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Author(s): Peter Cooke and Martin Doornbos

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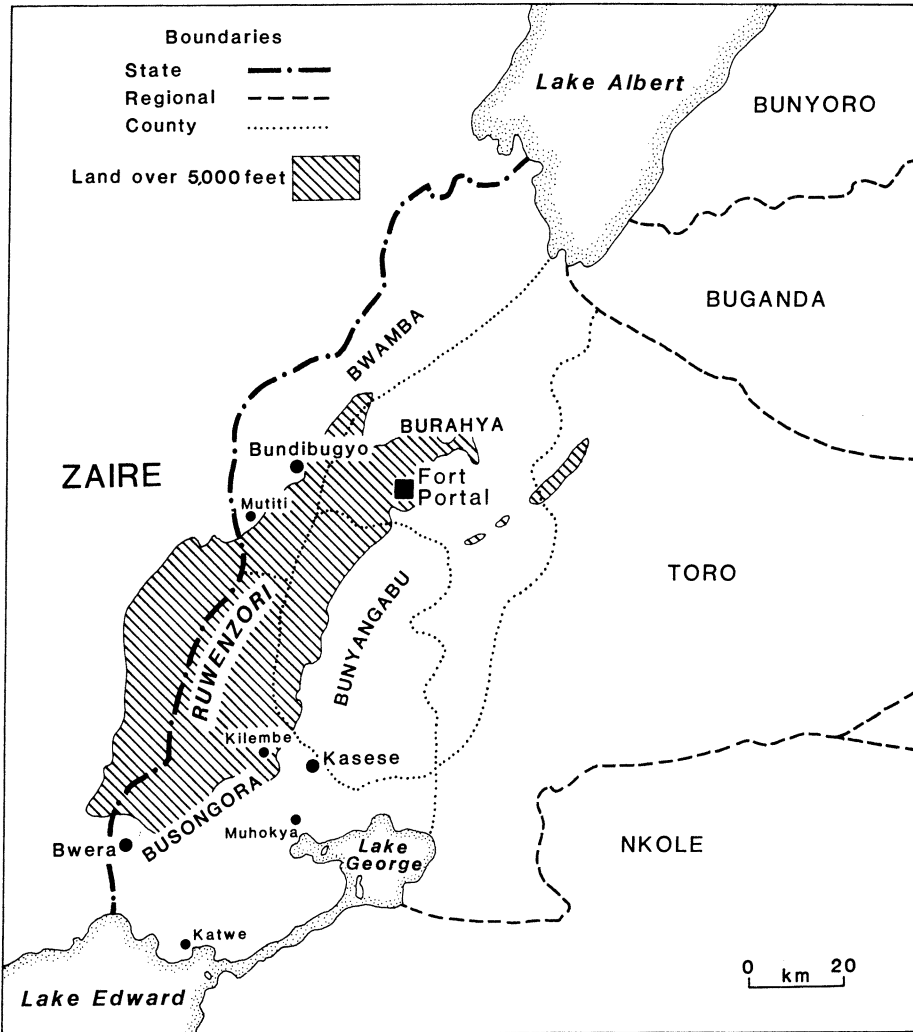
RWENZURURU PROTEST SONGS

Peter Cooke and Martin Doornbos

In this article we shall examine songs of the Rwenzururu movement of the Bakonzo and Baamba people in Western Uganda. We will be concerned with their different uses, as repositories of history and vehicles of exhortation, and also with their origins in time and space. The main interest in this paper, however, is to find explanations for the simultaneous expression of often strongly contrasted moods, viewpoints and styles in Rwenzururu songs.

