Calling, for example, Bana Chilomba remarked that she had no patience for pastors who wore worn-out shoes but claimed to be children of God. This, she went on, was simply antithetical to what it meant to be a Christian. While statements like these connect economic status and religious charisma, Pentecostals in Nsofu remain emphatic that visible riches cannot be the metric according to which their groups are organized. Put differently, financial prosperity must only be allowed to serve as an index of charisma if it is accompanied by other visible markers of the same, and more specifically those associated with ritual life.

Prosperity is therefore an especially tricky thing for Pentecostals on the Copperbelt. If we were to express what believers feel to be the ideal relationship between divine riches and charisma in Dumontian terms, we would say that charisma should encompass prosperity. This means that material success should only be allowed to develop as a value insofar as it does not contradict or replace charisma as the primary metric governing Pentecostal sociality. It follows then that those points where prosperity threatens to trump charisma as the ordering force behind Pentecostal relationships will be the most fraught. In this chapter I argue that Pentecostal exchange on the Copperbelt represents an important site at which the conflict between prosperity and charisma is being articulated, and at which believers are most concerned to establish an appropriate relationship between them. Doing so requires them to effectively negotiate two different modes of exchange: gifts and sacrifices. After demonstrating the presence of these parallel logics in Nsofu Pentecostalism, and showing how each of these is worked out

among believers on the township, I conclude this chapter with a discussion of Pentecostal sacrifice as a means of managing the contradictions of prosperity. My goal in this analysis is to allow the religious practice of Nsofu Pentecostals to provide us with a clearer picture of their social world.

"You Look at This Curtain, You Remember"

When I first began to visit Freedom Bible Church the classroom where the congregation met for worship lacked many of the Pentecostal aesthetic touches I described in the previous chapter. While church members made sure that the classroom they used for worship was clean and neatly arranged, the fact that the congregation gathered in a school was made obvious in the blackboard and desks that were the first things people saw upon coming for worship. This changed, however, one Sunday in August of 2008. That day I arrived to find a sheet of green, checkered linoleum spread across the floor at the front of the room where the choir would soon start singing. The chalkboard was covered with a matching green curtain. On the opposite wall of the classroom hung a new clock, positioned so that whoever occupied the wooden pulpit would be able to see the time.

The service that day began with prayer, singing, and testimonies. At several points church leaders remarked on the new furnishings and said that God would certainly bless those who had purchased them. While it was apparent that the pastors knew who had made these contributions, they did not identify them by name in front of the congregation. When these opening activities were finished, Pastor Kabre made his way to the front of the room to preach. He began his sermon by stating that Christians ought to be what he called "problem solvers," rather than people who were constantly mired in

difficulty. If, he continued, those in the congregation repeatedly found themselves in trouble, it might be because they were not giving in the way that they should. Having appealed to this familiar tenet of the prosperity gospel, Pastor Kabre used the rest of the sermon to outline the different ways that people could give to God. These included giving to orphans and widows, giving to relatives, and giving to the poor.

The last item on Pastor Kabre's list was among the topics to which he devoted most of his time: giving to "Levites," a term he said referred to those full-time Christian workers whose ministry obligations made it impossible for them to pursue other forms of employment. As with the previous examples, Pastor Kabre drew on a biblical text to support his point. The imperative to give to preachers was illustrated by an episode in the life of King Saul, quoted in the epigraph of this chapter, in which the king and one of his servants prepare to inquire of a prophet. Before setting off, King Saul anxiously asks, "If we go, what can we give the man? The food in our sacks is gone." His servant replies that he has a bit of silver, which will suffice as an offering. Only after they have secured an appropriate gift do they proceed to the home of the "man of God."

After one of the church elders read this passage aloud, Pastor Kabre began to discuss how giving to preachers would result in blessings:

> So, let's you and me learn about visiting… the man of God. Let's not go empty-handed (*fye na iminwe*), because sometimes you go to the man of God, you get there and he prays for you quite all right. But you may find that he's dying of hunger (*bali na ukufwa ulushile*). A pastor in Lusaka once told me, 'Look, in church there is no partiality, but sometimes you might not be able to make it (*kuti wafilwa ifyakucita*, literally, 'you might not be able to do anything'). You're sitting at home and then someone comes with a problem. She cries out, "I want you to pray for me, my husband left one year, two years, three years, five years, twenty years ago he left me for someone else. I have a problem." That person comes with rice, she has maize meal or something. Then someone else comes empty-

> handed. You will pray for that person quite all right and the first one quite all right. But there is a difference in that when you go into the kitchen you will find maize meal and you will remember the person who brought it… you will look over here and see some cooking oil and remember and go and kneel down and pray…. You look at this curtain you remember, you look at the floor… right now I'm praying as I'm looking at that clock.[1]

Several days after hearing this sermon I invited Bana Junior, Bana Brenda, and Bana Everett over for tea. Each of these women attended Pentecostal meetings, though some more regularly than others; all of them had been at Freedom Bible Church the previous Sunday and heard Pastor Kabre preach his message. During our visit I played a recording of this section of the sermon so that we could all hear it again. I then asked my guests about giving – who one could give to, how one should give, and so on. All of the women emphasized the importance of giving a tithe, or ten percent of one's income. When I remarked that it seemed unlikely that most people in Freedom Bible Church were giving this much, as the total collected in the offering basket was usually announced publically and rarely exceeded K70,000,[2] they responded that most members of the church were not using the offering basket, but were instead bringing their tithes and other gifts to the pastor in private. Indeed, Bana Junior added, this kind of direct contribution to a church leader was the very definition of what it meant to sow a seed that might reap a harvest. When the pastor received a gift from a specific, known person, she explained, he would be better equipped to pray for her, and as a result her requests were more likely to be granted.

In this example it appears that for Pentecostals in Nsofu the kind of giving that is considered most likely to result in prosperity involves making a gift to God in such a way that it is also a gift to a church leader. This dual approach to exchange was also

evidenced during another service at Freedom Bible Church when one of the lay leaders, Mr. Moyo, came to the front of the church to give a brief exhortation before receiving the offering. Among their contributions to the church, Mr. Moyo stated, believers ought to give what he called "precious seeds." He explained that these were offerings made above and beyond what someone might normally give – sacrificial gifts that would eventually yield a divinely increased harvest of prosperity. Seeds like these, Mr. Moyo went on, ought not to be considered gifts to the pastor or other church leaders. Rather, they were meant for God alone, and it was God who would provide a return gift.

When he had finished speaking, Mr. Moyo returned to his seat. All around him believers joined in a Pentecostal chorus as two other lay leaders passed a blue plastic basket through the rows of school desks. When the basket was passed to him, Mr. Moyo pulled a pink airmail envelope from his Bible and placed it among the wadded up notes that had already been collected. There was something written on the envelope, and while I couldn't make it out it is likely that he had signed his name there, as it is common for Copperbelt Christians from many denominational backgrounds to provide their church with a written record of their giving. Even if Mr. Moyo had not written his name on the envelope, however, the leaders of his church would have had no trouble knowing who had made this contribution, as we had all seen the bright pink paper sticking out of the Bible he read from during his discussion of seeds. While Mr. Moyo took care to emphasize to his fellow church members that the money they put in the offering basket was a gift to God alone, it was clear that he had made his contribution in such a way that his pastors would know he had given it. Since the pastors were the primary beneficiaries of this gift, Mr. Moyo's "precious seed" was therefore both a religious offering and a

contribution to the leaders of his church. In other words, it was both a sacrifice and a gift, and it is to a discussion of these two forms of exchange that we now turn.

Sacrificial Seeds

Before going any further I must point out that the distinction between sacrifices and gifts that I am making here is in some ways artificial. Sacrifices are, as we will see, a type of gift, one that creates an obligation. In André Iteanu's (2004) analysis of Orokaiva ritual practice, which has shaped my thinking on both gifts and sacrifices, he makes a distinction between those exchanges that, following Mauss' (1966) use of Maori terms, carry the *hau* and those that do not.[3] According to Iteanu, not all of the exchanges in Tamata Ranapiri's classic discussion of the *hau* actually bear this mystical quality. Only the exchange between the Maori and the forest, which is overseen by a priest, is a *hau*-bearing exchange; the subsequent transactions are not. Iteanu argues that these *hau*-bearing exchanges are ritual exchanges. While he does not refer to them as sacrifices, they fit the paradigm of sacrifice in many respects. For example, they are administered through an intermediary, they connect parties that are not equal to one another, and they are dangerous, resulting in serious consequences if performed incorrectly.

Iteanu uses this distinction to discuss the relationship between ritual – and specifically ritual exchange – and exchange more generally. For Iteanu, this is best expressed in Dumontian terms: exchange encompasses ritual (Iteanu 2004: 111). Among the Orokaiva, as in Nsofu, these actions are bound up in one another. Indeed, as we will see, Pentecostal gifts and sacrifices are part of the same contribution – the seed offering. We will return to Iteanu's analysis at the end of this chapter when we discuss the interplay between sacrifices and gifts in Nsofu, but I bring it up here in order to

demonstrate the clear interrelation of these types of exchange. Having done so, we are now in a position to tease them apart by examining how each of these logics is worked out on the Copperbelt.

There is no doubt that Nsofu believers view seeds and other offerings as sacrifices. Beyond the simple fact that they often refer to their contributions in these terms, the sacrificial nature of Pentecostal offerings is clear in the many ways they conform to Hubert and Mauss' (1964) "grammar of the sacrificial rite" (Evans-Pritchard 1964: viii). First among these characteristics is the way that Nsofu believers seek to "bind the god by a contract" (Hubert and Mauss 1964: 66) through gifts of money (also see Wiegele 2005:9). According to Pentecostals, the text of that contract is the Bible,[4] and believers are quick to cite God's command to "bring the whole tithe into the storehouse," an injunction that is followed by a challenge to "test [him] in this" to see whether or not God will "throw open the floodgates of heaven" and furnish an elaborate return.[5] Similarly, my informants frequently referenced the scripture that reads, "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap…"[6] In addition, the contractual nature of these gifts was revealed in the frequent observation that God would not neglect to honor the faithful sacrifices of his people because he would not allow himself to be shamed (*ukusebanya*) by going back on his word.

Secondly, we can see that Nsofu Pentecostals view gifts to pastors as sacrifices because they are careful to cultivate an appropriate spiritual state at the time they give their offering (Hubert and Mauss 1964: 28). During a conversation with several women from Higher Calling, a young woman who had only recently started attending Pentecostal

meetings asked whether or not it was true that if someone gave to God he would give her what she wanted. A pair of senior women, Mrs. Ntembe and Bana Ngoma, responded that things were not quite so simple as that. First, Mrs. Ntembe offered, it was necessary for a person to be righteous (*balungami*, literally, "a righteous person"); otherwise, God would not grant her requests. Bana Ngoma then chimed in to highlight the importance of what she described as a proper "motive:"

> "…If you want, you say, 'God bless me with a car,' but just so that you can have pride in that car. God cannot give to you at that time. Until you move on and learn to humble yourself, if you have the ability to humble yourself (*nga wakwata ukwicefiya*) then for that car you will have a good motive. You will say, 'God give me a car so that I can do your work, carry your people, things like that.' Then God can give to you since now your motive is [right.][7]

Statements about the necessity of proper "motives" are common among Copperbelt Pentecostals, who always use the word in English.[8] The example of a car used simply to boost one's pride instead of being put in the service of God and other people is especially popular, as is the argument that one ought to pray for a house primarily so that one can host Bible studies.

Beyond the contractual nature of seed offerings and the need to give them in a properly spiritual state, the primary indication that they are sacrifices is found in the fact that believers rely on intermediaries, most notably religious leaders, when making these offerings. Priests are an important part of the sacrificial rite: as Hubert and Mauss (1964: 22-23) point out, approaching the gods is dangerous business in which one does not typically engage without the aid of a ritual expert who can help negotiate the rite. This person must be sufficiently pure and sufficiently well versed in the ways of the gods to be able to bridge the gap between them and other humans. As the following example

demonstrates, it is based on their capacity as religious intermediaries that believers choose to give their seed offerings to a particular person.

Once a year, often around Christmas, most Nsofu Pentecostal churches will host "thanksgiving services."[9] These events are announced every week for months in advance, ensuring that everyone in the congregation has had time to prepare (or to avoid attending church on that particular Sunday if they do not wish to participate). On the day of a thanksgiving service, church members carry their offerings to the church wrapped in plastic bags or envelopes. Some bring money, while many others bring special gifts for the pastor or his family, such as a set of bowls or a length of *citenge* material that can be made into a shirt or dress. At the Key of David thanksgiving service, which was held on the last Sunday of 2008, Moses and a few other men brought bags of cement that would be used to plaster the outside walls of the church building.

The thanksgiving service itself is essentially a scaled-up version of the regular Sunday morning ritual of giving tithes and offerings. Believers march to the front of the church one by one or alongside their spouses and put their gifts in the hands of the pastor, who places them on the altar for everyone to see. Although the offerings are displayed publicly, they are not unwrapped in front of the congregation. The pastor thanks each giver individually with a handshake and respectful bend of the knee, a gesture that they reciprocate. In this way, the problem of anonymity that many Pentecostals find in the normal rituals of giving is resolved in the thanksgiving service, which provides the opportunity for believers to make a personal connection to their gift and its recipient (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: A thanksgiving service at Higher Calling.
On the far right, Bana Chembo receives her gifts.

The mood at the Key of David thanksgiving service was one of exuberance and hope, which stood in stark contrasts to the gloomy predictions of economic decline that echoed across the Copperbelt ahead of the 2009 New Year. The music team was in fine form, and many church members came to the front of the sanctuary to dance, adding to the lighthearted atmosphere of the meeting. Before inviting people to come forward with their gifts, Pastor Mwanza took great care to emphasize that the point of a thanksgiving service was not to manipulate anyone, but rather to provide an opportunity for them to give seed offerings that they could be confident would yield a harvest in the coming year. He urged those who gave to keep a record of the things they were hoping to receive in return for their gifts so that they would be able to draw a connection between future blessings and the seed offerings they sowed that day.

In addition to the regular members of Key of David who participated in the thanksgiving service, Bana Ilunga was also in attendance at this special event. Pastor

Mwanza was careful to introduce her to the congregation as a pastor, and she was seated in one of the positions of honor at the front of the church. While she was singled out in these demonstrations of respect, Bana Ilunga participated in the ritual in the same manner as the laypeople. She took her turn to walk to the front of the church where she handed a wrapped parcel to Pastor Mwanza, who greeted and thanked her before she returned to her seat. Bana Ilunga's gift was among the heap of offerings over which Pastor Mwanza offered a prayer to bestow divine blessings on those who had given.

A few days after the thanksgiving service I headed across the street to Bana Ilunga's house to ask why she had decided to participate in this event since she was not a regular attendee of Key of David. Bana Ilunga welcomed me into her bare kitchen, where I sat on a straight-backed chair while she squatted on a stool fashioned from an old bucket and the padded seat of some forgotten piece of furniture. In response to my question about the thanksgiving service, Bana Ilunga explained that she had chosen to give to Key of David in part because the other Pentecostal church where she was serving as a part-time pastor was not "moving" anywhere – that is, there were no miracles or other markers of charisma in that congregation. While normally she would be giving regularly to her home church, she said, the present state of that group had caused her to look for somewhere else to sow her seed. What Bana Ilunga was looking for was a church that showed signs of charisma among its members. Bana Ilunga had settled on Key of David, she went on, because she felt that this church had provided her with spiritual nourishment throughout the previous year.

After listening to her explain why she gave to Pastor and Mrs. Mwanza's church, I asked Bana Ilunga how this instance compared to other decisions she had made about

where to sow a seed. How did she know that someone was, in the Pentecostal turn of phrase, "good soil?" Bana Ilunga replied that one of the ways that she discerned the quality of a recipient was simply whether or not she was blessed after giving. If a seed did not produce fruit, then it was likely that she hadn't sown it in the right place. For example, once she had given a seed offering to a Pentecostal pastor in Nsofu who later fled the township in infamy after it came to light that he had proposed marriage to a Nsofu woman despite the fact that he already had a wife and children in the nearby Democratic Republic of the Congo. These revelations about his character confirmed the suspicions that Bana Ilunga said had already been aroused by a lack of blessing. Clearly, this pastor was not good soil.[10]

This was not the first time I had spoken with Bana Ilunga about seed offerings. During a previous conversation she told me that in making decision about where to sow she focused specifically on the economic status of potential recipients. Through her experience of giving to various types of people, Bana Ilunga explained, she had realized that making a gift to a poor person often resulted in a blessing. She reasoned that this was because the impact of even a small amount of money or food would be large in a household where people were in need of these things. As a result, those who had received such a gift would be particularly diligent in praying for the one who had given it, and blessing would therefore be more likely to follow. In contrast, a wealthier person would likely not feel the effects of a small gift, and would easily forget about both it and the giver.

Other Pentecostals in Nsofu employed an approach similar to Bana Ilunga's. That is, a person could be considered "good soil" if a believer received a blessing after giving

him a seed offering. For believers, this blessing is the direct result of the intercessory capacity of the one who received the seed. My neighbor Bana Chite described the church leaders (*bantungulushi*) as "keys," or as points of access to blessings for those who followed them.[11] Similarly, after a string of "breakthroughs" at Key of David, such as jobs for unemployed members, Bana Charles cited the divine "favor" that Pastor Mwanza enjoyed as the reason for the influx of blessings among church members. In response to this idea, Bana Karen added that the members of Key of David were indeed prospering because of their spiritual parent (*bafyashi*), Pastor Mwanza. She explained to me that leaders like him were able to provide special access to divine power and blessings for those beneath them. "All of us have the right to speak directly with God, but those who are his servants are chosen… They are the senior people in church… they are our *bafyashi*, those we draw near to."[12] By considering their offerings in the light of a biblical "contract," taking care to give them with an appropriate attitude, and pursuing intermediaries that are spiritually acceptable, Copperbelt Pentecostals treat their seed offerings like sacrifices.

In a recent article on the prosperity gospel, Simon Coleman (2011) has argued that sacrifice presents an especially compelling angle from which to examine the social productivity of Pentecostalism. At first glance, this might seem like a strange suggestion. While it is clear that, as Hubert and Mauss point out, "the sacred things in relation to which sacrifice functions, are social things" (1966: 101), sacrifices nevertheless seem less socially productive than what anthropologists generally refer to as gifts. Where Mauss' (1966) more famous analysis is concerned with social relations, with how it is that the gift produces an obligation to return, "gifts to God" create no "liabilities" for those who

receive them and do not put them in debt (Gregory 1980: 647; Hubert and Mauss 1964: 36-37; also see Lindhardt 2009). Sacrifices, in other words, do not result in an obligation between people, but rather in an obligation between humans and the divine. Understood in this way, however, Pentecostal seed offerings in Nsofu are not just sacrifices; they are gifts as well.

"The Charismatic Gift"

One of the clearest indications that seed offerings in Nsofu are gifts is found in the debt they produce in their recipients. Here, "gifts to men" produce the same type of "liabilities" that "gifts to God" avoid (Gregory 1980). In chapter two I described how this is worked out in Nsofu more generally through the exchange of greetings, hospitality, material goods, and labor that creates and facilitates social ties. To reiterate the point of that chapter, relationality on the township is structured by material hierarchy and actualized by gifts of words, work, and wealth. The debt of the what Coleman (2004) calls the "charismatic gift" is seen in the response of the church leaders who act as recipients of seed offerings. When Pastor Kabre proclaimed to the members of his congregation that an offering of rice or mealie meal brought to the pastor's home would inspire the "man of God" to pray regularly for the one who brought it, he highlighted the increased obligation that such gifts produce. This debt is also evident in the fact that Bana Ilunga responded to my gift of sugar and oil by praying for me regularly, even though I had not asked her to. In this second case, she was careful to turn my contributions to her household into both a sacrifice – by connecting it to future, divinely authored prosperity – and a gift – by treating it as an obligation for prayer. Along these same lines, Mrs. Mwanza explained to me that she and Pastor Mwanza kept a record of

contributions to Key of David to use as a guide for prayer, demonstrating that offerings were not simply absorbed by the church, absolving its leaders of any liability. Rather, for believers in Nsofu Pentecostal gifts to God are also gifts to men, gifts that create obligations.

The debt created by seed offerings amounts not only to the increased duty to pray that Pastor Kabre and Mrs. Mwanza talked about, but also to a greater frequency of visits and spiritual services. For example, one afternoon as Bana Chilufiya, Bana Mercy, and I were enjoying a late lunch of cabbage and *nshima* – the maize porridge that is the staple food of Zambia – we looked up to see Pastor Ephraim entering the yard. Sitting down beside us in the narrow shadow cast by a cinderblock wall, Pastor Ephriam explained that he had just come from Riverside, a wealthy low-density neighborhood of Kitwe that for many people represents the height of local economic achievement. Getting there from Nsofu requires two separate minibus trips, and therefore represents a significant journey. Despite the distance, Pastor Ephraim had traveled to Riverside that morning to see a believer who wanted prayer. Throughout the time that I knew him Pastor Ephraim made regular mention of those he visited in Riverside. Once, during a sermon, he stated that one of the people he went to pray for in this community had become rich because of her regular gifts to him. What emerged through these stories, which were widely known, was a pattern in which giving resulted both in the divine blessing associated with seed offerings and in the increased spiritual services that are the result of gifts to men.

While I hope I have shown that Pentecostals in Nsofu treat their seed offerings and other contributions to church leaders as both gifts and sacrifices, it is not yet apparent exactly why they feel the need to do so. Since gifts to men strengthen the highly valued

hierarchical ties that form in Pentecostal churches, and since I have already argued that such relationships are one of the things that makes this form of Christianity so attractive, why don't believers simply pursue human exchanges and eschew the language of sacrifice? Alternately, since believers have confidence in the ultimate efficacy of their sacrifices – so much so that they will sometimes give seed offerings to someone with whom they have no hope of forming a relationship, such as a bishop from Lusaka – why do they continue to rely on the gift as well?

Certainly, it is possible that Pentecostals are merely trying to make their exchanges as profitable as possible. Sacrifices to God carry the promise of an eventual blessing, and offerings to pastors foster relationships that are blessings in and of themselves. By making each contribution do double-duty, Pentecostals may simply be hoping to obtain both immediate and future returns. However, given what we know about the complicated position of material wealth among Copperbelt believers, I believe that the dual logic of Pentecostal offerings has less to do with attempts to maximize a return and more to do with protecting the fragile social relationships that their religious practice produces. In the remainder of this chapter I argue that believers simultaneously employ the logic of gifts and of sacrifices because of the ambiguous role that wealth plays in the social relationships that form between leaders and laypeople. In order to understand how this is the case, we must briefly shift our attention to an ethnographic context far removed from the Copperbelt.

Sacrifice, Exchange, and the Trouble with Pentecostal Ambition

In his discussion of ritual process on Ambrym Island in Vanuatu, Knut Rio (2007) offers an analysis that is extremely helpful in understanding the relationship between gifts

and sacrifices. Rio argues that much of Ambrym ritual life, and especially the sacrifice of pigs, is focused on "denying the gift" – that is, on eclipsing the unrepayable debt owed to the matrilineal kin responsible for one's life. The reason this is important to people on Ambrym is because the gift gets in the way of their social ideal. Rio argues that Ambrym society is one in which people understand themselves as independent actors engaged in relationships of reciprocity. The gift impedes this process because it can never be returned, and as a result keeps people from exchanging freely. It is therefore necessary for them to engage in ritual practices, especially sacrifice, which will cover the gift. On Ambrym, the killing of pigs releases independent exchange partners into a social world governed by reciprocity because in its symbolic power it frees them of the debt to their mothers' families.

Rio's analysis relies heavily on Iteanu's (2004) discussion of ritual and exchange among the Orokaiva. In this Papua New Guinea society, feast-makers give speeches before distributing the food that has been amassed for the celebration, speeches that outline what they feel the ritual has accomplished, whether a marriage or the restitution of a death. It is only after this ritual exercise that the food is distributed to guests, who then release it into the community by giving it away. Through this two-step process, the social work of the ritual is bound up with the material exchanged and reverberates through all subsequent transactions. "Hence, all those who end up ingesting that food are thereafter bound by what it stood for" (Iteanu 2004: 107). As noted above, Iteanu's larger argument is concerned with the relationship between ritual and exchange, which he describes as one of interdependence. In other words, exchange cannot function properly without ritual and vice versa.

These Melanesian examples point to a relationship between sacrifice and sociality that illuminates the data from Nsofu especially well. In both the Ambrym and the Orokaiva cases ritual life in general and sacrifice in particular work to create the social ideal. More specifically, they produce the circumstances necessary for safe, meaningful exchange.[13] This is exactly what Pentecostal sacrifice is doing on the Copperbelt. There, the seed offerings associated with the prosperity gospel present a threat to Pentecostal sociality for several reasons. We have already seen how the prosperity gospel muddies the waters of Pentecostal sociality by equating charisma with material success. Beyond the difficulty that prosperity theology presents, seed offerings further complicate the relationship between pastors and laypeople by channeling the obligations that Pentecostal pastors are supposed to have to everyone, regardless of material status, in the direction of those who are best able to give.

Although not all Pentecostal pastors in Nsofu are in the same economic circumstances – some have jobs or small businesses that they attend to alongside their ministry duties; others are married to women or men with salaried positions; some are single and therefore do not have the added financial responsibility of supporting a family – most of them have significant financial needs that they rely on the laypeople they serve to meet. Here, Pastor Kabre's mention of a pastor who was "dying of hunger" is a bit of hyperbole meant to indicate the very real dependence that church leaders have on their members for material support. The majority of Pentecostal pastors on the Copperbelt are adamant that they will pray for anyone who asks. However, they will also usually admit that in situations where they have to decide between traveling to the home of a believer who is likely to furnish him with some cash "for transport" and another believer who is

not able to make such a gift, they will choose the former. The relationship formed between pastors and laypeople through the ongoing exchange of spiritual services and material gifts must therefore be understood as partly the result of pragmatic decisions on the part of church leaders to focus their attention on those believers who are most likely to help them meet their financial needs.

When pastoral obligations are confused by material gifts, uniquely Pentecostal forms of both ambition and obligation become hard to maintain. Put differently, in situations where a pastor's spiritual attentions are necessarily oriented toward those who regularly provide him with the material contributions that will keep his rent paid and his children in school, it is difficult for everyone involved to argue that charisma alone is the metric of value structuring the relationship between leaders and laypeople. On the contrary, the gradient of charisma appears to have been switched out for one of economic achievement. Here, it may be that pastors have subordinated their spiritual obligations to their material ambitions – or at least, their material needs. Alternately, one might suggest that ambitious laypeople have tried to gain the favor of church leaders not through demonstrations of religious piety, but instead through gifts of money. In either case, under these circumstances it appears that the ordering force behind Pentecostal relationships has shifted from a religious hierarchy of charisma to one structured at least in part by the very economic concerns that have made social life on the Copperbelt so unstable in recent decades.

Let me pause here to emphasize that the problem created by exchange in Nsofu churches is not simply a result of material gifts as such. Not only does the social productivity of Pentecostal practice result in structures that make exchange likely and

desirable, adherence to the prosperity gospel requires people to give seed offerings. The problem is therefore not the presence of material exchange in Nsofu congregations, but the possibility that economic success may have usurped charisma as the primary ordering mechanism behind Pentecostal relationships.

It is in the light of the threat that gifts pose to the Pentecostal hierarchy of charisma that we can make sense of the emphasis that believers place on sacrifice. When seed offerings become gifts to church leaders they highlight the often-ambiguous social tie between a believer and a pastor. In contrast, treating those same offerings as sacrifices foregrounds the religious aspect of this relationship because sacrifice emphasizes a pastor's moral character and intercessory ability. In other words, while gifts to men are easily confused with the familiar framework of values that Pentecostals are trying to move away from, gifts to God are firmly grounded in the new relational values that believers hope will organize their social relationships. It is here that we find the reason behind the dual character of Pentecostal exchange on the Copperbelt. As gifts to men, seed offerings actualize the social potential of Pentecostalism, producing exchanges that reinforce ties of ambition and obligation. As gifts to God, these same offerings point to the centrality of charisma as the metric behind these ties, the ordering force beneath Pentecostal sociality. This latter component is, as we have seen, crucial to the preservation of a relational world protected from the vagaries of the market.

What we learn from seed offerings in Nsofu, then, is not only that Pentecostalism produces compelling social results, but also that it is frequently threatened by its own success. That is, it is difficult to keep Pentecostal social life within the non-market boundaries that represent its greatest appeal. While their strict insistence that seed

offerings are sacrifices administered by spiritually skilled pastors helps believers keep prosperity in the service of charisma, this ranking of values is far from secure. In a religious world shaped by the prosperity gospel, many believers feel that charisma is frequently usurped as the primary ordering value of their congregation. In the next chapter, we will examine a second aspect of the problem of Pentecostal sociality and hierarchy through a discussion of the ritual efforts of prominent laypeople.

Notes on Chapter 5:

[1] Transcript of a sermon recorded 18 August 2008.

[2] At the time of my fieldwork, about $12, too low to represent ten percent of the income of roughly 40 adults, among whom a number had access to steady wage labor.

[3] Not surprisingly, Mauss' work on sacrifice with Henri Hubert (Hubert and Mauss 1964) shaped his subsequent thinking on exchange in general and the gift in particular (Hart 2007).

[4] It was a common practice for pastors of Freedom Bible Church and other Pentecostal congregations to ask people to lift up the Bibles they had carried with them to a church service and repeat after the pastor, "This is my Bible. I am who it says I am. I can do what it says I can do." This regular exercise in collective exhortation reveals that scripture was a source of promises about the nature of humans, as well as the nature of God. Given this fact, the import of the text as a basis of contractual arrangements between God and humans is not difficult to see.

[5] Malachi 3:10

[6] Luke 6:38

[7] Transcript of a conversation recorded 27 November 2008.

[8] It is likely that this emphasis has followed the popularity of a particular New Testament verse that attributes a lack of divine response to a believer's requests to "wrong motives" (James 4: 3).

[9] Like so many other Pentecostal practices, the thanksgiving service probably has roots in the mainline, for example in the annual *umutulo wa ecclesia* in the Roman Catholic church (Cheyeka, personal communication).

[10] Bana Ilunga had previously told me that this was something that she, as a Pentecostal minister, sometimes worried about; what if someone gave her a seed offering and didn't get blessed? Might that mean that she was not good soil? While it was possible that this was the case, and Bana Ilunga did base some of her decisions regarding seed offerings on the results they produced, she was careful to add that a lack of blessing was not always an indication that someone had sown in bad soil. Sometimes the devil could corrupt a seed offering. Indeed, Bana Ilunga said this had happened to her several times. On one such occasion, she went back to the pastor who had received the offering to complain. This man was a highly respected leader in Nsofu, the first Pentecostal pastor to establish a church in the township. Together he and Bana Ilunga prayed to break the power of Satan and commanded her seed to produce fruit.

[11] Just as church leaders who were "righteous" (*abalungami*) would cause those below them to experience divine favor, some of my informants said that a corrupt or immoral preacher or pastor could bring cruses on his followers. This opinion was not uniformly held, however.
[12] Transcript of interview conducted 21 February 2009.
[13] Similarly, analyses of the South Asian *dan* also highlight how parallel approaches to exchange both complicate this so-called "Indian gift" (Parry 1986, 1989) while also making it spiritually safe and socially productive (Laidlaw 2001). I will have more to say on the relationship between the Pentecostal gift and the Indian *dan* in the next chapter.

Chapter Six: The Poison in the (Pentecostal) Gift

"So while from one perspective there is only one thing
which changes hands in the transaction,
this thing constitutes two quite different
kinds of object of consumption for the two participants"
James Laidlaw
"Riches and Renunciation:
Religion, Economy, and Society Among the Jains"
(Laidlaw 1995: 319)

"*Paradoxes such as this work on the fact that*
gifts are not always what people want,
and people might then instead try to press them into economic terms –
transforming prestations intended as gifts to become instead
'debts,' 'commodities,' and 'payments.'
Knut Rio
"Denying the Gift:
Aspects of Ceremonial Exchange and Sacrifice on Ambrym Island, Vanuatu"
(Rio 2007: 456)

Where gifts and sacrifices work together in Nsofu to protect the relationally productive hierarchy of charisma found in Pentecostal congregations, other elements of Pentecostal practice are likewise oriented toward the preservation of believers' religious hierarchy. In this chapter, I bring together the foregoing discussions of Pentecostal hierarchy, gifts, and sacrifices to further develop my analysis of how the religious life of Copperbelt believers interacts with the social relationships formed in their congregations. Continuing with the language of sacrifice that we have been using so far, I highlight the work that lay leaders perform to protect the Pentecostal hierarchy of charisma. On the one hand, prominent laypeople represent a vital part of the developing structures of Pentecostal churches – their presence is a sure sign of hierarchy, an indicator that the group is forming according to the model that people find desirable. However, the position of lay leaders, especially those who are materially well off, is also problematic,

as they bear much of the scrutiny associated with guarding the relational integrity of their congregations. As a result, it often falls to them to do the difficult work of maintaining charisma as the paramount value of Pentecostalism.

This chapter takes a slightly different form than those that precede it, as much of it will be framed primarily in terms one extensive ethnographic example – a party given for Mrs. Mwanza. While it is important to point out that this special event does not represent an everyday occurrence, it is precisely the scale of this party that throws the internal tensions that are always present in Nsofu Pentecostalism into such stark relief. After describing this event, I move on to examine the role of prominent laypeople in Nsofu Pentecostal congregations and how they work to protect their positions by simultaneously pursuing various forms of exchange and sacrifice. Through this analysis, I show that the religious efforts of lay leaders are, like seed offerings, aimed at preserving the vulnerable social structures of their religious practice from the material concerns brought into Pentecostal practice through the prosperity gospel.

Mending Mother's Kitchen

In the early months of 2009 the Copperbelt was feeling some of the worst effects of the *global*, and many workers had gone months without pay. Despite these difficult economic circumstances, several of the women in leadership positions at Key of David decided to throw a "kitchen mending" for Mrs. Mwanza. They planned the event for later in the year, when the rainy season had passed but before the weather got too hot. Within the framework of Pentecostal ritual practice, this event was similar to a thanksgiving service, though significantly larger in scale. More than it drew on existing Pentecostal models, however, the party planned for Mrs. Mwanza was primarily

organized according to the more common "kitchen parties" that precede some weddings on the Copperbelt (see Raising 2001). Rather than outfit the home of a new bride, a kitchen mending is aimed at improving the items in a married woman's home. Although the recipient of a kitchen mending or party can expect to receive a wide range of appliances, dishes, and cookware, the cost of hosting such an event is significant. Guests come bearing gifts, but expect to be fed and given alcohol – or, in the case of Pentecostal parties, soft drinks. A kitchen mending for Mrs. Mwanza, then, meant a heavy financial burden for the members of Key of David, especially the women.

In order to offset some of the expense of the party, the leader of the Key of David women's group, Bana Chibale, established a "committee" of people who would each contribute K250,000[1] toward the event. On the Copperbelt people typically form such committees for large social occasions like weddings or kitchen parties. Not only are these groups responsible for the bulk of the monetary costs of these functions, they also see to all the relevant logistics, meeting regularly for weeks or months beforehand to choose a venue, rent furnishings, and design and distribute invitations. On the day of the event, committee members dress alike in outfits purchased for the occasion and perform much of the necessary labor, including cooking, decorating, and ushering. In exchange for their contributions, they can expect to receive a generous share of the refreshments they have helped to provide, perhaps a crate of soft drinks or a chicken.

While membership in the committee for Mrs. Mwanza's kitchen mending was limited to women, it was not limited to Key of David attendees. Indeed, those in charge made an effort to reach beyond the boundaries of the congregation in order to secure the support of as many people as possible. The primary criterion on which membership in

the committee was based was therefore not religious involvement, but rather the perceived ability of a particular woman to contribute the required amount. Around half a dozen Key of David women, including myself, were asked to be on the committee, as well as two or three others from outside the church. Together, the committee also solicited the help of unmarried men like Moses, who may not have otherwise contributed to the event, as he had no wife to join the committee. Since Moses was employed at a bank, the committee was certain he would be able to make a significant donation. In addition to these contributions, all women at Key of David who did not join the committee were told they must give K100,000[2] towards the event, a sizable sum by anyone's metric. This mandate extended to a large number of women, including several who were rarely seen at Sunday services.

The Women of Key of David Worship Centre Invite
Miss/Mrs. ______________________ *to:*

Kitchen Mending

for: Pastor Mwewa Mwanza

Date: 27 June 2009
Time: 13:00 to 17:00
Venue: Key of David Worship Centre
Guest of Honor: Pastor Lily Nyrenda

Color Scheme: Black, white, and silver
Strictly no plastics, please!

RSVP: Mrs. Chibale 0967-427944
Miss Haynes 0966-035447
Mrs. Kufuna 0978-541982

"The wise woman builds her house" (Prov. 14: 1)

Figure 8: Template for the invitation card for Mrs. Mwanza's kitchen party (with psydonyms)

The committee met on a near-weekly basis for several months leading up to the kitchen mending. While some of our time together was given to things like designing a uniform to wear to the event or deciding how to decorate the church, far and away the task to which we devoted most of our efforts was making and continually revising the budget. Each week we carefully went over the itemized list of expenses, making small adjustments every time. At one meeting we would decide to allot K405,000 for chicken, K74,000 for spices, and K50,000 for potatoes only to revisit those numbers a week later, changing the relative costs of various items, or adding new things, such as charcoal, to the list. My fieldnotes from the weeks leading up to the kitchen mending include detailed budgets with the amounts crossed out again and again, as well as quotes for the price of ice and the required deposit for several dozen crates of Coca-Cola. Some changes to the anticipated cost were the result of fluctuations in the price of food, the primary expense associated with the kitchen mending. However, as the event drew closer, we returned again and again to the budget with one key question in mind: Would people make the donations they had been asked to?

Bana Chibale had been careful to schedule the kitchen mending at a time of year when people were more likely to have money – well after they had made their biannual rent payments and their children's first term school fees. The event had been planned for the end of June, and as a result the last days of May were an especially busy time for the committee. In the weeks before the kitchen mending, Bana Chibale and Bana Zulu – who, because of her reputation as a tenacious and forceful person had been put in charge of collecting donations – redoubled their efforts to convince the women of Key of David to make their required contributions. Because salaried workers on the Copperbelt are

typically paid at the end of the month, the committee wanted to secure contributions before the inevitable slipstream of expenses consumed the money they hoped would finance the kitchen mending. Bana Zulu hounded the women of Key of David every chance she got, sometimes using expensive cell phone airtime to call them, sometimes stopping by their houses to ask for whatever money they might have at the moment. Once, while she and I were together in town, we tracked down Bana Karen at work, walked with her to the bank, and stood over her shoulder while she withdrew some cash from her account and begrudgingly handed it over to the triumphant Bana Zulu.

For her part, Bana Chibale took every opportunity to exhort people to pay their contributions. On several occasions when the Key of David women were gathered together she pointed out that it would not "look good" (*ukumoneka bwino*) if those who had been invited to the party arrived to find that the food was inadequate or, worse yet, that the group had not been able to buy Mrs. Mwanza the gift she wanted most: an upright refrigerator. If that happened, Bana Chibale said, they would all be embarrassed and ashamed (*ukusebanya*). Moreover, she implored, it would tarnish the reputation of the church, of Pentecostalism, even of God. At other points Bana Chibale appealed to the promise of an eventual return on their present social investment. One day, she would point out, their daughters would need kitchen parties, and their own kitchens would need to be updated. By giving to Mrs. Mwanza's kitchen mending they would ensure that when the time came for them to solicit the help of others it would be forthcoming. Similarly, contributions to the party were occasionally described in the familiar Pentecostal language of seeds; just as money given to the kitchen mending carried the

promise of reciprocity within the larger Nsofu social world, it was also said to provoke heavenly return gifts.

Let me pause here to note that in general whenever one of the committee members made a public exhortation urging the women to give their required contributions, Mrs. Mwanza was not present, having been ushered out of the room before such conversations began. Mrs. Mwanza was typically not welcome at committee meetings either, particularly if we had planned one of our myriad discussions of the budget. Only when the agenda included aesthetic or social topics – questions of who to invite or how to decorate – was Mrs. Mwanza asked to attend, and even then the committee hurried her away as soon as the topics that required her input had been discussed.