Rwenzururu as a movement of political protest was rooted in resentment of the discriminatory treatment of the ethnic minorities in the kingdom of Toro (Doornbos 1970). Until 1967 Toro had figured as one of four semi-traditional states within Uganda, at the apex of which stood the Omukama (king). Bakonzo and Baamba, who lived along the Zaire border, comprised approximately 45% of the population of the kingdom, whereas the Batoro were in the majority in Toro. The Bakonzo were the larger of these two oppressed groups, totalling 110,000 in 1959 as against 36,000 Baamba. Compared to the Batoro, Bakonzo and Baamba had long had fewer social and economic opportunities. They had less access to education, fewer chiefs or other government appointments; few medical and other facilities were available in their areas. Moreover, Bakonzo and Baamba were often treated by Batoro as inferiors. In 1962, shortly before Uganda became independent, Bakonzo and Baamba joined hands in the Rwenzururu movement which aimed at establishing a separate district for themselves as a way of improving their political status. This united front came about in the Toro Rukurato (Council), where elected representatives of the two groups had been meeting since 1961 and had come to know each other's grievances. For a variety of reasons, however, both the Toro and the Uganda Governments resisted Rwenzururu demands. A prolonged deadlock ensued. Aggravation and violent conflict between Rwenzururu and Batoro became dominant; particularly severe clashes occurred between 1963 and 1965.

As time passed, the issue became exceedingly complex, with not only the Uganda and Toro governments, but also major factions within the movement adopting different positions. In 1962, one wing of the movement, led by Isaya Mukirane and based in the inaccessible Ruwenzori mountains on the border with Zaire, declared itself an independent state called Rwenzururu Kingdom. Other factions, primarily identified with Yeremia Kawamara and Petero Mupalya, continued to press for some kind of arrangement whereby they could remain within Uganda. Over the years, constitutional deliberations, emergency measures, army and police interventions, raids and counter-raids by Bakonzo, Baamba and Batoro, as well as the imprisonment and displacement of many people and considerable losses of life and property, became commonplaces of the dispute. As no clear solution was forthcoming, eventually the Rwenzururu movement was mired in misery and disillusionment. Some change of situation occurred in 1967, when Uganda adopted a more centralised framework of government and Toro became a District. However, if then there seemed a certain respite, this was probably due as much to pervasive fatigue among the parties involved in the conflict as to the abolishment of Toro



kingship or any other political concessions granted to the Bakonzo and Baamba. The demand for a separate district was not fulfilled until 1971, when Idi Amin came to power and gave one to the Baamba, another to the Bakonzo. Although the issue would thus appear to have been deflated, the Rwenzururu Kingdom, having gone beyond a point of no return, persisted in its secession and has in fact, albeit very diminished, continued to exist until the present (cf. Worrall 1980). The secession has currently (1981) acquired a new significance as a base for operations of one of the guerilla groups fighting the new Obote regime.

SONGS AND HISTORY

The songs which emerged in the Rwenzururu movement form an oral record of the hopes, frustrations, purposes and confusions generated by the conflict. People sang

these songs to air their feelings of the moment, to articulate their situation as they perceived it and to pray for justice. Typical of such an outcry is a song called *Rwenzururu Wethu Mulilirwa*, which in a few lines summarises the Rwenzururu agony:

The Rwenzururu we cry for is our land, we cried for the land,
Batoro are happy, but the day we shall get our land, we shall sing
cha-cha-cha

Our Rwenzururu, where have you gone? When we think about you tears
appear

Army men came and beat everybody for Rwenzururu,
When we think of all these sufferings,
tears drop.

These sentiments recur in many songs. Brief and direct, the contrast between the confidence of the first verse (note the use of the foreign 'cha-cha-cha' to denote joy) and the increasing despair of the last two is noteworthy. Rather than conveying an inherent inconsistency, the song's reaffirmation of the 'just cause' from which it springs renders the fate of Rwenzururu even more lamentable – 'where have you gone'. Below, we shall return to such variations of tone.