Beyond appeals to their reputations or promises of reciprocity, the tactic that Bana Chibale most frequently employed in an effort to encourage the women of Key of David to give was reminders that contributions toward Mrs. Mwanza's kitchen mending were part of their relationship with their spiritual mother. With less than a week to go before the kitchen mending, it was this approach to their monetary obligations – one she had used a number of times before – that Bana Chibale chose to employ to make one final plea for people to pay their contributions. On that day the women had gathered in the empty Key of David sanctuary to learn the dance steps we would perform at the party. When we had finished rehearsing, we gathered in a corner of the church around a cluster of the plastic garden chairs the congregation used on Sunday morning. By that point, Bana Chibale was visibly strained – during the prayer session that had preceded the dance rehearsal she was lost in fervent intercession, curling her shoulders forward and keening

as she asked God to spare the event from failure. With many of the women grouped around her for this final meeting before the party, Bana Chibale gave one last request for help. Surely, she cried, they would never allow their real mothers to hold a kitchen mending with insufficient funds! In the same way, it would be wrong of them to leave Mrs. Mwanza, their spiritual mother, alone in her hour of need.

After hearing these words, many of the Key of David women were upset. Several knew that there was no way they would be able to produce the cash they were supposed to contribute before the rapidly approaching event, now only days away. Bana Daka, whose husband had been laid off at the mine months before, said that she not only could not give, but that she did not even plan to attend. It would be unfair for her to come and eat food toward which she had not been able to contribute, she reasoned, and she therefore planned to stay away.

While the committee had received enough money to buy food for all the guests they expected, two days before the kitchen mending we had still not amassed sufficient funds to purchase an upright refrigerator. When Mrs. Mwanza got wind of this, she was visibly crestfallen. The main reason she had wanted to have a kitchen mending, she confessed to me, was to get this coveted, expensive appliance. All the other gifts that she was sure to receive, whether dishes or cookware, would not make the event worthwhile if it didn't also result in a refrigerator.

The day before the kitchen mending I heard Mrs. Mwanza speaking loudly on the telephone, trying to make herself heard despite a bad connection. She was clearly happy, laughing out loud and singing a modified version of the Pentecostal chorus, "Something Good in my Life": "Something good in my kitchen, something good in my kitchen!" I

learned later that day that the phone call had been from a Zimbabwean man who had attended Key of David church before finding a job across the border in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He told Mrs. Mwanza that he was wiring K500,000[3] as a loan to help with the event. These funds, along with extra last-minute donations from Bana Chibale and her husband, as well as the Phiris, another wealthy couple in the church, meant that even though several Key of David women were unable to contribute the amount they had been asked to, everything was in place for the party to move forward.

The night before the kitchen mending I went to bed late after an evening of last-minute party preparations. A number of Mrs. Mwanza's relatives had traveled from Lusaka to Kitwe to attend the party, and together we had rubbed dozens of pieces of raw chicken with spices for the next day's meal. Shortly after I went to sleep I was awakened by the unmistakable sound of Pentecostal prayer. Despite the late hour, Bana Meshach, the wife of another Pentecostal pastor in Nsofu, had come to join her friend Mrs. Mwanza in intercession and spiritual warfare ahead of the kitchen mending. Together, they sang and prayed against any demonic interference in the event as I drifted off to sleep.

The morning of the kitchen mending dawned dry-season clear and cold enough for me to see my breath when I stepped outside. June is the coolest month of the year in Zambia, and the landscape turns brown both from the lack of rain and the dust kicked up by the wind that blows across the Copperbelt in the Southern Hemisphere winter. A little after 6:00 am I cut around across a narrow footpath to Bana Chibale's house, where we were soon joined by several other committee members. We spent the morning cooking – frying chicken, chopping cabbage for salad, peeling potatoes, and boiling rice. The work spilled over into Mrs. Chibale's back yard, where we set up several charcoal braziers that

we used along with the electric stove in the kitchen. Hours later we changed into our matching “Africa print” outfits, which were tailored in the latest style, and made our way to the church. We found the Key of David sanctuary transformed, filled with chairs we had hired for the occasion and decorated with most of Mrs. Phiri’s sitting room furnishings.

To everyone’s relief, the party went off without a hitch. In addition to Mrs. Mwanza’s visiting relatives, a number of her work colleagues and neighbors were also present. The guests had either brought small gifts of their own or in some cases pooled their money to purchase larger items, including a dinette set. The committee and churchwomen – visiting anthropologist included – successfully performed the dances they had choreographed. When it came time for the committee to formally present our gift, we left the room and danced back in to lead Mrs. Mwanza to the upright refrigerator. She wiped her eyes as Bana Chibale opened the double doors to show off the gift, and wrapped several of the committee members in emotional embraces while all around her the dancing continued.

During the party, none of the resentment or worry that had marked the weeks leading up to the kitchen mending was evident. Instead, people ate, drank, and listened attentively as Bana Nyrenda, a popular Pentecostal speaker who had been invited as the guest of honor, preached a brief sermon. Before she left, Bana Nyrenda made a point to pray for Mrs. Mwanza, who knelt down while the senior preacher laid hands on her forehead. The prayer asked for blessings for Mrs. Mwanza, and specifically for a baby. Those who knew Mrs. Mwanza were well aware that this was her deepest desire; she had been married to Pastor Mwanza for nearly six years and they did not yet have a child

together. During her prayer, Bana Nyrenda proclaimed that by the same time next year there should be a baby in the Mwanza house.

Although unity prevailed among the Key of David women during the few hours of the kitchen mending, as soon as the guests had gone home the divisions evident since the party was first announced surfaced once again. The food that was served had been carefully rationed by the committee, which meant that there was quite a bit left over after Mrs. Mwanza left and those from outside the congregation went home. Even as they began to clean the sanctuary for the following day's service, the women of Key of David pulled plastic containers and bags from their purses and headed toward the committee to ask for more food to take home to their families. Even though Bana Chibale and Bana Zulu had taken care to leave a cache of prepared food for the committee back at Bana Chibale's house, they were still forceful in their efforts to reserve most of the leftover food for themselves and others who had given particularly large contributions to the kitchen mending. These actions prompted sharp complaints from the other women, who felt entitled to a share of the leftovers. While some acknowledged that they had not contributed the amount they had been asked to, they pointed out that all of them had supplied labor in the days leading up to the event, and that they therefore deserved some of the special fare they had helped prepare.

After doling out whatever food they felt should go to the other women, the committee members made our way back to Bana Chibale's house. By now it was late in the evening and all of us were exhausted. When we arrived at the Chibale home we filed into the back bedroom where pots of chicken, rice, and potatoes had been stowed away alongside crates of soft drinks. Wearily we began dividing the food among ourselves and

people like Moses, who had made contributions but had not be present at the event. While Bana Zulu and the other committee members devoted themselves to this task, I noticed that Bana Chimfwembe, who had walked with us from the church and joined us in the circle at Bana Chibale's house, was being left out of the distribution of food. Bana Chimfwembe had not been part of the committee, nor had she been able to give much money toward the kitchen mending. All of us knew that her husband had crashed the vehicle that he operated as a taxi and would have to compensate the owner, who had also released him from employment. Now, Bana Chimfwembe had followed the committee into the private meeting where they were dividing up the extra food. No one said anything to her at the time, though they were careful not to give her anything. Afterwards, however, Bana Zulu and others indicated that they were angry at Bana Chimfwembe's actions. They could not believe that she would dare try to share in the privileges of the committee when she had not given what she had been asked to contribute towards the event.

The next morning I watched as Mrs. Mwanza sorted through the heap of gifts she had received. In addition to the coveted refrigerator and the dining table and chairs, she had been given a large assortment of kitchenware, including dishes and pots and pans. Indeed, among her presents there were far more kitchen tools than she could use, and Mrs. Mwanza said she planned to save some either to use as replacements for things that eventually broke or wore out, or to bring to future kitchen parties or weddings. Wrapped in her usual *citenge*, her hair still tightly braided into the wig she bought for her special day, Mrs. Mwanza looked tired but satisfied. Not only had she received the large gift she hoped for, as well as many more that she confessed she had not expected, but she also

pointed out that those who attended the event had been spiritually encouraged by the singing and the sermon. This last point was particularly important to Mrs. Mwanza, who said that those who came bearing gifts ought to leave encouraged in soul as well as fed in body. Because this had been the case, the kitchen mending was, in Mrs. Mwanza's mind, a successful Pentecostal ritual.[4]

The Problem of Super-Members

I have devoted so much space to this event because of how well it illustrates the complex social relationships that form in Nsofu Pentecostal churches, along with the various values by which these relationships are organized. I hope I have made it clear that the most important and most controversial figures in this event are the lay leaders positioned between their spiritual mother, Mrs. Mwanza, and the other women in their congregation. Bana Chibale represents a larger category of Pentecostal laity that I came to think of during my fieldwork as "super-members." Super-members are fixtures in any Copperbelt Pentecostal church, and once one is mindful of their presence it is easy to identify them upon the first visit to a new congregation. They are almost always seated at the front of the church, smartly dressed and carrying large Bibles. Like Mr. Moyo at Freedom Bible Church, many take part in the formal aspects of Pentecostal worship by giving brief exhortations, making announcements, or receiving the offering. Typically, they are among the most dedicated members of their congregations, arriving punctually (even early) for Sunday services and participating in other events as well. As we might expect, super-members are those who best embody charisma as it is defined in urban Zambia, demonstrating both facility with ritual forms and, crucially, economic success.

Given what we know about how the prosperity gospel has complicated Pentecostal hierarchy on the Copperbelt, it should come as no surprise that super-members are often those around whom controversy crystallizes, particularly in the light of the possibility that their economic status presents a threat to a purely spiritual hierarchy. However, because of their position between other laypeople and the pastor, super-members are also the lynchpins of congregational sociality; put differently, they are the ones on whom the hopes of Pentecostal relational life are most obviously made to rest. For, in the developing hierarchies of Nsofu congregations, lay leaders like Bana Chibale or Mr. Moyo are the surest signs of institutionalization. They are hierarchy realized, a metonym for a larger, stratified Pentecostal whole.

It is because of the simultaneous danger and promise they presented as super-members that the members of Mrs. Mwanza's kitchen mending committee found themselves in the particularly difficult position that they did. As part of the committee, their task was first and foremost to amass the necessary funds to give Mrs. Mwanza the party and gift she wanted. These efforts were identical to those behind any Copperbelt wedding or other special event regardless of the religious affiliation of its participants, and as such were not problematic. However, the fact that the differences between the contributions from the committee and the rest of the women from Key of David reflected aspects of the church hierarchy – both Bana Chibale and Bana Zulu were married to men who were elders in the church, and Bana Chibale was the leader of both the women's group and the music team – meant that the economic distinctions within that hierarchy were foregrounded. Moreover, because the amounts requested from committee members and from the rest of the church were determined by this group of leaders, whose husbands

had access to steady employment, many of the women at Key of David felt that their interests were not represented. It might be easy for people like Mrs. Phiri to give several hundred thousand kwacha, people complained to me, but in families where even the lowest required gift represented a third or more of their monthly income that type of contribution was almost impossible.

In the actions and functions of the kitchen mending committee, then, the problems of Pentecostal hierarchy are brought into sharp relief. The kitchen mending was not the only event that produced this kind of result, however. Pentecostal groups are always raising money for something, whether a trip to a convention, a building on a newly acquired plot of land, or the wedding of one of their members. Beyond these special campaigns, church groups are routinely called upon to assist with things like food for funerals and the sick, all of which require cash or goods in kind. And, of course, at every Pentecostal meeting an offering is taken. While certainly not everyone gives every time, there is at least a degree of pressure to do so.

All of these circumstances present opportunities for super-members to distinguish themselves on the basis of their economic achievement as opposed to any other marker of superiority. Which, again, makes the other members of their churches nervous. While the position of lay leaders is obviously precarious, however, they are not left without spiritual resources with which to counteract the problems their material contributions create. As in the case of seed offerings, gifts to the spiritual mother at Key of David were protected by a sacrificial logic operating alongside the various appeals made toward reciprocal gift exchange.

We have already seen that Pentecostals in Nsofu employ two parallel logics of exchange when giving offerings to church leaders. By treating these contributions as sacrifices while at the same time treating them as gifts, believers attempt to guard the position of charisma as the primary ordering force behind the relationships formed in their congregations. This is accomplished by emphasizing the intercessory capacity of pastors and prophets, thereby reinforcing the notion that the high position they occupy is the result of their spiritual authority. In a very different way, super-members also employ the idea of sacrifice in order to protect Pentecostal relationality. Like pastors, they too serve as intermediaries; however, in contrast with their leaders, people like Bana Chibale do not simply administer the offerings of others, but instead offer themselves as sacrifices for the sake of the Pentecostal hierarchy of charisma.

The "Indian Gift" on the Copperbelt

In trying to understand the various registers of exchange evident in the kitchen mending, I have found it helpful to turn to ethnographic studies of South Asia. Specifically, I draw on analyses of the *dan*, the so-called "Indian gift," that transmits impurity from the giver because it bears with it a part of her person (Parry 1986). *Dan*, according to Gloria Goodwin Raheja (1988), is socially important for the way it structures relationships. In her treatment, the dominance of particular castes is reinforced in their acceptance of *dan*, and with it the inauspiciousness of their community. By accepting and ingesting "the poison in the gift," recipients of *dan* become sacrificers and "protectors" of their villages (Raheja 1988: 25).

The particular danger of the *dan* varies with the actors who receive it. Jain renouncers, for instance (see Laidlaw 1995, 2001), are threatened by the corrupting

potential of the food they receive from lay Jain families; even if it has been meticulously prepared according to the rigorous requirements of Jainism, the violence of cooking is enough to make a renouncer impure. What's more, the dependence implied in these donations is, according to Laidlaw, a further threat to the Jain ideal of unencumbered asceticism. Through a carefully ritualized conversation in which renouncers adamantly refuse the daily alms lay families offer them, while at the same time the latter firmly insist that they accept these offerings, this dangerous exchange is rendered pure for the renouncers. In the light of this detailed back and forth, Laidlaw argues that the *dan* is perhaps the nearest thing to a Derridean pure gift available in the ethnographic record. It therefore stands out as an asocial offering, one that, as he puts it, "makes no friends" (Laidlaw 2001). At the same time, as far as Jain laypeople are concerned, *dan* is not a pure gift but is rather part of a reciprocal exchange through which they receive religious instruction and karmic merit, and which may even produce an enduring bond with a particular renouncer (Laidlaw 1995: 324-229). In the Jain context, then, the *dan* is a dangerous gift simultaneously governed by two logics that together enable ritual specialists to remain free of the taint of social relationships while still allowing social relationships to develop and religious goods to accrue to donors.

In contrast to Jain renouncers, who are at least officially outside of the relational entanglements of everyday life, Parry (1989) argues that the danger of the *dan* in the pilgrimage city of Benares lies primarily in the fact that although the Brahmin priests who receive these gifts are embedded in the relational life of their communities, they do not offer a return gift in exchange. While the whole point of the *dan* is to make a meritorious gift without an expectation of a return, Parry notes that this soteriological

function is worked out in a wider social context in which a return is required. The tension between these two modes of exchange is what gives this gift its "moral ambiguity" (Parry 1989: 77). It is also, therefore, the source of the layers of ritual process surrounding *dan*. As in the Jain case, then, ritual life reflects the difficulties involved when one gift serves two contradictory ends – a religiously motivated soteriology and a socially motivated reciprocity.

Like the *dan*, the degree of religious, social, and discursive development around the kitchen mending suggests that this is an exchange that is particularly fraught, one that presents a serious threat to the relational structures of Pentecostalism. In addition, this case parallels that of the South Indian gift in the different modes of exchange simultaneously employed by believers whose goals are both social and soteriological – or at least, religious. Taking our cues from the analyses of the *dan* outlined above, and following our earlier discussion of the interplay between gifts and sacrifices in Nsofu, our task is first to disentangle the various logics of exchange visible in the kitchen mending, and then examine how these overlapping registers facilitate the sacrificial authority of Pentecostal lay leaders.

On the Sociology of Pentecostal Exchange

The first level of exchange visible in the kitchen mending included everyone involved in the event: the laypeople, the committee members, Mrs. Mwanza, and even the guest of honor Mrs. Nyrenda. This might be called the "official" level, at least insofar as it was characterized by the ideals of Pentecostal hierarchy and exchange as I have identified them. When Bana Chibale appealed to the other women of Key of David to give their contributions because they owed their spiritual mother the same kind of

respect and support they would give to their senior kin, she was operating on this official level. For, she was drawing on a common way of describing the Pentecostal hierarchy of charisma, urging her fellow church members to respond to the spiritual superiority of their religious *bafyashi* in the same way she did: by giving material offerings.

Beneath this official level, however, it is not difficult to find another, more complex set of interactions and exchanges. Indeed, Bana Chibale demonstrated the fact that she was operating in multiple registers of exchange in the various ways she framed her appeals for money to the Key of David women. In part, what Bana Chibale was drawing on was a social logic of reciprocity, as when she urged people to contribute to the event with the knowledge that when their children needed kitchen parties they could count on the assistance of those they had helped put on Mrs. Mwanza's kitchen mending. Here, Bana Chilbale's language is different from the framework of exchange laid out in chapter two, as she appeals not to individual hierarchical exchange, but rather to the kind of collective action necessary for large expenses. Part of the stress of the kitchen mending, then, was found simply in the scale of the event and in the amount of social energy required to bring it off successfully.

Beyond the basic challenges of mobilizing sufficient support, however, the primary danger present in the kitchen mending was that the economic gradient that continually challenges the Pentecostal hierarchy of charisma might usurp it all together. Whenever committees are formed in urban Zambia they are done with an eye to economic status. As in the case of Mrs. Mwanza's kitchen mending, the primary qualification for membership on a committee is one's ability to make the required contribution. Those who are most frequently approached to join committees, then, are

those who are perceived as most likely to give a large amount of money; in other words, those of a certain economic status. Part of the processes of assessing the suitability of a potential committee member parallels the larger process of determining others' position on the gradient of prestige that undergirds social life on the Copperbelt.

Here, an example from a context other than Mrs. Mwanza's kitchen mending is instructive. One morning I returned home from a run through the township to find Bana Richard, a Pentecostal woman and erstwhile member of Freedom Bible Church, leaving through the Mwanzas' front gate. I was surprised to see her there, and assumed she had come to see me, as I didn't know that Bana Richard knew Mrs. Mwanza. Certainly, the women did not have a close relationship. So, when Bana Richard simply greeted me and went on her way, I was puzzled. It was only after entering the house that I learned from Mrs. Mwanza that Bana Richard had come to ask her to be on the committee for her daughter's wedding, an offer she had refused, having just been involved with a large wedding at Key of David. While I am sure that their acquaintance was occasioned by a common Pentecostal identity, when Bana Richard went to Mrs. Mwanza her primary concerns were economic rather than religious. Mrs. Mwanza's response, grounded in her own inability to pay, confirms this. Although I did not witness the conversation between them, it is safe to say that Bana Richard's request to Mrs. Mwanza was grounded primarily in an assessment of the Mwanza family's material status, which was perhaps informed by her knowledge that I lived with the Mwanzas and might be contributing to the household budget.

While a committee represents more of a collective effort than a stratified reciprocity, the evaluative mechanisms through which people form these groups reflect

social processes bound up in economic differentiation and hierarchy. In the context of the kitchen mending, the activities of Key of David women were therefore oriented primarily toward material status, and only secondarily organized around charismatic authority. It is on this level that we must interpret the committee's strong-arming and the resentment of the rest of the Key of David women. It is also in the light of the danger that this level posed to charismatic hierarchy that we can understand the way the committee treated Mrs. Mwanza.

The different levels of exchange evident in the kitchen mending can be helpfully interpreted in terms of what Marshall Sahlins refers to as "reciprocity" and "pooling" (Sahlins 1972: 188-191). Pooling is a collective, centralized form of redistribution, such as one might find in a chiefly society; reciprocity, on the other hand, refers to economic transactions between two parties. These two forms of exchange are in turn linked to different social models. Specifically, Sahlins defines pooling as a "*within* relation, the collective action of a group," while reciprocity is a "*between* relation, the action and reaction of two parties" (Sahlins 1972: 188). Although it is true that these two models can and do collapse into one another – pooling may ultimately be understood as a form of reciprocity – it seems productive for our purposes to treat them as distinct types of exchange. That said, the fact that it is analytically possible to allow reciprocity and pooling to bleed into each other further indicates the suitability of these ideas for understanding situations like Mrs. Mwanza's kitchen mending, in which both logics are simultaneously at play.

I hope that it is already clear that what I have been referring to as the secondary, or underlying, level of exchange operating in the kitchen mending is one of reciprocity.

By itself, this logic is not incompatible with Pentecostal practice. Indeed, in our discussion of exchanges between pastors and laypeople, reciprocity as a between relationship plays a primary role. However, the between relationship that colors the actions of the kitchen mending committee and the rest of the Key of David laywomen in this example is not primarily worked out in terms of charisma. Rather, the social relations that characterize this event are, like those that mark the formation of any Copperbelt committee, between relationships organized primarily on the basis of economic status.

On the official level, in contrast, what was communicated to Mrs. Mwanza and to guests from outside Key of David was that the efforts of the committee and other laywomen represented an instance of pooling, a within relationship that subordinated economic to spiritual hierarchy. On the official level the primary mode of distinction was not economic status, but rather charisma. More specifically, the central difference in play was that between a church leader and the members of her congregation, and not the various economic statuses of those members. Indeed, this ranking of spiritual status did not end with Mrs. Mwanza, but also extended above her to include the prominent figure of Bana Nyrenda.

This charismatic distinction was evident in part in the clothing the various groups wore to the event. While the committee was dressed in coordinating black and white smocks made from *citenge* material, most of the laywomen had also chosen to have similar outfits sewn for the event. Even those like Bana Daka – who in the end chose to attend the kitchen mending – who were unable to afford new clothes, borrowed or reused the white Key of David polo shirts that they had from an earlier women's event. These,

along with black trousers that matched what everyone else was wearing, created a sense of uniformity alongside subtle gradation. Mrs. Mwanza, in contrast, was dressed in a new *citenge* outfit sewn from high-quality Congolese fabric that the same Zimbabwean man who contributed to the purchase of the refrigerator had sent especially for her. Bana Nyrenda was dressed more uniquely and lavishly still, wearing a Botswanan fabric that few of us had ever seen before, and that she made a point to mention during her sermon.

When the material status distinctions among the Key of David laywomen were minimized, whether through uniformity in dress or a choreographed dance "step" that we all performed together, these differences were subordinated, kept in what Pentecostals believe to be their proper place. During the kitchen mending, the most apparent and important distinctions were between Mrs. Mwanza and the lay members of her church, and between Bana Nyrenda and Mrs. Mwanza. In other words, the hierarchy that emerged as the primary ordering mechanism behind the event – at least in the eyes of the guests and of Mrs. Mwanza – was the same one that believers feel ought to define their churches and shape their social relationships.

Despite all of the conflict and stress before and after the kitchen mending – the committee's scrabbling for contributions, the statements by many laywomen that they would avoid the event all together, and the blatant exclusion of Bana Chimfwembe from the distribution of leftovers – those who attended the event were still able to place it within a Pentecostal framework of values in which charisma encompasses any other form of social organization. That it turned out this way is largely the result of the efforts of super-members, most notably Bana Chibale, to shield Mrs. Mwanza from the forms of reciprocity the committee mobilized below and behind the official structures of

Pentecostal exchange. By absorbing the poison in these gifts, the lay leaders in this example performed a religious service that, at least in the eyes of some, foregrounded their own spiritual capacity and charismatic authority.

The Priestly Efforts of Lay Leaders

From the earliest stages of preparation through the kitchen mending itself, the committee focused much of their energy on confining Mrs. Mwanza to what I have been referring to as the official level of the event – that is, the level characterized by pooling and organized by a hierarchy of charisma. This is clear in their decision to exclude Mrs. Mwanza from most of the planning process, and especially from those parts of their meetings that involved making the budget. During these conversations, individual members of the congregation were regularly mentioned by name along with a report as to their progress toward payment. Not surprisingly, discussions of the budget routinely highlighted the various problems and conflicts present among the women. What Bana Chibale and the rest of the committee were trying to do when they kept Mrs. Mwanza out of discussions of the budget was to allow her to experience the gifts she would receive in and at the kitchen mending as part of the common narrative of Pentecostal exchange in which laypeople respond to the charismatic authority of their leaders by presenting them with offerings, and not as a result of calculations of economic status in the congregation.

The committee's efforts to shield Mrs. Mwanza from those parts of the kitchen mending that did not conform to Pentecostal social ideals represents a potential solution to the problem of lay ambition identified in the last chapter. Here, it is important to recall the way that prosperity theology has complicated ambition for Nsofu Pentecostals, especially those laypeople who occupy leadership positions. While the gifts of wealthier

congregants engage the obligation of pastors in a manner that unproblematically reflects the value of charisma, the ambition demonstrated by these laypeople is not so easily interpreted in these terms. As we have seen, although believers may understand the gifts that super-members make to their pastors as part of a sacrificial economy organized by charisma, it is also possible for them to argue that increased attention from church leaders that follows these offerings is an indication that one or both parties have traded a hierarchy of charisma for one of economic status. If the difficulties of Pentecostal exchange make it especially hard to identify the ambitions of super-members, situations like the kitchen mending present them with important opportunities to clarify the spiritual nature of their efforts.

Like the recipients of *dan* in Raheja's analysis, Bana Chibale and the rest of the committee provided a priestly service when they worked to protect Mrs. Mwanza, as well as the hierarchical relationships that had formed around her and her husband. While the gifts offered in the kitchen mending were dangerous because of the way they slipped between different registers of exchange motivated by different forms of relational hierarchy, the committee members positioned themselves so as to absorb the most problematic aspects of this exchange. They did so not only by removing Mrs. Mwanza from discussions of the budget that included evaluations of economic status, but also by making up the difference in the amount of money needed to buy her a refrigerator. Although many of us knew that Mrs. Phiri and her husband, together with the Chibale family, had furnished the extra money necessary for this gift, their contribution was officially treated as a secret. In this way the committee was able to include those who,

for whatever reason, were not able to respond to Mrs. Mwanza's charismatic authority with the kinds of material offerings that are considered appropriate.

By shielding Mrs. Mwanza from the fact that material hierarchy was a social force in her congregation, while at the same time circumventing that material hierarchy to draw their fellow church members into a structure that exemplified the Pentecostal social ideal, the super-members on the committee positioned themselves as spiritual intermediaries. Specifically, they reconciled other laypeople with their spiritual mother through their own sacrifices and willingness to absorb those aspects of the exchange that threatened the superior position of charisma in the congregation's hierarchy of values. In so doing, they effectively made a statement about the charismatic quality of their own authority. If there were doubts that the ambitions of laypeople like Bana Chibale were religious in nature, her willingness to serve in what amounted to a priestly capacity – albeit one that mediated between other laypeople and the leader of their church, rather than God – represented a firm claim to charisma. Whether or not these efforts were understood or affirmed in these terms varied with individual interpretations of her actions.

As far as Mrs. Mwanza was concerned, the work that the committee did was a religious act, a worthy sacrifice of their resources that, coupled with the efforts of the rest of the congregation, constituted an appropriate actualization of the Pentecostal gradient of charisma. While I am sure that Mrs. Mwanza had some sense of the stress the committee was under as a result of the event, and even of the frustration some of the other laywomen felt with the demands of the committee, she was sufficiently shielded from these issues to be able to articulate a narrative of the kitchen mending that conformed to Pentecostal ideals. The event itself appeared to confirm this perspective and, crucially, effectively

performed it for those outside the congregation who were in attendance. When the women marched in together, dressed either in coordinating uniforms or Key of David polo shirts, they appeared to represent a uniformly comprised group. When they together honored Mrs. Mwanza with dancing and gifts, they drew on a familiar Pentecostal logic of hierarchical exchange, presenting their spiritual mother with an offering. When Mrs. Mwanza knelt before the visiting preacher while her guests looked on, she further demonstrated that it was a charismatic hierarchy that obtained at Key of David, and that she, too, sought out spiritual services from those who were her religious superiors. So, when Mrs. Mwanza told me on the day after the celebration that she felt it had been a success because those who came to the event had received spiritual encouragement in return for their offerings, she spoke confidently from within the official framework of Pentecostal exchange that had been carefully created and maintained for her by the committee of super-members. Indeed, it is clear that even before the kitchen mending Mrs. Mwanza was operating primarily in a Pentecostal religious register. When Bana Meshach joined her for a late-night intercessory prayer session, they together emphasized that the events of the following day were religious in nature, and that they were therefore especially vulnerable to satanic attack.

While Mrs. Mwanza was able to pronounce the kitchen mending a successful Pentecostal ritual, it was not so easy for all of the laywomen in Key of David to do the same. Certainly, some were able to affirm the position of charisma as the ordering force behind the social ties that formed in their churches. For them, the large contributions that some super-members had made were simply a natural outgrowth of their position as faithful Pentecostals who had experienced the blessing that these believers hoped would

one day also find them. However, others involved in the kitchen mending were hurt and alienated by the experience, and felt that it undermined the charismatic hierarchy of their congregation. Their experience with this large and expensive event felt like a variation on a common theme in Copperbelt Pentecostal churches: the encroachment of material hierarchy on the relational life of their congregation.

The difference between these common, everyday suspicions about the integrity of their religious sociality and those worries associated with the kitchen mending is that, in the absence of the kind of ritual resources provided by a special event like a party for a church leader, it is very difficult for super-members to demonstrate that their ambitions are charismatic. Under these circumstances, the relational world created by charisma and protected by the language of sacrifice and the efforts of lay intermediaries becomes increasingly unstable. In the next section, we will examine what happens when the various ritual tools through which Pentecostals on the Copperbelt attempt to preserve the position of charisma in their congregations fail to protect the fragile social framework they have created.

Notes on Chapter 6:

[1] At the time of my fieldwork, about $50. K2500,000 is half of the monthly salary for a minimum wage salaried worker and nearly the entire monthly wage of those employed on a contract basis.

[2] At the time of my fieldwork, about $20

[3] At the time of my fieldwork, about $100

[4] A few days before I left the field, Mrs. Mwanza asked me what kinds of things I planned to write about in my dissertation. When I mentioned that I planned to include the kitchen mending in my analysis, she was very pleased. At least, she said, you will go back to your country with a testimony – this woman used to stay one way and now stays another. Here again we see that for Mrs. Mwanza, the kitchen mending represented a successful Pentecostal ritual through which divine blessings had been seen to follow from faithful religious adherence.

Section III:

When Prosperity Fails

Much depends on the balance which Pentecostalism maintains
between its ability to expand among the masses,
by remaining of the masses,
and its ability to advance their condition.
David Martin
Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America
(D. Martin 1990: 232)

One of the most important questions to emerge from increased anthropological attention to the prosperity gospel is found in what I refer to as the prosperity theodicy. If the prosperity gospel is first and foremost attractive to people because of its promise of wealth, what happens when those who follow this movement do not get rich? Certainly, there are a number of ideas built into Pentecostalism that can keep this problem at bay. Pentecostal deliverance and spiritual warfare, for example, allow believers to attribute their lack of prosperity to interference from dark powers (see Gifford 2004: 83-112). As we have seen in Nsofu, the redefinition of prosperity as "security," or "[staying] well at home" (Maxwell 1998: 366) also helps believers remain devoted to the prosperity gospel by making its promises more likely to be fulfilled. Indeed, insofar as prosperity on the Copperbelt can be described in terms of realizing a particular kind of social ideal, charismatic hierarchy and religious obligation and ambition represent a fulfillment of the prosperity gospel's promise.

However, as our discussion of Nsofu Pentecostalism so far has suggested, even this locally redefined prosperity is far from certain, far from secure. While the various efforts of pastors, lay leaders, and ordinary believers to protect the social relationships formed in their religious groups are often effective, they do not always succeed. When

believers feel that the relational dynamics of their church, especially ties between a pastor and the various members of his congregation, have been compromised, they are left with several options. Some choose to stay in their congregations, perhaps working to reform them in keeping with what they understand to be the Pentecostal social ideal. Others do their best to ignore the problems they see, focusing only on their relationship with their pastors and leaving the other members of their churches to do what they will. But many of those frustrated by the social direction of their congregations choose to leave. Usually, disaffected believers look for another Pentecostal church that they feel is closer to the relational ideals of their religion; alternately, they may come together with others to start a new group. In chapter seven, we will discuss those who stay in Pentecostal congregations despite failure and scandal, and in chapter eight we will focus on the emergence of new groups and the movement of members among them. Through this analysis we will examine what happens on the Copperbelt when prosperity fails (Festinger, et al. 1956; also see Dada 2004).

Chapter Seven: Pentecostalism and Its Malcontents

We carry in our worlds that flourish
our worlds that have failed

Christopher Okigbo
"Lament of the Silent Sisters"

One afternoon while walking along one of the hundreds of dirt paths that crisscross Nsofu at every imaginable angle, I spied Bana James standing outside her home washing clothes. Bashi James was the groundskeeper at Key of David, and the family lived on the church property, which meant that Bana James' front door was also the back door of the church. I hopped over a trench cut for footings of someone's new house, slipped through a gap in the plank fence around the church, and called out '*Odi*,' asking Bana James if I could enter the yard. She smiled and gestured to a wooden bench leaning against the cinderblock sanctuary before drying her hands and joining me there.

It was a few weeks before the kitchen mending, and the upcoming event had brought the economic tensions at Key of David to the fore. Seated beside me in the shade of the church building, Bana James told me that in her eyes the reason that the women of the congregation were so clearly divided along economic lines was because Mrs. Mwanza was not a good *bafyashi*. Rather than operating according to the Pentecostal belief that one's material status ought not dictate his position in the congregation, Bana James went on, Mrs. Mwanza appeared to favor those who "came in cars." Indeed, Bana James added, Mrs. Mwanza was likely to "baby" members of the congregation who displayed their wealth. She contrasted this behavior with that of another Pentecostal pastor's wife, whose meetings Bana James used to attend. This woman, Bana James explained, was a good *bafyashi*. Instead of favoring those who were obviously better off

she encouraged those with more to give to those in need; she also counseled the women in her church against jealousy. In this congregation, Bana James emphasized, everyone received the attention of the pastor's wife regardless of economic status.

The frustrations that Bana James expressed ahead of the Key of David kitchen mending were by no means unique among Pentecostals in Nsofu. Despite the various ritual resources employed by lay leaders and ordinary laypeople to guard the relational structures of their congregations, believers were often angry about the way that social ties developed in their churches. Bana James' comments highlight the first of two primary points around which their frustrations crystallized. To wit, believers were often upset at the promotion within the church hierarchy of people who, while wealthy, failed to demonstrate the charisma necessary for leadership. In addition, the charismatic authority of pastors also caused distress – not only when, as in Bana James' description of Mrs. Mwanza, they did not organize church social relationships the way they ought, but also when the charisma that first led to their superior position appeared to have faded. In this chapter, I describe each of these forms of frustration, paying particular attention to how they relate to the social life of Pentecostal congregations. I then go on to analyze the various ways that believers work to shore up the hierarchical structures of their congregations after they have been damaged. This discussion will once again highlight the importance of hierarchy among Pentecostals by offering examples of how believers respond when that hierarchy breaks down. These examples will in turn set us in good stead to examine the ultimate fracturing of congregational relationships and structures in the next chapter.

“Corruption” in Church, or The Problem of Pentecostal Class

We have already established that much of the tension in Nsofu Pentecostal churches crystallizes around the problematic position of super-members. At Key of David, this mainly involved two different couples: the Chibales and the Phiris. Mrs. Mwanza’s particular intimacy with Bana Chibale and Mrs. Phiri can be attributed in part to their shared social, cultural, and linguistic identity. All three of these young women were originally from Lusaka and spoke fluent Nyanja, the language in which Mrs. Mwanza felt most comfortable. It was on the basis of these commonalities that Mrs. Mwanza explained the special relationship she had with these members of her congregation. While others in the church understood this point, they found Mrs. Phiri’s tie to Mrs. Mwanza troubling. Apart from Bana Chibale, Mrs. Phiri and her husband were the only people in the church who drove their own car to Sunday morning meetings. Although the couple had not been assigned a formal leadership role, Mrs. Mwanza kept very close counsel with her new friend, and she and Pastor Mwanza had come to rely on Mrs. Phiri and her husband for transportation and other things. Clearly, the couple occupied a place of authority in the church, and it was not difficult to see why people felt they were being groomed for an eventual leadership role. Mrs. Phiri’s central part in the kitchen mending committee was, for many, another indication that she already held a powerful position at Key of David.

This apparent favoring of a wealthy newcomer was suspicious enough, but in the eyes of some believers it was made worse by Mrs. Phiri’s comparative lack of spiritual fervor. At least Bana Chibale, along with her husband, had all the markings of Pentecostal commitment. Mrs. Phiri, in contrast, never appeared to be all that engaged in

prayer. She was often late to Sunday service and absent at mid-week meetings. One of Mrs. Phiri's most vocal critics was Bana Zulu. Although Bana Zulu was included in the kitchen mending committee, and had served in other leadership positions in Key of David, she did not enjoy the same degree of authority as Bana Chibale. In part this was because of Bana Zulu's temperament – she was opinionated, sometimes brash, and not above holding a grudge if she felt she had been wronged. However, it was also apparent that Bana Zulu was not able to make the same sorts of material contributions to the church that Bana Chibale did. Although Mr. Zulu had a good job at the mine, the family's financial position was very different from that of the Chibale family or of Mrs. Phiri and her husband. Indeed, when the time came to make her committee payment, she quietly borrowed the money from me, as she didn't have the cash on hand to give the amount that was required. In some ways, then, Bana Zulu is the exception that proves the rule; despite the fact that she and her husband held leadership positions at Key of David, both of them expressed feelings of being left out of key decisions in the church. Perhaps not coincidentally, their economic position was not equal to that of other leaders.

In a very different way, the same rule was proved by the rapid economic decline and parallel religious demotion of Mr. and Mrs. Ntembe. This couple had offered their backyard for the construction of a new Higher Calling chapel after Bana Mfuwe moved to South Africa. Before her departure, Bana Mfuwe had placed both Mr. and Mrs. Ntembe in official positions of leadership in Higher Calling. Together with a large number of other laypeople, they were expected to serve under the authority of Bana Chilomba. Mr. and Mrs. Ntembe were put in these positions while he was still making a good living working for the state telephone company. While Mr. Ntembe was employed

the family lived very well in a large house with a yard spacious enough to accommodate the new chapel. However, as we saw in chapter three, the family's decline when he lost his job was painfully quick.

At first, the fact that Mr. Ntembe was not working seemed to facilitate his increased involvement at Higher Calling. He was able to attend more midweek meetings, where his presence was a welcome addition to both the singing and preaching rotas. But as time went on the Ntembe family came under increasing attack from some members of the congregation. In particular, Bana Chilomba was not shy in saying that she felt the family was being judged for some wrongdoing, perhaps a sin that Mr. Ntembe had committed before he became a believer. Given this opposition it is no surprise that when the family was forced to move out of their house they also left Higher Calling, cutting many of the already strained ties to the church leadership.

Many members of Higher Calling were troubled by the speed with which their congregation had abandoned the Ntembes, and some of them maintained their relationships with the family, although this was made difficult by their relocation. Among those who felt that Mr. and Mrs. Ntembe and their family had been treated poorly there emerged a common narrative. Bana Matthew, a young mother employed in the mining sector, told me that she thought the changes in the way Bana Chilomba treated the Ntembe family were the result of the change in their economic status. When they were no longer able to support the church financially, most notably by providing them with a place to meet free of charge, they lost their position of leadership in the congregation. Like most Pentecostals, Bana Matthew thought this behavior was wrong in that it

suggested that positions in Higher Calling were given on the basis of material wealth rather than spiritual maturity, an area in which she felt the Ntembes were not lacking.