Many songs relate the history of the movement as the people understood it, and these songs became a major vehicle for conveying this history. In a largely non-literate society with no mass media and few other means to chronicle its history, songs were used to record history and thus to serve as an archive. They also had educational functions. Many songs dealt with specific events such as the elections which gave Bakonzo and Baamba representation, the demands they presented to the authorities at Entebbe, the Commission of Inquiry which came to their areas, and the ideas and actions of their leaders. An interesting example is a Lukonzo song which recounts some earlier conflicts involving Bakonzo and Batoro:

Welcome natives, Baamba/Bakonzo to visit us. Good morning,
We thank God who has passed you through guns and knives safely.

Let us pray God to give us courage so that we can all stick to one thing.
Let us fight bravely and whatever comes, we shall succeed.
We must send away the Batoro from our land.

We shall never dine with a Mutoro any more. He must go away.
'Goodbye'. We have refused him totally.

This is the third tribal war in which many people are killed.
The first one was Nyamutswa's. The second war was Kabalega's.

A long time ago, we had Nyamutswa and Tibamwenda who refused to pay
the tax graded by the Batoro. Then the Batoro killed them and buried them
in one grave.

Then afterwards, Isaya searched the history of how these people were
killed.

From this research, he wrote the information in many exercise books.

After that there were elections in which Isaya passed through.
Then he presented our views in the Rukurato.

Then Isaya came and told the people about what happened in the Rukurato.
The people told him to go back and claim for our land.
Do not give up, but the day you return, we shall laugh.

Of primary interest is the use of history in this example. The reference to the Bakonzo chiefs Nyamutswa and Tibamwenda concerns a confrontation of 1919, when these two Bakonzo chiefs (and a third one, Kapoli) led an uprising in resistance to the establishment of Toro authority in the Ruwenzori region. This establishment was undertaken after World War I, on the basis of new boundary demarcations between the Uganda Protectorate and the Congo. In 1921, Nyamutswa, Tibamwenda and Kapoli were hanged after their appeal to the East African Court of Appeal had failed (Uganda Government 1962: 3, 6). To the followers of the Rwenzururu movement, these incidents were reminders of their lost independence, and no less an exhortation to regain it. Isaya Mukirane's search for the history of his people, which he had conducted since 1954 as President of the Bakonjo Life History Research Society, was an immediate precursor to the Rwenzururu movement. This research was of no small importance; much of the information thus gathered was subsequently used to substantiate demands. It also gave rise to an incipient organisation and encouraged reflection on shared grievances.

Most songs were concerned, however, with more contemporary history. One of these, dealing with some of the events immediately leading up to the Rwenzururu movement, is called *Akatambi* (time):

When the time came, the Europeans informed us about Elections.
They said that we should elect our own people whom we like.

The Omuhikirwa¹ also said that we should elect reasonable people and not lazy ones.

When elections were in action, Bakonzo elected Isaya.
Baamba elected Kawamara and Mupalya.

When the Rukurato was in session, our leaders presented our views. They said that we were not included in the Agreement of 1900. We should therefore make a new agreement.

Batoro refused this, but our leaders liked it. You have refused to include us in the Agreement, we should therefore separate.

Then, our brave leaders walked out of the Rukurato and informed us about it. Batoro have rejected our ideas.

The people told them to go ahead and get our Rwenzururu.
We shall not be sat upon when we have no voice in the Rukurato.

When fighting started, the Central Government sent the Commission of Inquiry which included three people.

This song refers to the Toro Agreement of 1900, through which the British negotiated their entry into Toro, which at that time did not include the Bakonzo and

Baamba areas. In 1962, the Bakonzo and Baamba representatives in the Toro Rukurato asked for a new Constitution which would explicitly recognise that the people of Toro were the Batoro, Bakonzo and Baamba. The rejection of this demand did much to precipitate the claims for a separate district; the Rwenzururu movement soon became a fact. It is interesting to compare this song with a presumably later version, which is virtually identical except for the deletion of the Omuhikirwa's pre-election counsel in the above rendering – which probably suggested too close a reliance on advice from the Toro side – and the substitution in the last line of 'when fighting started' by 'when Kawamara started his duty': an interpretation which accords greater weight to one of the more accommodative Baamba leaders.