Another of those who had watched the Ntembe family fall from grace was my neighbor Bana Chite, a soft-spoken woman twice widowed who lived with her elderly mother and children in an unfinished house positioned halfway between the Mwanza's home and the bus stop. During an interview with Bana Chite I broached the subject of favoritism in Pentecostal churches, using the Bemba verb *ukusala*, "to choose." Her answer to my bumbling question – I found it uncomfortable to speak so directly about this topic – reveals what she, and I believe many Pentecostals in Nsofu, felt about the influence of wealthy super-members in their congregations.

> NH: But is it OK, maybe people, maybe leaders have a few people that they treat as their friends…. Some people complain that the pastor often chooses (*ba pastor balitemwa ukusala*; literally, 'the pastor likes to choose'). Is that alright? Because it seems that maybe… I've seen in perhaps every church every pastor has those he is very close to, more than other people. Is that alright?
>
> BC: Naomi, that happens. What you said about pastors having some people that they're close to. Naomi, here in Zambia this is the way things are: if someone has money, lives very well, then pastors – you'll see – a pastor will be very close to you. In every little thing. You might have a request or a prayer or simply say that you are not feeling well, you're sick, and they might pray for you for one whole hour. But someone who doesn't have money might say, 'I'm sick' and they pray twenty, twenty-five minutes.
>
> NH: That's all (*capwa*).
>
> BC: That's all. That goes on in many churches, even in Pentecostal churches it goes on. There are some that are close [to the pastor] because of what we call *ukutula* [giving or giving offering]. Let's say I have nothing, like right now I have nothing, I'm just staying at home [and not working]. There are others who have something, but I'm just sitting. There are some who go privately to our *mayo* [mother], to our *bafyashi*. They may have bought Boom [detergent], they may have bought bread, sugar, food. They bring it to her. The next day, they go to town and ask, '*Mayo,* what

> would you like?' They buy it whether oil, *fitenge* material, soap, and bring it to her.
>
> That *bafyashi* will think that the one who has thought of her is the child who cares for her. You see? We don't care for her. Now, she doesn't know that the issue is simply that we don't have anything. Because if you have you can certainly give. So, what happens, as you'll see, is that even if that person makes trouble, she will defend him[1]… Why? Because that person gives a lot. He gives in church, yes, but also behind the scenes, at the backdoor, he goes privately to the reverend or pastor or elder. He goes privately for prayer, having said, '*Bafyashi*, I want to see you, I'll come by your house.' He goes and may give even K100,000. And the pastor will say that this is a good child. Just because he gives. But us, his friends at church don't see. We just see what happens when you go and pray, go and pray. But that person goes privately, he gives something as though he is bribing the pastor.[2]

Bana Chite's choice of the word "bribe," which she used in English, is instructive. In discussing the changes in Higher Calling leadership after Bana Mfuwe had left, she mentioned those who, despite having made significant financial contributions to the group, had not been given leadership positions. Bana Chite felt that Bana Mfuwe had done the right thing in not letting herself be swayed by the gifts of wealthy members. God, she said, does not abide "corruption." In the political context of Zambia, where accusations of corruption are rife and bribery is not uncommon, Bana Chite saw a direct connection between the behavior of church and state leaders. Like crooked politicians, pastors who allowed themselves to be influenced by gifts undermined the proper process through which authority should be established. Moreover, they kept the poor from receiving the services that were their due, offering them only a fraction of the amount of prayer time they gave to the rich, for example.

Let me be clear here that while Bana Chite offered this diagnosis in a moment of candor, her opinions were not strong enough to compel her to leave Higher Calling.

While believers in Nsofu are often frustrated with the apparent favoritism demonstrated by their church leaders, many do remain loyal to their spiritual *bafyashi*. Indeed, the fact that in the eyes of some believers the problem lies more with super-members than it does with church leaders allows them to simultaneously disapprove of the actions of the former while remaining true to the leadership of the latter. In these cases, charisma prevails as the animating force behind a particular believer's involvement in the church. As long as the connection that she has with her pastor remains intact – the connection that first brought her into the church – a believer may overlook the apparent favoritism of that leader.

As suggested in the foregoing discussion of the efforts of super-members to protect the relationship a pastor has with his or her followers, these problematic members of Pentecostal congregations are very much invested in helping their fellow believers move around any accusations of favoritism. Here, the prosperity gospel provides them with important theological resources, since in their giving to church leaders super-members can easily claim that they are simply adhering to a biblical commandment. So too their displays of religious commitment are essential in confirming that the material components of their religious life are just that: divine responses to faithful Pentecostal adherence. Just as super-members draw on theological tenets of Pentecostalism in order to reinforce the position of charisma as the organizational logic of their congregations, pastors also rely on the promises of the prosperity gospel to encourage those among their followers who are frustrated by the apparent favoritism in their churches. As the following example demonstrates, Pentecostal preaching is overwhelmingly focused on

encouraging believers to remain faithful not only to their religious commitments, but also to their spiritual parents.

Crossing Over to the Other Side

On the Copperbelt, all-night or "overnight" prayer meetings are among the most popular of Pentecostal gatherings. There are several reasons for this. In part, depriving oneself of sleep is said to be an important ascetic practice that, like fasting, constitutes a demonstration of faith sure to compel the favor of God. Along these same lines, one of my informants said she appreciated the longer time that is devoted to Pentecostal religious practice at an "overnight." Rarely, she said, did one have so many uninterrupted hours to pray and listen to sermons. Nighttime is also understood to be the time when witches and Satanists are abroad and dark forces are at work. Praying during the night is therefore an especially effective way of weakening malevolent powers. Finally, more than most Pentecostal gatherings, overnights are popular because they are times of significant social involvement. Participants arrive in small groups, each person wrapped in shawls and sweaters against the chill of the evening. Babies are bundled up in blankets and knitted hats and spend the night tied to their mothers' and other women's backs, sleeping despite the cacophony of prayer, singing, and preaching. Everyone enjoys the break from routine, time spent with others when one would normally be shut up at home sleeping or watching the evening programs on ZNBC.[3]

It is these factors and not the content of overnights themselves that make them so popular. Indeed, as far as the various components of an overnight are concerned, they are no different from any other Pentecostal meeting. Singing, dancing, preaching, and collective-personal prayer are all part of the program, and those in charge move back and

forth among these activities to keep everyone awake. In this way, overnight prayer meetings resemble several Pentecostal church services held back-to-back. The one difference in the content is that at some point in the evening, usually four or five hours into the gathering, everyone will be served a snack – typically bread with margarine and a cup of hot, very sweet tea.

Like many Pentecostal churches in Nsofu, Freedom Bible Church regularly hosted overnight prayer meetings. These events became increasingly popular among residents of the township as more people heard about the church and, more specifically, about Pastor Ephraim's prophetic abilities and skill in deliverance. During this period of rapid growth, Bana Kazempe, who served as the treasurer for the interdenominational prayer meetings associated with Freedom Bible Church, volunteered to host an overnight prayer meeting. Bana Kazempe, Bana Sinkala's friend, lived in a large and well-furnished home across the street from the Catholic church. On the September evening chosen for the event, several dozen believers crowded into the house, filling the sitting room and spilling into the dining room and hallway.

For many attendees the overnight was the first time they had been in Bana Kazempe's home, and one could not help but notice the luxury of her surroundings. Alongside this obvious evidence of wealth, the various pastors who took turns preaching at the overnight made a point to state that their hostess and her family would certainly receive a blessing for opening their home. At one point in the evening Bana Kazempe's husband was called into the room (he was not a Pentecostal and had not participated in the prayer and singing). Bashi and Bana Kazempe knelt together before the pastors, in

view of the entire group. Pastor Ephraim and his team prayed for the couple, asking God to bless them and their family.

It was not difficult to imagine that some of those present at this overnight prayer meeting felt uncomfortable with the many references to Bana Kazempe's future blessings. Without question she was one of the most prosperous members of the Freedom Bible Church fellowship, and therefore did not seem to be in need of blessing to the same extent as many others in the congregation. As if sensing that some of those present might feel this way, Evangelist Maxwell urged people not to feel "jealous" of Bana Kazempe's fine house. One day, he assured them, they would have nice houses of their own.

Alongside these remarks about Bana Kazempe, the preachers at the overnight prayer meeting repeatedly drew on popular Pentecostal themes that serve to ease the frustrations of believers. The theme of this particular gathering was, "We are Crossing Over to the Other Side," a notion that the leaders connected to, among other things, the Old Testament story of the Children of Israel's passage through the Red Sea. Just as the Israelites had been brought from slavery into the Promised Land, Pentecostal believers could be confident that they too would eventually move from whatever difficult circumstances they were facing into a time of blessing. As I have already noted, the overwhelming majority of Pentecostal sermons feature similar exhortations to bear up under suffering, or to stand firm in the face of controversy or, indeed, church scandal. In all cases the strength to do so is to be found in the hope of a miracle, the eventual realization of one's desires.

This type of preaching is not unique to Pentecostals, and one may hear similar themes in other Christian churches in Zambia. However, there is a difference in that for Pentecostal believers ideas like those expressed at the Freedom Bible Church overnight are not just theological. That is, these are not just statements about the way that God works, but about the way that pastors work as well. As we have seen, for Copperbelt believers blessings, miracles, prophecies and so forth issue from charismatic church leaders whose special access to the Holy Spirit enables them to administer these things. Exhortations against jealous feelings in the home of a super-member alongside promises that eventually one would cross over into a Promised Land where a similar house would be waiting were therefore just as much attempts to keep believers in a particular congregation as they were efforts to keep them from leaving the faith altogether. Put differently, while I am sure that Pastor Ephraim and Evangelist Maxwell were concerned with the spiritual wellbeing of their followers, much of what they were doing at the meeting at Bana Kazempe's home was trying to maintain their status as charismatic leaders.

As long as a Pentecostal believes that the pastor she is following can help her access the divine blessings for which she is praying, it is likely she will remain in his group, even if she perceives that he pays more attention to those in the congregation who are wealthier than she is. In such situations, the strength of a pastor's charisma trumps whatever social frustrations a believer may feel. Here again, it is clear that the most important relationship in Pentecostal congregations is that between a believer and a church leader. Sometimes, however, even a pastor's promises of spiritual breakthrough

are not enough to keep believers going. Under these circumstances, charisma too appears to have failed.

You feel in your heart that it will happen

My description in chapter four of the process through which believers choose to join the groups that form around charismatic leaders included an extensive conversation with Bana Sinkala about her first encounter with Bana Mfuwe and her subsequent decision to attend Higher Calling meetings. That conversation took place after I had been in the field for more than a year, by which point Bana Sinkala and I had become good friends. At the time of that conversation Bana Sinkala had all but stopped attending Higher Calling. This development may have had something to do with Bana Mfuwe's departure, since like many believers in this group, Bana Sinkala's membership in Higher Calling was an outgrowth of her relationship with Bana Mfuwe. Once their leader was gone, dozens of people who had been very committed to the fellowship stopped attending meetings.

When Bana Sinkala told me that she was no longer going to Higher Calling, however, she did not mention Bana Mfuwe's departure. Instead, what emerged from her narrative was a deep sense of disappointment, particularly with regard to the issue that had brought her to Higher Calling in the first place. When she initially began to attend meetings at Bana Mfuwe's house, Bana Sinkala had been praying that her husband would return, that her marriage – and with it her economic security – would be restored. Now, years later, it had become abundantly clear that this would not happen. And this despite the fact, Bana Sinkala commented wryly, that Pentecostal preachers were very good at encouraging their followers (*ba Pente balakoselesha*). At this point in the conversation,

Bana Sinkala's neighbor, who was not a Pentecostal, chimed in to explain the process. They yell and yell, she noted, and eventually, you believe and begin to follow them. That's it, Bana Sinkala agreed, they convince you that the story they are telling is true, and you feel in your heart it will happen. This, she concluded, was a problem (*bwafiya*).

Before going any further it is important to point out that while Bana Sinkala had stopped attending the interdenominational prayer meetings at Higher Calling, she remained a relatively active member of another Pentecostal church in Nsofu. Her frustration about the lack of answers to her most earnest prayers had therefore not led her to abandon Pentecostalism completely. They had, however, contributed to her waning interest in Pentecostal prayer meetings and to her effective decision to dissociate herself from Higher Calling, particularly in the absence of Bana Mfuwe.

Such expressions of frustration or disillusionment with Pentecostal promises of blessing were not the first things believers in Nsofu shared with me. Many of them had decided to join the particular group or groups to which they belonged because they hoped that participation in these various congregations – and more specifically association with particular charismatic leaders – would bring about the breakthroughs they were asking for. Because Pentecostals believe that God will respond to displays of faith, they were often careful with their words and admonished one another to do the same, especially if they heard a fellow believer expressing despair. Still, as the following conversation demonstrates, these ideas came through, sometimes in the most unlikely moments.

One afternoon in March of 2009 I interviewed Esther, a young single woman who frequented Pentecostal meetings throughout Nsofu. She was a fixture at Higher Calling and had, over the course of my fieldwork, lived in the homes of various Higher Calling

members, including Bana Sinkala. At the time of our interview she was staying on the same street as the Pastor and Mrs. Mwanza, having left Bana Sinkala's home to move in with Bana Veronica. The two women were keeping close quarters in a house that had been converted into a private primary school, where Bana Veronica was employed as the caretaker. Esther and I had decided to conduct the interview outside, and Bana Veronica brought me a fiberglass kitchen chair to sit on while I balanced my notebook in my lap.

As we were winding up our conversation, the sky opened and the steady rains that had been falling on and off all week forced Esther and me quickly off the veranda and into Bana Veronica's small room. Esther pushed back the lace curtain that shielded the sleeping area from the cooking space, climbed onto the bed, and curled up against the wall, her back resting on a pillow. Bana Veronica followed me inside, carrying with her the chair I had been sitting on when it started to rain. She placed it opposite Esther and instructed me to sit down while she settled down at Esther's feet. Veronica came to sit beside her mother on the bed, where she quietly played with a few plastic clothespins. Outside, the rain fell in sheets, except at the threshold of the house, where the corrugated roof channeled the downpour into regular streams.

I had turned my audio recorder off and was planning to leave as soon as the rain let up, but Esther had something on her mind that she wanted to discuss. Before she began, Esther made a point to emphasize that she was not complaining (*ukulilishanya*), but simply talking. The nature of her comments thus established, Esther proceeded to ask her question: How did it happen that people received the things that they were asking God for? This issue was bothering her, Esther went on, because despite her faithful Pentecostal adherence, including fasting and midnight prayer, her breakthrough had not

come. And she wanted to know why. While Bana Veronica tried to encourage her friend, as the conversation progressed it became clear that she was struggling with similar feelings. In particular, Bana Veronica found it very frustrating that people she knew to be engaged in sinful behavior prospered. If she was honest, faithful Pentecostal adherence had meant a fall in her standard of living, a fact that she said sometimes moved her to put on a miniskirt with the thought of going to bars and meeting men. So far Bana Veronica had not made it out of the house in her old clothes, but she and Esther both said they were tired of asking for prayer and undergoing deliverance. Someday soon they needed a breakthrough.

Part of what Bana Sinkala, Esther, and Bana Veronica addressed in these conversations with me was a frustration that had very little to do with other Pentecostals, whether leaders or laypeople. Insofar as this was the case, their quarrel was with God, and their problem a theodicy related to the particular promises of the prosperity gospel. However, in the light of what we know about the relationship between pastors and laypeople, and in particular the way that church leaders serve as religious intermediaries for those in their congregations, I would argue that on another level these complaints reflect the failure of the promise of charismatic leadership. Because pastors serve as points of access to divine prosperity, as what Bana Chite called spiritual "keys," a lack of blessing in a believer's life is easily interpreted as a sign that a preacher or prophet has lost his charismatic authority. Or, perhaps, that he never had any such authority to begin with.[4] Either way, part of what comes through in the frustrations expressed by these believers is a sense that those on whom they are depending to help get them access to God may not in fact be in a position to perform this service.[5]

Taken together, the various grievances expressed by Nsofu believers – both their anger at "corruption" in their churches and their frustration with the lack of spiritual breakthroughs – suggest that despite the best efforts of everyone involved, the social world produced by Pentecostal adherence sometimes breaks down. No matter how careful leaders and laypeople are to emphasize the sacrificial quality of seed offerings; no matter how hard super-members work to protect pastors and others from the economic realities of their relationships; no matter how firmly Pentecostals believe that charismatic leaders will help make their miracle materialize, the framework of social relationships that makes this form of Christianity so attractive is often unable to survive the tensions present in Nsofu congregations. When this happens, believers have two options. They can leave the group they are a part of, whether to join another Pentecostal church, to form a new fellowship, or to leave Pentecostalism behind completely. Or, they can stay where they are, hoping that the promises that brought them to that congregation in the first place will eventually bear fruit. The first of these options will be the topic of the next chapter; I discuss the second option below.

Following God, Following Man

Of the three congregations at the center of my research – Key of David, Freedom Bible Church, and Higher Calling – the latter two faced significant crises of leadership during my fieldwork. After Bana Mfuwe left, membership at Higher Calling decreased dramatically, particularly after the congregation was forced to stop meeting in Nsofu. With the loss of the Ntembes' yard, the group moved into a school classroom in an adjacent township for Sunday morning meetings. They used a community center, also located at some remove from the previous location, for their Wednesday gatherings. And

Bana Chilomba received people in her home for deliverance, prayer, and counseling. At the same time that Higher Calling reeled from the loss of Bana Mfuwe, as well as the Ntembes, Freedom Bible Church was facing its own leadership problems. This began when the very popular preacher and singer Evangelist Maxwell left the church not long after the congregation had contributed significant resources to his wedding. Several months later, Mr. Moyo announced that Pastor Ephraim was being put on "church discipline" while they sorted through various accusations of misconduct that had been made against him. Several women had come forward, each claiming to be pregnant with the pastor's child. Pastor Ephraim was unmarried – a widower – and had been told to marry one of the women, with whom he already had a child. Rumor said that he was recalcitrant in this regard, however, and would not marry her. He also denied having anything to do with the other two pregnancies. Pastor Ephraim agreed that he would not preach or offer prophecy while under church discipline, and although he came to church most Sundays, he was there as a quiet participant rather than a leader. Just as Bana Mfuwe's departure was followed by a huge reduction in the size of the congregation, so too the absence of Evangelist Maxwell and Pastor Ephraim from ministry preceded a loss in membership at Freedom Bible Church. While these problems unquestionably prompted a number of believers to leave these groups, in both cases there were those who stayed behind while their co-parishioners moved on. Pentecostals who chose to remain in these fractured churches employed several strategies to preserve the charismatic leadership structure that initially brought them to the group.

The easiest way for believers to preserve the charismatic hierarchy of a congregation in crisis was to treat its original structure as authoritative, whatever the

evidence to the contrary. In the case of Freedom Bible Church, there were those who said they did not believe the women who made accusations against Pastor Ephraim. Others acknowledged that their stories might be true, but laid the blame not on their leader, but rather on the devil, who they noted was always trying to thwart God's work. To support this claim, believers drew on the Old Testament prophecy that Jesus quotes before his crucifixion: "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered."[6] According to my informants, this text made it clear that a spiritual attack on a church leader was an attack on the structure of a congregation, and allowing themselves to be "scattered" meant allowing Satan to have the upper hand in their church. They would therefore maintain their loyalty to their pastor and his ministry. For those at Higher Calling, where the change in leadership was a result of relocation rather than scandal, some of those who remained tried to keep Bana Mfuwe in a position of authority despite her distance. Particularly when they saw what was happening to the Ntembes, people phoned or sent text messages to Bana Mfuwe in South Africa to ask what they should do.

Taking a slightly different tack, others at Higher Calling invoked Bana Mfuwe's legacy in hopes of keeping people in the fold. Their leader had worked very hard to build the fellowship, they pointed out, and it would not be right to allow it to fall apart just because God had called her to South Africa. In this same vein, when people questioned the authority of Bana Chilomba or others that Bana Mfuwe had left in charge, the new leadership was often quick to remind them that their founder had chosen her successors. Towards this end they made a public announcement of any conversations they had with Bana Mfuwe by telephone, conversations in which, according to church leaders, she encouraged people to continue to meet together as they had when she lived in Nsofu.

In addition to efforts to maintain the original leadership structure in whatever way they could, there were those who remained in both congregations who accepted the new leader as carrying the same charismatic authority as their predecessors. Some at Higher Calling gathered around Bana Chilomba, calling her "mother" in the same way they had Bana Mfuwe. Similarly, certain members of Freedom Bible Church seemed content with the preaching of Pastor Abraham and the music leadership of Pastor Kabre. Part of what kept these believers in their congregations was some form of a Weberian charisma of office. In addition, there was a sense, at least in the Higher Calling case, that the mantle of Bana Mfuwe's leadership had been passed to Bana Chilomba, and that the former's charisma had thereby been conferred on the latter.

Finally, and most importantly, virtually everyone who chose to stay in these congregations in the absence of their original leaders at one point or another appealed to an authority higher than the one that had been lost. One of the ways that this happened among members of Higher Calling was through the influence of the ministry's bishop, who lived in Lusaka and oversaw Higher Calling activities throughout the country. This woman, Bana Shalom, had on various visits made a point to tell members of the Nsofu branch of Higher Calling that it was she who had initially identified Bana Mfuwe as a leader, taught her to preach and to pray, and sent her to Kitwe when her husband's job transferred him to that city. Bana Shalom was therefore Bana Mfuwe's spiritual "mother," and as such possessed an authority higher than that of anyone in Nsofu.

When things became difficult at Higher Calling, especially as the Ntembes' situation grew worse, Bana Ngoma and some of the other believers phoned the bishop and asked her to come to Nsofu to set things right – that is, to restore the Ntembes to the

leadership position warranted by their spiritual status. The mere rumor of the bishop's coming revived some members of the group who had been feeling discouraged. Bana Shalom did not visit Nsofu before I left the field and I do not know if she did so later on. Even in her absence, however, the bishop's authority served to strengthen the hierarchy of Higher Calling. Whatever people may have thought of Bana Chilomba as a spiritual *bafyashi*, there was no question that above her stood leaders whose charismatic authority had been tested and approved. By appealing to Bana Shalom, Bana Ngoma and the other members of Higher Calling enabled some believers to remain in their church despite the fact that in the demotion of the Ntembes it had begun to show signs that charisma was no longer the metric underlying the structure of Higher Calling.

Because the hierarchy of Pentecostal charisma is virtually infinitely expandable, even believers whose congregations were not part of a body like Higher Calling were able to turn to superior authorities in an effort to reinforce struggling church structures. When things grew difficult at Higher Calling and Freedom Bible Church, members of both of these congregations took their concerns all the way to the top, so to speak. For example, during a conversation with Bana Junior and Bana Mercy of Freedom Bible Church about frustrations I had heard believers express, they told me that people who would leave a church over such things were not following God, but were instead following a person. Similar statements were made in an effort to criticize those who had left Higher Calling after Bana Mfuwe's departure. Such people, said those who had remained, had simply been following Bana Mfuwe; they were not following God.

In the wider context of Protestant Christianity, statements such as these do not sound strange, and given that most of my informants had roots in missionary-established

mainline churches, I am quite sure that they were appealing to a Protestant understanding of direct access to God when they made these remarks. When placed in a Zambian Pentecostal framework, however, these comments are striking. As we have seen, what brings individuals into Pentecostal congregations is almost always the perceived charisma of a preacher, pastor, or prophet. While believers would not say that they follow such figures instead of following God, they depend on their leaders to help them obtain divine blessings. When things go well, believers will thank God, but will also be quick to cite the divine "favor" of a particular pastor as an important component of the good things that are happening. In short, when the Pentecostal hierarchy of charisma is operating as it should, believers have no qualms with emphasizing the relationship they have to a church leader. It is only when that hierarchy breaks down that one hears believers criticizing others for their devotion to a Pentecostal pastor.

By appealing to God as their ultimate authority, as the only one they are following, it became possible for Nsofu Pentecostals to stay in churches where the hierarchy of charisma had been weakened. In the same way that a reminder of the position of the bishop reinforced the structure of Higher Calling, statements of devotion to God, who sits at the top of the Pentecostal hierarchy, strengthen that hierarchy in the minds of believers. As a result, people like Bana Junior and Bana Mercy were able to remain a part of Freedom Bible Church even when the most popular of that congregation's leaders were no longer providing religious services and when those who had filled positions of leadership were clearly less charismatic than their predecessors.

In these ways, members of Pentecostal churches attempt to preserve the hierarchy that they believe should order their congregations. Insofar as they are successful,

Pentecostal religious and social life remain intact: believers are enabled to treat the leaders who have been placed above them with the respect they ought to assign their spiritual *bafyashi*. In time, particularly as new believers join the congregation, the internal framework of the church may regain its proper form. Of course, the same structures that allow believers to go over their pastors' heads in an appeal to existing charismatic hierarchies also make it possible for them to abandon a congregation entirely. As the examples of Higher Calling and Freedom Bible Church suggest, this is the more common strategy for Pentecostals on the Copperbelt. While, as we have seen in this chapter, believers are able to manage their frustrations with Pentecostalism so long as they retain some form of the hierarchy that sits at the heart of their religious life, there are times when even these last lines of defense fail. When this happens, charismatic hierarchy is short-circuited once and for all. Rather than preserving their congregational structures, believers abandon their churches in hopes of finding another set of Pentecostal social relationships that is closer to the ideal.

Notes on Chapter 7:

[1] The Bemba here and in the rest of the quote is gender-neutral when referring to this imaginary person.

[2] Transcript of an interview recorded 22 May 2009.

[3] It is worth pointing out that the only other time that people on the Copperbelt gather together to pass the night is during funerals. In urban Zambia, a burial is preceded by several (usually three) days and nights of mourning in the home of the deceased or one of his close relatives. The home furnishings are moved outside and under a tent, where a fire is often kept going in the cold season. This area is the domain of male mourners, while the women keep to the house, which stands empty except for a few mattresses, rugs, or reed mats. There the women sing, wail, and sometimes sleep. Funerals are also important social events, precisely because they occupy this special spatiotemporal position, inverting the domestic space (the sitting room is often a man's domain) and furnishings and keeping vigil at night while sleeping during the day. While they are certainly scenes of grief, not to mention the stress associated with paying for the burial and feeding guests, they are also important breaks with routine.

[4] Here, as Bana Ilunga's discussion of good soil in the chapter five indicates, the problem may be a moral failing on the part of a pastor. Equally likely in the eyes of many Pentecostals is the possibility that the miracles associated with a church leader's prayers were not the result of Christian adherence, but instead products of the occult involvement. Stories of Satanists masquerading as Pentecostal pastors are common on the Copperbelt, and believers are wary of this danger even as they continue to look for leaders who give them access to the miracles they need.

[5] Esther's comments also point to a further complication presented by super-members. Esther was upset not only because she had not received what she was hoping for, but also that others had been blessed in the meantime. Indeed, from Bana Veronica's point of view, there were others who enjoyed a much higher standard of living than she did despite the fact that their spiritual commitments were non-existent. In the light of these comments it is even clearer why members of Key of David found Mrs. Phiri's relationship with Mrs. Mwanza so galling. Here was someone who prospered despite what was at best a mediocre level of Pentecostal commitment, someone who enjoyed privileged access to a church leader and important decision-making power in her congregation despite her lack of religious fervor. In other words, not only does her position undermine the ordering force of charisma in her congregation, it also suggests that the blending of charisma and economic status as put forth by the prosperity gospel may not actually be possible.

[6] Zechariah 13:7; Mark 14:27.

Chapter Eight: On The Circulation of Nsofu Saints

By its very nature,
the existence of charismatic authority is specifically unstable.
The holder may forego his charisma;
he may feel 'forsaken by his God,' as Jesus did on the cross;
he may prove to his followers that 'virtue is gone out of him.'
It is then that his mission is extinguished
and hope waits and searches for a new holder of charisma.
Max Weber
"The Sociology of Charismatic Authority"
(Weber 1946: 248)

If people do not welcome you,
leave their town and shake the dust off your feet
as a testimony against them.
Luke 9:5

Thomas Kirsch's (2008) analysis of what he calls, "bureaucracy in the Pentecostal-charismatic mode" presents, as we saw in chapter four, a helpful response to Weber that illustrates how bureaucracy and charisma sometimes work together. Kirsh shows that among members of the Spirit Apostolic Church in southern Zambia religious hierarchy is simultaneously founded on spiritual power and administrative skill. For Zambian Apostolics, the trick is to promote both bureaucracy and charisma in a balance that does not allow either of these elements to overrun the other. As Kirsch points out, this is far from easy, and charisma often threatens the hierarchy of the church. Although Kirsch's argument differs from Werbner's recent study of Apostolic Christians in Botswana, in that the latter argues that charisma for these Christians operates outside the church hierarchy (see Werbner 2011), both analyses are similar in their demonstration of how charisma can undermine established church structures. Because the Holy Spirit is equally available to everyone, charismatic authority can be reconfigured at any time as different believers gain accesses to spiritual power. As followers gather around a new

charismatic figure a new religious group emerges, and with it the possibility of a new hierarchy.

On the Copperbelt, where the volatile component that charisma introduces is combined with other elements that threaten Pentecostal social relationships, the problem carried in the promise of charisma is perhaps even more pronounced. Because the charismatic displays around which Pentecostal groups form may, in principle, be performed by anyone, there is always the potential for new churches or fellowships to develop. When Copperbelt believers find themselves, as they so often do, frustrated by the types of social relationships that have developed in their congregation, they have no difficulty finding other places to worship. The result is a Zambian Pentecostal "circulation of the saints" (Bibby and Brinkerhoff 1973) as believers either move from one church to another or come together under an emerging charismatic leader to form a new congregation.

In this chapter we will examine some of the paths that Nsofu believers take when they leave a particular Pentecostal group. Building on the discussion of believers' frustrations in the last chapter, I will show how the failure of Pentecostal ambition or obligation prompts people to move from one church to another. Sometimes, this means joining an existing congregation, perhaps one that is larger and therefore less constrained by the economic problems that threaten social relationships in smaller churches. In other cases, believers leave a group to form a new fellowship in which charisma is clearly put forth as the ordering value. Finally, those who have left the mainline to attend a Pentecostal group may return to their former missionary-established churches if they find something lacking in their new congregations. These examples further underscore the

importance of charismatic hierarchy and of religious ambition and obligation for Copperbelt believers, and the conclusion of this chapter will build on these elements to briefly explore the problem of charisma and its unique promise for believers in urban Zambia.

Following Ambitions, Creating Obligations

Up to this point in our discussion examples of Pentecostal ambition among laypeople have been few. One of the reasons for this is that positions of lay leadership, particularly those that present a possible point of ascendance to the pastorate, are usually filled by super-members whose ambitions cannot be unproblematically interpreted in terms of charisma. As we have seen, believers on the Copperbelt are frequently frustrated when they feel that super-members monopolize or distort the obligation of church leaders. Similarly, one thing that sometimes prompts Pentecostals to leave their congregations is a sense that there is no possibility of ambition for those who are not wealthy enough to be super-members.

One person whose spiritual ambitions ultimately pulled him away from his church was a man named Ba Simwanga, who stopped attending Key of David about halfway through my fieldwork. Ba Simwanga had a good relationship with my closest friends in the field, Bana Sam and her husband, and it was they who first spoke to me about the reasons for his departure. Since arriving at Key of David, they told me, Ba Simwanga had wanted to go to Bible School and had hoped that Pastor Mwanza would be able to help him achieve this goal. For some reason, however, the pastor had not done anything to assist him. In Bana Sam's account she speculated that Pastor Mwanza had doubts about Ba Simwanga's ability to pay for classes. Ba Simwanga had told her as much, she

explained, saying that because he did not use the offering envelopes provided by Key of David when he gave to the church, Pastor Mwanza and the other church leaders did not know how much he was giving as a tithe or how much money he earned.

I wanted to talk to Ba Simwanga about these questions myself, so I arranged to interview him at the house he was building near Nsofu, which, ironically, was located across the street from the rooms the Ntembe family rented. Surrounded by bags of cement and piles of cinderblocks, Ba Simwanga offered me a seat at a table placed in the corner of what would eventually be the sitting room. Since I lived in the Mwanza's house, I'm sure Ba Simwanga wondered whether or not they had sent me to ask him questions. I was therefore especially grateful for his willingness to talk about this issue with me.

Some of what Ba Simwanga had to say was unique – for example, he made multiple references to what he called, in English, the "independent church government" of Pentecostal congregations like Key of David. While I was not accustomed to hearing people speak about church organization in such terms, the problems that Ba Simwanga associated with this structure were familiar: favoritism of certain members of the congregation and an overemphasis on material concerns at the expense of spiritual matters. The main reason Ba Simwanga had left Key of David, however, was that he felt he was not encouraged to develop his own spiritual capacity – that is, to pursue Pentecostal ambition. When he first arrived at Pastor Mwanza's church, Ba Simwanga explained, he expressed a desire to go to Bible School, and asked the pastor to speak to the director of the college he had attended in Lusaka. According to Ba Simwanga, Pastor Mwanza agreed to do this when he was in the capital, and he made several trips that

would have afforded him a chance to make good on this promise. Despite these opportunities, however, Pastor Mwanza never spoke up on Ba Simwanga's behalf, which the latter obviously found troubling, as this failure of pastoral obligation kept him from pursuing his religious ambition.

It was in this state of frustration that Ba Simwanga decided to visit All Peoples Church. This large congregation was housed in a building bordered by the small bush that separated Nsofu from an adjacent township. Coincidentally, on the day he chose to attend All Peoples the sermon topic was, in Ba Simwanga's words, "capacity building." Not only did this appear to be a congregation in which believers were encouraged to develop their spiritual strengths, he also noticed that it facilitated that development through a church-sponsored Bible School and training courses in trades like tailoring. Ba Simwanga found all of this both timely and attractive, and therefore decided to leave Key of David and begin attending All Peoples, where he soon matriculated in the Bible School. While he took care to emphasize that this was a switch made "without hating anybody," Ba Simwanga was critical of patterns he saw in many Pentecostal churches. In particular, he disapproved of pastors who made the members of their congregation "dependent" on them without also allowing for their spiritual development.

While Ba Simwanga never said anything to me regarding the financial aspect of his participation at Key of David, given what we know about the connection between economic status and Pentecostal super-membership it may very well be that what Bana Sam told me about Ba Simwanga's giving was true. Even if it was not, however, Ba Simwanga's case represents an important example of the role of spiritual ambition in the lives of at least some Pentecostal laypeople. What Ba Simwanga found most troubling

when he spoke of his church involvement was what we might call a closing off of Pentecostal ambition. In this example, then, it is clear that ambition, like obligation, ought to be available to all believers on the basis of charismatic ability and nothing else. When believers feel these conditions are not being met, they may leave one church and go to another – perhaps, as in the case of Ba Simwanga, to a larger congregation where the material needs of a pastor are less acute and where church leaders are therefore more easily able to operate on the basis of religious concerns alone.

Incidentally, after leaving Higher Calling, Mr. and Mrs. Ntembe expressed similar sentiments with regard to their own spiritual ambitions. Like Ba Simwanga, they too had a desire to go to Bible School and obtain more religious training, despite the fact that the leadership at Higher Calling had prevented them from participating in ministry. This, Mr. Ntembe explained to me, was one of the reasons he and his wife had decided to join Bethlehem Pentecostal Church. Just weeks after they started attending, he went on, the pastor of this church had encouraged them to enroll in a Bible College in a different part of the Copperbelt, even giving them the necessary forms and promising that as soon as they had been part of the congregation for a while he would happily provide them with a recommendation as well. In the meantime, the couple had already enrolled in a course on deliverance offered by the church.

Here again, one of the things that led Mr. and Mrs. Ntembe to leave one Pentecostal church and join another was the possibility for them to develop their religious ambitions in the latter regardless of the economic resources at their disposal. In other words, like Ba Simwanga, the Ntembes moved from a church in which they felt that the relational values of Pentecostalism were not being acted on to a church that in their

opinion more closely conformed to the Pentecostal social ideal. In All Peoples Church and Bethlehem Pentecostal Church, these believers found congregations that provided for their spiritual ambitions without focusing – or at least without focusing too much[1] - on economic status. As such, these churches represented the promise of a religious sociality that was more in line with what believers hope for in Pentecostalism.

Just as Pentecostal ambition unrealized may lead people to leave one congregation and join another, believers who feel that obligation in their churches is not what it ought to be may look for it elsewhere.[2] Such was the case with Bana Ninde, a schoolteacher who, when I met her, had proudly introduced herself as one of the founding members of Freedom Bible Church, someone who had been with Pastor Ephraim from the very beginning. After the scandal surrounding Pastor Ephraim's personal life broke, however, Bana Ninde renounced these loyalties and left Freedom Bible Church in search of another Pentecostal community. It was difficult for her to find a church in Kitwe because she worked for the government school system, which had assigned her to a rural post in Southern Province. She was therefore only on the Copperbelt during school holidays or when extenuating circumstances – including an injured ankle – kept her from work. Still, Bana Ninde tried to find a new church, and during our last conversation before I left the field she told me she was taking the minibus into town each week to attend services at Bread of Life,[3] perhaps the largest Zambian-initiated Pentecostal denomination in the country.

While one of the reasons Bana Ninde gave for her departure from Freedom Bible Church had to do with her religious ambitions – she had wanted to start an intercessory prayer group but had received no support in this endeavor – a central component of her

decision was what she perceived as Pastor Ephraim's inability to fulfill his religious obligations, to her or to anyone else. In Bana Ninde's opinion, Pastor Ephraim was no longer a good *bafyashi*. In part this was because of the control he had given to particular members of the congregation. Here, Bana Ninde's sentiments echoed those expressed by Bana James: a good *bafyashi* is one who does not consider economic status when building relationships with the members of his church. The primary reason that Bana Ninde felt Pastor Ephraim was no longer a good *bafyashi*, however, was his moral failing. When a leader's actions inhibit his ability to act as a religious intermediary for those in his congregation, he is no longer able to fulfill his obligations to them. Because Pastor Ephraim had sinned – and appeared rather unrepentant – Bana Ninde did not feel he could help the members of his church gain access to divine blessings. Indeed, she worried that the negative effects of Pastor Ephraim's sin might accrue to those who followed him. In the eyes of Bana Ninde, Freedom Bible Church was no longer a place where obligation was enacted properly.

The failures of Pentecostal ambition and obligation, which the examples of both Bana Ninde and Ba Simwanga show are connected, often lead believers to step away from one congregation and join another. Sometimes, however, a new group will form instead. Like all Pentecostal churches on the Copperbelt, these grow up around charismatic leaders, whether laypeople who have left their congregations or pastors who have worked with other leaders before deciding to start their own church. At least two such fellowships emerged from the groups I studied, one from Freedom Bible Church and one from Higher Calling. In both cases, the social concerns that so often led believers to leave their congregations were dealt with in very direct ways.

Prayer Behind Closed Doors, Preaching in the Street

While Bana Mfuwe was still living in Nsofu she was often found in the company of Bana Rhoda, who lived on the opposite end of the township, roughly half an hour's walk away. Bana Rhoda was an important member of Higher Calling, known for her faithful fasting, singing, and periods of possession by the Holy Spirit. Members of Higher Calling could all recognize her husky voice, roughened, it was said, by hours of prayer. In the months immediately following Bana Mfuwe's departure, Bana Rhoda continued in her role as a church leader, though I am not sure whether she was among those given formal positions in the new congregational hierarchy. Regardless, her presence continued, as did her contributions to the ritual life of the congregation as a prayer and song leader.

As time went on, however, Bana Rhoda stopped coming to Higher Calling meetings. About the same time another believer, Bana Blessing, also disappeared. Rumors that the two women had started attending other groups began to circulate: someone said they had seen them at Power and Glory Church, where they were thought to have connections. Bupe, a young woman from Higher Calling, and I met Bana Rhoda at a Pentecostal deliverance clinic in Ndola as well. Beyond her participation in various other congregations, I also heard reports that Bana Rhoda had started hosting prayer meetings in her home. Bana Ngoma told me that she had called on Bana Rhoda one afternoon and was surprised to find a group of women engaged in Pentecostal prayer at her house. Others, who had in some cases left Higher Calling, confided in me that they had begun to seek out Bana Rhoda's spiritual assistance, whether prayer or counsel.