The historical record transmitted in these songs does not appear to be without inaccuracies. A notable element of fiction and of wishful thinking has crept into their texts, with some events and actions apparently imagined and others interpreted in a fashion that seems difficult to reconcile with reality. Two examples may illustrate this apparent melange of fact and fiction, the first being a song which attributes to the British rather a considerable measure of goodwill and partiality towards Rwenzururu aspirations:

The English at the Assembly in Entebbe asked Isaya what he wanted.
Isaya replied that he was looking for what he had lost and that the Batoro
had taken away his land.
They encouraged him and said that the land was his – New Bukonzo.²
Then Isaya went to Busongora³ with a flag from Entebbe.

The second is a verse of a song called *Obuthoki* (Authority) which runs as follows:

The UNO disagreed with the statement of the Omukama of the *Batoro*
[authors' emphasis] that his kingdom was too small to be divided and
declared that Mukirane should take his land.

Sadly, notwithstanding innumerable letters and memoranda, which for years Rwenzururu leaders (especially Mukirane) have addressed to the UN and other international bodies (OAU, the Pope, African Heads of State, the Queen of England and others), their case has never received any attention in these circles and it is in fact doubtful whether internationally there was ever any appreciable awareness of it.

MEDIUM AND MESSAGE

If songs generally offer insight into popular sentiments, this is particularly true for songs of protest. Unlike, for example, the techniques of survey research, analysis of song contents (and form) cannot of course provide one with quantifiable 'precise' or 'hard' data. Basically unaffected, however, by research situations or even research designs, this seemingly 'soft' evidence may actually convey more genuine reflections of popular attitudes and opinion than will many a well-designed attitude survey.

Again, this in no way implies that insight is identical with historical accuracy; song in fact would be a rather poor medium through which to try and learn the history of a movement like Rwenzururu. But it is likely that the songs will point to what local people considered key landmarks in the conflict; and, more generally, how the

movement was perceived from within. Yet in the case of Rwenzururu, the songs which the movement has generated are actually quite diverse, connoting hope as well as despair, fulfilment and defeat, favouring now one rendering of events, then conveying another interpretation.

Some aspects of this diversity have also been noted in an earlier analysis of Rwenzururu songs. Kirsten Alnaes has suggested that many such variations of tone and interpretation can be related to different phases which the movement itself has undergone – initially a dream of ultimate justice in the hereafter, followed by a phase of concrete demands for equality, then a ‘crisis of action’ when conflict evolved into violent rebellion, and, finally, a phase of withdrawal and return to the dream about ultimate justice (Alnaes 1969: 244).

It is undoubtedly true that chronological variation is a factor of basic significance, as songs originate at different intervals and are likely to respond to different moments. However, while accepting this, we feel that a chronological scale by itself cannot fully account for the range and kinds of differences we found. Not only did we, on several occasions, listen to quite contrasted songs being sung on the same occasion (as Alnaes did), but we came across some variations that probably should be attributed to opposing factions within the movement, others that suggested different regional origins of song content and, most significant of all, some quite different kinds of songs, composed for different purposes and expressing rather markedly different orientations to the movement. This refers particularly to a difference between ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ songs, composed for beer parties and school concerts respectively. To this we will return in the analysis below. Nor does it appear likely to us that the Bakonzo would have completed a full and somehow symmetrical song cycle as Alnaes suggested – from dream through demand to crises and withdrawal and again to dream – in the ten-year span between 1959 and 1969. Though no more now than a shadow of its former strength, the Rwenzururu movement has continued up to the present and in the course of time it has no doubt sponsored many novel songs, about Idi Amin and his intervention in particular, but no less about local events and frustrations, though unfortunately we are not able to relate these from