One day I found myself in Bana Rhoda's neighborhood, where I was intending to see a friend; this person was not at home, so I decided to look in on Bana Rhoda. As I drew nearer to her house I heard the unmistakable sound of collective-personal prayer coming from inside. While it seemed clear that I had happened upon a Pentecostal meeting in progress, the gate in Bana Rhoda's fence was locked and the windows and curtains were shut. This was strange – at every other prayer meeting I had attended in Nsofu the door had been open, partly because of the heat and partly as a way of welcoming visitors. And, even in the absence of a meeting one almost never saw the windows of a house closed during the day unless it was raining or the occupants were away. Despite these indications that those inside did not want to be disturbed, I decided to see if they would let me in, and tapped the heavy padlock against the frame of the gate to get their attention. Bana Rhoda looked through the window and saw me, and a few minutes later opened the front door and let me inside the house. Half a dozen women, almost all of them people I recognized from my early attendance at Higher Calling, were pacing around Bana Rhoda's living room praying. I sat quietly in a chair in the corner as the group moved through a series of prayer topics typical of the intercession portion of any Pentecostal meeting.

After about an hour Bana Rhoda asked me if there was anything in particular for which I wanted prayer. The women listened to and prayed for my usual request – that my research would go well – before Bana Rhoda moved to explain the nature of their meeting to me. While the rest of the group looked on quietly, Bana Rhoda told me that all they were doing was gathering to pray and that they wanted to keep their numbers small. This, she went on, would allow them to pursue the spiritual practices that they

thought were most important. It was in the light of these desires that they had not invited others to their meetings. Having prayed for me and explained the group's motivations, Bana Rhoda informed me that I was free to go. I left the women as I had found them, their voices blending above the familiar timbre of Bana Rhoda's as they prayed for strength for their families, health for their bodies, and victory over satanic powers.

While the women who met at Bana Rhoda's house were unusually secretive about their gatherings, the various fellowships started by the erstwhile Freedom Bible Church leader Evangelist Maxwell were notably open. Together with Evangelist Sichone, this preacher was the first member of the leadership to leave Freedom Bible Church. His departure marked the beginning of that congregation's decline, which was exacerbated by the scandal involving Pastor Ephraim. After he left Freedom Bible Church I no longer saw Evangelist Maxwell and did not know if he still lived in Kitwe or had gone elsewhere. Nearly a year after his departure, however, I learned that he was holding prayer meetings in the home of Bana Brenda, who periodically attended Freedom Bible Church and its associated fellowship. In addition to the leadership of Evangelist Maxwell, a man named Joshua, who had also been part of Freedom Bible Church, served as an assistant song and prayer leader during these gatherings. About half a dozen women[4], most of whom had at one point attended meetings with Pastor Ephraim, crowded once a week into Bana Brenda's sitting room for prayer, singing, and a sermon from Evangelist Maxwell.

A few days after attending one of these gatherings I arranged to meet Evangelist Maxwell at Bana Brenda's house. I wanted to ask him about his decision to leave Freedom Bible Church to start his own congregation. Through our conversation I also

learned about his conversion to Pentecostalism and his involvement with various churches across the Copperbelt and in other parts of Zambia. He had been part of the leadership teams of nearly half a dozen congregations over the years, some of which folded under crises of leadership, some of which he left of his own accord. Evangelist Maxwell told me that he and I had come to Freedom Bible Church about the same time, in early 2008. While he had been instrumental in the period of rapid growth that followed, he faced opposition from the church leadership with regard to the wife he had chosen; he was also one of the first to become aware of Pastor Ephraim's problematic relationships with women. These factors, in addition to what he, according to Bana Ninde, called the "confusion" caused by the large number of pastors at Freedom, all influenced his decision to leave the church.

For a while, Evangelist Maxwell's desire to work in church leadership flagged. However, after a few months of "just sitting" several other pastors encouraged him to form his own congregation, and he decided to take steps toward doing so. Evangelist Maxwell began by preaching on the street and door to door before eventually starting several home prayer meetings, including the one at Bana Brenda's house. He was working together with Pastor Muyunda, who had loose ties to Freedom Bible Church, and their plan was to begin renting a classroom in a nearby school (the same one where Higher Calling was meeting, in fact) as soon as they had enough people to cover the costs. In the meantime, Evangelist Maxwell said, he encouraged those who came to his prayer meetings to go to other churches. Indeed, he spoke extensively about what he called "Christian networking," or simultaneous involvement with a number of Pentecostal groups at once. Evangelist Maxwell felt this was a good and healthy practice,

one in which he himself was engaged. By going to different churches a believer could learn more, he explained; perhaps she would learn about fasting in one place, scripture in another, and prophecy in a third.

In these examples, new Pentecostal groups were formed in the wake of crises of leadership that believers felt had compromised the hierarchy of charisma in their congregations. What is instructive about both Bana Rhoda's and Evangelist Maxwell's efforts are the different ways that these emerging leaders worked to create structures organized around religious obligation and ambition and nothing else.[5] In these two particular cases, we see unique – indeed, opposite – approaches to this perennial Pentecostal problem.

To return to Bana Rhoda, the secrecy that surrounded her group was part of an effort to protect their spiritual practices from outside influences, and in so doing guard against the kinds of relational problems that were probably part of her reason for leaving Higher Calling. By controlling the membership of her group to the extreme, it is likely that Bana Rhoda hoped to manage each tie that developed so as to ensure that it was structured by the appropriate values. Bana Rhoda could choose not to accept someone whose spiritual ambitions she did not approve of, while at the same time taking care not to extend her religious obligations beyond what she could comfortably fulfill. In this group, an identifiable hierarchy of charisma had already begun to emerge, as demonstrated in part through the individual believers that sought out Bana Rhoda's spiritual services and in part through her leadership of the prayer meeting I attended. The fellowship at Bana Rhoda's house, then, was a place where Pentecostal practice had produced a hierarchy made of carefully guarded ties of ambition and obligation.

Evangelist Maxwell's strategy, in contrast, was not to control the membership in his fellowship, but rather to attract people from as many places as possible, creating a sort of social safety valve that would minimize pressure on the relationships that formed between him and his followers. By casting a wide relational net, so to speak, and encouraging others to do the same, Evangelist Maxwell opened up a large number of avenues for ambition and obligation. Practically speaking, his emphasis on "Christian networking" helped keep Evangelist Maxwell from overextending himself by spreading obligation among a wider number of church leaders without having to share the limited relational and economic resources of a single congregation – the issue that led to "confusion" at Freedom Bible Church.

While his method differed from that employed by Bana Rhoda, and while I'm sure that financial considerations shaped some of Evangelist Maxwell's decisions, there is no doubt that both of these leaders were equally intent on building congregations structured first and foremost by charisma. This is evident, for example, in Evangelist Maxwell's description of his itinerate preaching throughout the surrounding townships. When going door to door or holding meetings, he explained, he was careful to pray for anyone regardless of economic status and encouraged people to come to his church whether they were able to give money towards it or not. Some pastors had counseled him to court the wealthy, Evangelist Maxwell told me, but he refused their advice. This did not mean, he added quickly, that he did not accept money from those who wished to give seed offerings, but only that he was willing to provide spiritual services to rich and poor alike.

Not only was Evangelist Maxwell concerned with keeping financial considerations out of the structure of his congregation, thus protecting charisma, his actions also demonstrate that he was keen to promote both ambition and obligation for himself and for those in the group. In his association with Pastor Muyunda, as well as previous connections with other charismatic leaders, Evangelist Maxwell's own religious ambitions are as apparent as the obligation he demonstrated in offering prayers for those who could not give him money. Just as he was actively creating a framework in which he might develop relationships with people of both more and less charisma than himself, Evangelist Maxwell was also helping those in his congregation to do the same. His relationship with Joshua, for example, was one of ambition for the latter. Moreover, Evangelist Maxwell's concern for "Christian networking" meant that under his leadership believers would be free to pursue relationships with multiple spiritual *bafyashi*, increasing their potential for ambition within the Pentecostal community even as it extended the obligations of the pastors with whom they developed relationships.

In short, whether through careful control of membership or by allowing members the maximum amount of freedom possible, leaders of new Pentecostal groups aim to create religious communities organized by charisma that promote everyone's religious ambition and that create religious obligation based on spiritual status alone. In this regard, Evangelist Maxwell and Bana Rhoda are no different from other emerging Pentecostal leaders on the Copperbelt. Often, what people say they appreciate about young congregations is not only the power of the religious services offered in these groups, but also the purity of the relationships that form there. Because young leaders are concerned primarily with generating a critical mass of congregants, they cannot afford to

be respecters of persons. That is, their priority is increasing membership, not deriving their living from the congregation – "eating from" the church in the common Copperbelt expression.

Taken together, the foregoing examples illustrate some of the routes believers in Nsofu take upon leaving Pentecostal congregations. Here it is worth noting the tendency toward larger and more established congregations on one hand, or toward newer smaller fellowships on the other. All Peoples, Bethlehem Pentecostal, and Bread of Life were all large churches with their own buildings and some sort of national or transnational connections, whether denominational or otherwise. It may very well be that this kind of Pentecostal church provided some relief from the problems Ba Simwanga, the Ntembes, and Bana Ninde found in their congregations. Because of their size and comparative wealth, the types of relational concerns that caused these believers to leave their churches may not have been as pronounced. While some of my informants who left their churches went to larger, more established churches, others, like those who followed Bana Rhoda and Evangelist Maxwell, took the opposite approach. In these cases, the combination of measures taken by church leaders to ensure that their congregations were protected from common Pentecostal relational problems and the simple fact that newer groups conform more readily to the social ideals of Pentecostalism meant that these groups also stood out as places where ambition and obligation were structured by charisma alone.

While this chapter has so far been concerned with those who move from one Pentecostal congregation to another, this is not the path that all believers who leave Pentecostal churches take. Some stop attending Christian groups altogether. Others, including the couple in the following example, leave Pentecostal churches for other

Christian groups. In these cases, it is not so much that people are looking for a congregation that more closely conforms to the Pentecostal social ideal, but that something about this ideal has proven undesirable.

Returning to the Mainline

In order to get to Pastor Mwanza's house from the main road in Nsofu I had to follow a dirt road down a hill until it was intersected by a row of houses, one of which was Pastor Mwanza's. In the mornings and evenings, especially, that road was busy with children walking to school, people buying bread for breakfast, and professionals headed to work. Everyone who made his way up or down this road passed by Bashi Kondwani's house, which sat opposite Bana Chite's on one side and the Dutch Reformed Church on the other. Bashi Kondwani and his wife often spent time in their yard and as a result knew most people in the neighborhood. Sometimes they sold maize meal, eggs, and tomatoes from a table set up along the road. Each of them worked occasionally, and these wages supplemented their small income from food sales and the rental of two cabins on their lot.

Bashi Kondwani and his family were active in the Catholic parish in Nsofu, attending midweek meetings as well as Sunday mass. Occasionally, however, Bana Kondwani would visit Pentecostal fellowships. When I asked her about this, she responded that she sometimes felt that Pentecostals were more powerful in prayer, and she therefore would go to Pentecostal leaders when she had a particularly difficult problem. Mrs. Mwanza, she added, along with other Pentecostal leaders in Nsofu, knew that she felt this way and would often invite her to prayer meetings. Bana Kondwani then told me something I had not known about her family. Although she and her husband had

both been raised in the Catholic Church, there was a time when they had belonged to a Pentecostal congregation.

The reason Bana Kondwani and her husband chose to attend this Pentecostal church was because its pastor had successfully exorcised a demon from her, a demon that her priest had been unable to deal with. In this way, their involvement with a Pentecostal congregation paralleled that of most believers: having seen the spiritual ability of a particular leader, they decided to join his group. However, according to Bashi Kondwani the couple never completely severed their ties with Catholicism. Although for a while they were associated with a Pentecostal group, they ultimately decided to return to the Catholic Church, where they had been ever since. For Bana Kondwani, this decision was largely based on the discomfort she felt with Pentecostal ritual practice. When everyone at a Pentecostal meeting started to pray aloud at the same time, Bana Kondwani told me, she didn't know how to participate and as a result felt very out of place. Her husband expressed similar unease, describing collective-personal prayer as chaotic and disorderly, "noise" that he felt was inappropriate for Christian worship, which in his mind was primarily a question of being "together" rather than of individual expression. This and other common Pentecostal practices, he went on, made him feel like an "outsider."

Although Bana Kondwani and her husband maintained relationships with some Pentecostals – she through occasional attendance at prayer meetings, he primarily through his brother, who was a Pentecostal pastor – their tenure as participants in a Pentecostal congregation did not last. Certainly, this is in part attributable to their familiarity with Catholicism, the form of Christianity with which both of them had been raised. Beyond the fact that the Catholic Church was a place where Bana and Bashi

Kondwani felt comfortable, however, the reasons they gave for leaving their Pentecostal church suggest that they found it difficult to perform the kinds of ritual practice that are central to the relational structures of Pentecostal congregations. For Bashi Kondwani, Christianity was not a religion of individual charismatic actors, but of collective processes pursued by everyone "together." What this meant for him and his wife was that they did not participate in the shared religious forms that produce relational hierarchy in Pentecostal churches. While they had clearly recognized the spiritual power of their former pastor in his capacity as an exorcist, they did not enter into the same process of religious distinction and differentiation for themselves. As a result, they remained outside the relational hierarchy of the congregation, at least insofar as their own religious ambitions were concerned.

In Bashi and Bana Kondwani, then, we have an example of people for whom Pentecostalism did not produce the social outcome that is so central to its popularity, and who chose to leave behind this form of Christianity and return to the mainline. While I would argue that this was a less commonly chosen option – more believers moved from one Pentecostal congregation to another than left Pentecostalism completely – there were certainly those in Nsofu who took this route. Often, as in the case of Bana Matthew, who stopped attending Higher Calling after the Ntembes were forced from the congregation, those who left returned to the missionary-established denominations they had grown up in. Bana Matthew returned to the New Apostolic Church; she was also one of those who sought prayer and counsel from Bana Rhoda. Like Bana Kondwani, Bana Matthew had in many ways removed herself from the relational structures of a Pentecostal

congregation, while still maintaining some connection to a Pentecostal leader who could provide her with spiritual services.

Charisma as Problem or Charisma as Promise?

My aim in offering the range of examples provided in this chapter has not so much been to show why people choose to leave a particular Pentecostal congregation – these reasons have been explored already – but rather to demonstrate how this process is worked out in Nsofu. If the previous chapters have left any doubt that the relational structures created through Pentecostal practice are a central part of what has made this religion so important to people on the Copperbelt, our discussion of the Zambian circulation of saints has, I hope, confirmed the importance of ambition, obligation, and hierarchy for Nsofu believers. Moreover, demonstrating the instability of charismatic hierarchy on the Copperbelt has set us in good stead to round out our discussion of how Pentecostal religious life is related to sociality and political economy. Doing so requires us to first return to Weber and to the framework of charisma developed through our analysis of Nsofu.

The processes described in this chapter, whether the question of pastoral succession, the breaking away of leaders from established Pentecostal churches to form new fellowships, or the movement of believers to larger congregations that are better equipped to respond to the economic needs of their leaders, all evoke Weber's discussion of charisma and its routinization (Weber 1978: 241-254). In Weber's treatment, charismatic groups are unsustainable, cut off as they are from the everyday realities of economy and social life. It is these factors that ultimately lead to the routinization of charisma, to the integration of a charismatic group into the surrounding society. Here,

Nsofu Pentecostals appear to be dealing with a classic Weberian problem. On the one hand, the charismatic power of church leaders results in new relational frameworks. Over time, however, members of these groups are confronted with, among other things, the economic needs of their leaders, which reorient Pentecostal obligation and ambition in troubling ways.

While there is no question that the cycle of Pentecostal church participation is illuminated by a Weberian analysis, it is important to bear in mind the ways that charisma on the Copperbelt expands Weber's framework. Recall our discussion in chapter four of the interrelationship of religious practice and hierarchy on the one hand and charismatic display and recognition on the other. For Nsofu Pentecostals, charismatic hierarchy is bound up not only in the power of the leader, but also in the collective ritual life of a religious group. More specifically, while the power and personality of a particular pastor are necessary parts of Pentecostalism's social productivity, it is the relational structures that follow from his charisma that constitute the source of this religion's appeal. The failure of charisma on the Copperbelt is therefore not simply a matter of the loss of a leader, or even the institutionalization of church hierarchy as a result of economic concerns. Rather, what I hope I have demonstrated in this section is the primary importance of a relational world created through religious practice and undergirded by a familiar set of cultural values. It is the loss of this social structure and the betrayal of these values that keep Nsofu saints in circulation.

Understood in these terms, while it may be that charisma short-circuits hierarchy, it does so not as a means of rejecting the structures created through Pentecostal practice, but rather as a way of ensuring that these are founded on the appropriate values. Indeed,

as we have seen, much of Pentecostal ritual life, not to mention congregational conflicts, are bound up with these values. A study of the religious practice of Pentecostal believers, as well as the things that threaten their ritual or relational lives, has allowed us to see the values that guide the decision to join a church or to leave it. Having done so we are at last able to turn our attention to the ethnographic problem that sits at the center of this dissertation.

Notes on Chapter 8:

[1] It is clear that the recommendation that Mr. and Mrs. Ntembe attend Bible College was made without regard for their economic situation, at least insofar as the tuition at this particular school would have been far beyond their ability to afford when Mr. Ntembe was not working. In contrast, Ba Simwanga's material status had a part to play in his religious education, as he had paid what he considered to be a "reasonable" price for his Bible courses.

[2] Sometimes, looking outside one's own church is simply a matter of attending the meetings of another Pentecostal leader. This was a strategy that Bana Junior, despite her dedication to Freedom Bible Church, employed quite often. I would frequently run into Bana Junior at meetings around Nsofu and in other parts of Kitwe. Bana Junior's pursuit of relationships with a variety of pastors reflects the more general Copperbelt tendency to create as many ties of obligation as possible. Like people trying to connect with as many material patrons as they can, believers routinely reach out to a number of Pentecostal pastors in an effort to produce multiple ties of religious obligation. To have a relationship with more than one pastor at a time was, by my observation, more common in Nsofu than having only one such connection.

[3] Because of Bread of Life's prominence as a denomination I have not given it a pseudonym. Given the large size of its Kitwe branch, I do not believe that this decision in any way compromises Bana Ninde's identity.

[4] Although I do not address the gender dynamics of this group here, suffice it to say that the charismatic hierarchy of this group relied on gender hierarchies at play in Zambia more generally. This is often the case among Pentecostals. Despite the prominence of certain female church leaders, whether local figures like Bana Mfuwe or others prominent at a regional or national level, it is far more common for Pentecostal churches to be led by men and filled with women. Under such circumstances, charismatic hierarchy is reinforced by gender hierarchies – and indeed, as we saw in chapter four, often expressed in these terms.

[5] It is in these nascent congregations, therefore, that the relational values of Copperbelt Pentecostalism are most easily identified.

Conclusion:

Ambitious Obligations in a "Christian Nation"

If you don't bless me, Lord
No one will bless me.
If you don't touch me, Lord
No one will touch me.
If you don't heal me, Lord
No one will heal me.
Copperbelt Pentecostal Song

Figuring out just what one is supposed to be paying attention to while doing fieldwork is probably always difficult. Especially in a setting like Nsofu, with so many people coming and going, the object of ethnographic study seems hard to pin down. When I went to the field I had designed a project aimed at exploring the difference between Pentecostals and "non-Pentecostals." It didn't take long for me to realize that these were not neat categories, and that instead of boundaries between religious insiders and outsiders there was a continuum of Pentecostal participation that included a significant portion of the population of Nsofu. The decision to focus on three specific congregations also proved problematic, as members of these groups kept popping up at other Pentecostal gatherings and leaving to join different churches. Should I follow those people to their new fellowships? Should I stay with the group even when, as was the case at both Higher Calling and Freedom Bible Church, over half of the congregation left during the course of my fieldwork? Was I studying individual believers or Pentecostal groups? And why were so many people leaving churches in the first place?

This last question eventually emerged as the primary ethnographic problem in my study of Copperbelt Pentecostalism. It seemed clear to me that the answer did not lie in any obvious ritual or aesthetic difference among Nsofu's many congregations and

fellowships. While there are small variations between groups, the form and content of Pentecostal gatherings across the Copperbelt is remarkably uniform. People sing the same songs and pray in the same collective-personal style for a common set of concerns; pastors preach sermons on familiar topics; classrooms and chapels are always decorated with lace curtains, printed carpets, and silk flowers. These similarities were not lost on my informants. When I asked about Pentecostal forms and practices, believers did not hesitate to acknowledge the lack of distinction among churches. "*Cimo cine*," literally, "it is the same thing," was a common observation on this point. So, believers weren't going from church to church because they saw significant differences in the visible aspects of these groups, or in their ritual forms.

If the movement of believers among Copperbelt churches and the parallel formation of new fellowships in homes and classrooms were not driven by a desire for unique religious experiences, then the reason for this movement was the result of something more than ritual life. As I spoke to more and more believers about their decision to join or leave a group, and about the things they found must frustrating in the groups they attended, relational concerns were consistently at the center of our conversations. More specifically, while there was no doubt that people developed friendships with those they met at Pentecostal meetings, the social tie that was most important to them was the one they formed with a group's leader. Consequently, when something about this relationship was not what they felt it should be – whether the way their pastor treated them or others in the fellowship – believers became upset. Understanding why this was so important has required me to look not only at Pentecostal religious and social life, but also at Copperbelt relationality and political economy more

generally. The result has been the foregoing discussion. In concluding this analysis I would like to briefly revisit these concerns by putting them into dialogue with contemporary anthropological research. I will begin with the topic of Pentecostalism and its relationship to the contemporary Copperbelt political economy before turning my attention to the intersection of these issues and the Anthropology of Christianity.

African Pentecostalism

In most of urban Africa today the presence of Pentecostalism is inescapable. Nsofu, with its ever-growing number of churches, resembles many neighborhoods across the continent. Many anthropological analyses of this form of Christianity have drawn attention to the emphasis pastors and believers place on cutting social ties, exemplified in the common Pentecostal exhortation to "make a complete break with the past" (Meyer 1998). Because one's ancestors, not to mention non-believing kin and neighbors, had participated in traditional rites, preachers proclaimed, they represented a spiritual danger to believers (e.g. Maxwell 1998). Indeed, the risk in these relationships was not limited to the fallout of others' religious practices; these same people, doubtless under the influence of demonic powers, might try to attack a believer in the spiritual realm, leaving her to suffer illness, poverty, or barrenness. It is in the light of this threat that preachers exhorted their followers to cut relational ties. As Paul Gifford graphically puts it, "The lesson [is] that if members of your family, even your mother, are responsible for your ills and are hurt by your counter-attack, don't pray for them; 'Let them die, let them die…!'" (Gifford 2004: 105).

More recently, Linda van de Kamp (2010) has given some of the most compelling ethnographic evidence that participation in a Pentecostal group results in the severing of

social relationships, particularly ties to kin. In her study of women who join the Brazilian-based Universal Church of the Kingdom of God – arguably the paradigmatic prosperity gospel movement – van de Kamp argues that Pentecostalism is attractive to young, upwardly mobile women in Maputo in part because the history of colonialism, socialist rule, and subsequent economic liberalization has changed the role of women in Mozambican society. In addition, the overwhelming weight of kinship obligations has, in circumstances similar to those on the Copperbelt, made the possibility of cutting ties especially attractive. Yet the results of this social mobility and individualism are, as one might imagine, rather terrible. Minimally, because the demands to give to the movement are so great, members of the Universal Church are sometimes faced with bankruptcy. Having cut off their ties to kin along the way, they are left with little recourse when a business venture encouraged by the church fails. The most tragic story that van de Kamp relates is of a young woman that she calls Luisa (2010: 163-65), whose family relationships had deteriorated as a result of her participation in the Universal Church. Luisa lived alone and was therefore an object of suspicion among her neighbors, who she said were using witchcraft against her. Eventually, despite her frequent gifts to the church and prayer sessions with the pastor, Luisa fell ill. Soon afterward, she disappeared, presumably with no friends or extended family to look for or take care of her.

While there has been convincing evidence that Pentecostalism is a religion that disparages and demonizes "social life as it has been lived until now" (de Boeck and Plissart 2004: 56), there have nevertheless been other examples from across the continent that have troubled this notion. One early argument to this effect is found in Rijk van

Dijk's (2002) discussion of gift remitting among Ghanaian Pentecostal immigrants in The Netherlands and elsewhere. According to van Dijk, while it is true that Pentecostalism results in a restructuring of kinship relationships by "delocalizing" its adherents and orienting them towards a transnational network of believers, this religion is not so much concerned with breaking existing relationships as it is with subordinating them to a Christian ethic of giving that includes regular contributions to the church. Similarly, Matthew Engelke has argued that despite Pentecostal exhortations to "make a complete break with the past," scholars of African Christianity will do well to remember that, "Discontinuity is one thing as presented in a self-consciously constructed story, and another in how it is enacted" (Engelke 2010: 187; also see Engelke 2004). While Engelke points out that there are certainly kin with whom Christians would like to cut ties, there are many other instances in which relationships with non-believing family are maintained, and indeed, in which doing so is understood to be part of a Christian ethic of care. As one of Martin Lindhardt's informants put it, "If you are saved, you cannot forget your parents" (see Lindhardt 2010).

One of the contributions of this dissertation to the study of African Christianity, then, is an ethnographic account of the kinds of social relationships that Pentecostal adherence fosters. Here, my focus has been less on ties with kin and more on the relational structures of urban communities like Nsofu. By showing how a hierarchy of charisma results in religious ties of ambition and obligation, my analysis underscores the socially productive aspects of Pentecostalism in a part of the world where it has often been described as socially corrosive. In addition to expanding anthropological understanding of Pentecostal relational life, examining the social life of believers

alongside the relational challenges of late capitalism has allowed me to address what I have referred to above as the prosperity theodicy.

The central problem of the prosperity theodicy is perhaps best described by Birgit Meyer's call for more research "to assess the way in which the Prosperity Gospel is at once [Pentecostalism's] main attraction and, as the promise in the long run fails to materialize among most ordinary believers, its main weakness" (Meyer 2004: 460). In the case of the Copperbelt, we have seen that part of the reason for the prosperity gospel's staying power despite the absence of riches has been a reconfiguration of prosperity focused not on lavish personal wealth, but rather on a particular kind of social world. Moreover, Pentecostalism contains the makings of prosperity as it is locally defined because adherence to this religion produces relationships of ambition and obligation that are not dependent on the political economy of the Copperbelt. Therefore, instead of being "subverted by its own appeal" (Meyer 2004: 460), the prosperity gospel on the Copperbelt has been incorporated into a larger social process that sits at the heart of Pentecostal practice. In this way my analysis offers an ethnographic response to one of the more puzzling aspects of Pentecostal expansion on the continent.

A discussion of the prosperity gospel and the ways that this transnational message is understood, changed, and applied in urban Zambia brings us to a final point at which this study engages the literature on African Pentecostalism. In the same review article that identifies the problem of the prosperity gospel's unfulfilled promises, Meyer also highlights the global and globalizing character of this form of Christianity. There is no doubt that Pentecostal churches in Africa and elsewhere regularly present themselves as transnationally oriented – they include the word "international" in their names, play host

to pastors from around the world, plant congregations abroad, and send their leaders overseas for preaching and educational opportunities (van Dijk 2002: 177; Maxwell 1998: 362).[1] Nevertheless, as accounts of Pentecostal belief and practice from multiple contexts indicates, the fact that this form of Christianity, perhaps more than any other, engages preexisting beliefs and practices means that converts also "turn to their new religion immediately to [address] local issues in locally comprehensible terms" (Robbins 2004b: 129).[2] In other words, in Pentecostalism we find a tension present in many transnational movements: a simultaneous, perhaps dialectical, process of global connection and local engagement.

With regard to this tension between the local and the global, my work shows how Pentecostalism has become "a site of *action*" on the Copperbelt (Marshall 2009: 22, emphasis in the original). There, people draw on a range of religious practices common to Pentecostal churches around the world, such as the giving of seed offerings or the prayer and prophecy that establish charisma, to create social relationships that reflect local cultural values. As such, this dissertation offers an ethnographic example of how specific social concerns are addressed in Pentecostalism, thereby providing insight into the local dynamics of a globalized world religion.

Ultimately, I hope that my analysis reflects Achille Mbembe's discussion of research in contemporary Africa, which he argues must be concerned with "the rules, regularities, and reproductive logics that underpin our current condition – a condition that is of necessity global, although always global in a variety of local ways, shapes, and forms" (Shipley 2010: 658-59). Through Pentecostal participation believers on the Copperbelt work to create the kinds of social ties that matter most to them, ties that have

become increasingly difficult to maintain in situations of economic crisis. In this way, the relational efforts of Nsofu Pentecostals shed light on the social difficulties that have followed changes in the Copperbelt political economy. Through an engagement with Pentecostalism, then, this dissertation examines the intersection of social organization and economic liberalization in a particular urban African context. This connection between the Copperbelt political economy, neoliberal capitalism, and Pentecostal practice turns our attention to the anthropology of Christianity, and more specifically to critiques of this growing disciplinary subfield.

Culture, Christianity, and its Anthropology

One of the most prominent criticisms of the Anthropology of Christianity has been that it is overly, if not exclusively, concerned with religious ideas at the expense of other social, historical, or political economic factors (Comaroff 2010; Hann 2007). The Anthropology of Christianity is, in this treatment, a reductive enterprise in which a complex world religion is distilled to a set of (largely local) cultural concerns and divorced from the historical power relationships in which it is entrenched. As such, it appears to have forgotten many of the lessons the discipline has learned about studying globalizing phenomena, institutions, and power.

The problem with this critique is that it turns on a false dichotomy between religious life and the various circumstances that surround it. To say that the study of religious ideas amounts to an erasure of the social or economic contexts in which they are taken up – what Ruth Marshall calls their "conditions of plausibility" (2009: 8) – is to employ a narrow reading of religion. In such a framework, Christianity is positioned at a remove from those historical factors that in these analyses emerge as more real. Indeed,

this is precisely the trap that Jean and John Comaroff fall into in their influential series of articles on "occult economies" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999, 2000, 2003). In their argument, prosperity Pentecostalism, along with rumors of zombies, pyramid schemes, and accusations of witchcraft, can all be read as signs of the paradox of neoliberalism: the simultaneous possibility and elusiveness of wealth. While these various supernatural discourses are certainly anthropologically interesting, what is really going on are changes in the market, the rise of what they call "spectral" capital, and the increasing frustration of a global underclass.

One might argue that the analysis presented in this dissertation could also be subject to the same criticism – what is really going on for Zambian Pentecostals are the social and economic changes that have followed structural adjustment and the *global*. Religion, as I have described it, is simply the way people in Nsofu have found to cope with these changes. While it is possible to read the situation this way, to do so is, I submit, to miss the point. In Pentecostalism Copperbelt believers are not merely making sense of – or even simply responding to – the social dislocation of the neoliberal era. This is because religion is not just an interpretive framework for understanding the world, but also a set of epistemological, social, and ontological resources for living and acting in that world. In Zambia, as in almost any place, this entails responding both to local social life and to a globalized political economy. For Copperbelt believers, doing so has meant not only interpreting the changes they have observed over the past several decades in spiritual terms – which they certainly do – but also, as I have chosen to highlight here, drawing on the relationships and practices of their religious community to act in social circumstances that have been transformed in the wake of economic restructuring. The

market processes that have contributed to these transformations are no more or less real than the religious frameworks through which they are engaged.

What I hope my study of Copperbelt Pentecostalism brings to the Anthropology of Christianity, then, is another[3] strong example of how deeply embedded religion is in every other aspect of human life. One cannot speak of, let alone understand, Pentecostalism in Nsofu without also being aware of the social and political economic context in which this religion has been taken up. In the foregoing argument I have moved from a description of religious life to a discussion of sociality to an examination of recent economic history and back again to religious practice. Through this analysis, the interrelationship between religion and the historical circumstances that surround it has, I hope, been clear. In this way, my work responds to the criticism that the Anthropology of Christianity is too concerned with religious ideas by showing that these cannot be separated from the type of issues that scholars offering this critique consider so important. History, sociality, and political economy are bound up with religious ideas and vice versa; understanding this connection is crucial to the analysis of any and all of these areas.

Conclusion: Value and Pentecostal Social Life in Nsofu

In this dissertation I have argued that the concept of value – that is, the ranking of various social forms, ideas, and actions in a hierarchical structure – represents a helpful way of approaching the complex social circumstances of neoliberal urban Africa. In closing, it is worthwhile to briefly revisit this idea in order to bring the more extensive theoretical discussion of the first section into dialogue with the ethnographic study of Pentecostalism that follows it. My decision to employ an approach informed by Dumont

was made with the belief that identifying the kinds of relationships people most often and enthusiastically pursued would enable us to discern a pattern in Nsofu social life that would in turn allow us to see what was most important to people on the Copperbelt – that is, what their values were. The chain of hierarchical relationships that emerged from this analysis revealed the dimensions of value by which they were organized, namely ambition and obligation. And understanding that these relationships depended on economic differentiation highlighted the challenges that economic uncertainty presents to social life on the Copperbelt.

What Pentecostalism offers in this context is the possibility of relational forms that differ from the social ties found in urban Zambia more generally only in the hierarchy that undergirds them. By creating hierarchy based on charisma, rather than economic status, Pentecostal adherence produces relationships of ambition and obligation that do not depend on the economy of the Copperbelt. As such, they are an attractive social alternative. Here it is worth noting that for many believers the choice to participate in a Pentecostal community does not constitute a conversion. Most were raised in at least nominally Christian contexts, which in the last decade have become increasingly "Pentecostalized" (Cheyeka 2006), making the transition from the mainline even less marked. So we are not dealing here with a significant restructuring of values of, for example, the type that Robbins describes among the Urapmin (Robbins 2004a, 2009a). On the contrary, it is the formal similarity between the relational values of Pentecostalism and that of the surrounding community that make this form of Christianity so successful on the Copperbelt.

The point of using this theoretical framework is therefore not to identify a major shift in values as a result of religious adherence, but rather to tease apart the more complex aspects of Pentecostal ritual life. If the attraction of Pentecostalism lies in the correspondence between its relational values and social structures and those of the Copperbelt more generally, then it is no surprise that it is at those points where these values are at risk of being reconfigured that believers put the greatest effort into protecting them. This is why the language of sacrifice surrounds seed offerings, and why super-members position themselves so as to absorb the negative responses to gifts to church leaders. Approaching these topics in terms of value reveals both the social work and risk of Pentecostal practice, especially with regard to exchange. It is also in this framework that we can understand why believers leave one church and move to another, or band together under an emerging leader to form a new congregation.

Ultimately, then, the relational values of Nsofu as worked out through ambition and obligation hold the key to the central ethnographic question of this dissertation. To wit, the most striking characteristics of Copperbelt Pentecostalism – the proliferation of new churches and the near-constant circulation of their members among them – are, perhaps paradoxically, an outgrowth of the very mechanisms that make this religion so popular in the first place. When it appears that Pentecostal relational hierarchies and the values that inform them have been left behind, whether as a result of a prosperity gospel equation of charisma with material success, the financial needs of church leaders, or the basic role that exchange plays in Copperbelt social life, the easiest response is often to join one of the numerous other Pentecostal fellowships in Nsofu, and in so doing attempt to develop a charismatic hierarchy that is more stable, more pure. As we have seen, these

structures are easily created and easily undermined, all of which keep circulating Pentecostal saints in motion. By viewing Pentecostal practice on the Copperbelt through the lens of values, the attraction, relational productivity, and vulnerability of this religion have been shown to be embedded in the social circumstances of contemporary urban Zambia.

Notes on the Conclusion:

[1] In the light of these transnational connections, some scholars have gone so far as to argue that in Africa, where access to the ostensibly global networks of the market is extremely limited (Ferguson 2006: 14), Pentecostalism is often "the only form of globalization in which [people]… really take part and can claim a leading role" (de Boeck and Plissart 2004: 100; cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 2000: 314).

[2] The larger anthropological debate involved in questions of the localizing and globalizing forces of Pentecostalism – and, indeed, Christianity more generally – is that of whether or to what extent Christian conversion constitutes the radical rupture that believers often describe (see Bialecki, Haynes, and Robbins 2008: 1143-46 for a summary of this debate). In other words, is conversion best understood and theorized as in terms of the cultural changes that, for example, the Urapmin of Papua New Guinea have witnessed over the last several decades (see Robbins 2004a) or instead as an instance of more or less syncretic cultural continuity in which no significant transformation takes place (e.g. Scott 2005)? Joel Robbins has argued that the inability of anthropology to understand and properly theorize Christian conversion stems from the discipline's history as a "science of continuity" (2007b: 6), which makes it impossible for the discipline to engage with the types of change that believers say they have experienced. While it is difficult to exaggerate the importance of this debate within the contemporary anthropology of Christianity, in terms of the Copperbelt, where Christianity has been a central part of social life for decades, the question of cultural change has, I believe, less to do with Christianity and more to do with the kinds of political economic shifts we have explored here.

[3] Of course, mine is not the only analysis presented as part of the Anthropology of Christianity to make this point. Even in these early stages of the subfield it is readily apparent that the study of religious ideas and practices has much to tell us about, for example, social engagement (e.g. Elisha 2011), political activism (e.g. Bialecki 2009), market participation (e.g. van Dijk 2009), and the "institutional deficit" (Martin 1998: 117-18 after Lash and Urry 1994) of the neoliberal era (e.g. Robbins 2009b).

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<u>Appendix</u>

Household Consumption Survey Forms

<u>Form 1:</u>

Household Survey
Preliminary Information

Name

House Number

Church

Number of people in house

Employment?

Business?

Approximate monthly income

Items **given** to people outside
the household:
*Ifintu **mulepela** abantu mushikala nabo pa ŋanda*:

1. Item given/*Cintu mupele*:
   Given to/ *Cipelwa kuli ba nani?*:
   Day/ *Bushiku nshi?*:
   Time/ *Ninshita nshi?*:
   Amount/ *Fili finga?:*

2. Item given/*Cintu mupele*:
   Given to/ *Cipelwa kuli ba nani?*:
   Day/ *Bushiku nshi?*:
   Time/ *Ninshita nshi?*:
   Amount/ *Fili finga?:*

3. Item given/*Cintu mupele*:
   Given to/ *Cipelwa kuli ba nani?*:
   Day/ *Bushiku nshi?*:
   Time/ *Ninshita nshi?*:
   Amount/ *Fili finga?:*

4. Item given/*Cintu mupele*:
   Given to/ *Cipelwa kuli ba nani?*:
   Day/ *Bushiku nshi?*:
   Time/ *Ninshita nshi?*:
   Amount/ *Fili finga?:*

5. Item given/*Cintu mupele*:
   Given to/ *Cipelwa kuli ba nani?*:
   Day/ *Bushiku nshi?*:
   Time/ *Ninshita nshi?*:
   Amount/ *Fili finga?:*

6. Item given/*Cintu mupele*:
   Given to/ *Cipelwa kuli ba nani?*:
   Day/ *Bushiku nshi?*:
   Time/ *Ninshita nshi?*:
   Amount/ *Fili finga?:*

Items **received** from people outside
the household:
*Ifintu **mulepokelela** ku bantu mushikala nabo pa ŋanda*:

1. Item received/ *Cintu mupokelele*:
   Received from/ *Mupokelele kuli ba nani?*:
   Day/ *Bushiku nshi?*:
   Time/ *Ninshita nshi?*:
   Amount/ *Fili finga?*:

2. Item received/ *Cintu mupokelele*:
   Received from/ *Mupokelele kuli ba nani?*:
   Day/ *Bushiku nshi?*:
   Time/ *Ninshita nshi?*:
   Amount/ *Fili finga?*:

3. Item received/ *Cintu mupokelele*:
   Received from/ *Mupokelele kuli ba nani?*:
   Day/ *Bushiku nshi?*:
   Time/ *Ninshita nshi?*:
   Amount/ *Fili finga?*:

4. Item received/ *Cintu mupokelele*:
   Received from/ *Mupokelele kuli ba nani?*:
   Day/ *Bushiku nshi?*:
   Time/ *Ninshita nshi?*:
   Amount/ *Fili finga?*:

5. Item received/ *Cintu mupokelele*:
   Received from/ *Mupokelele kuli ba nani?*:
   Day/ *Bushiku nshi?*:
   Time/ *Ninshita nshi?*:
   Amount/ *Fili finga?*: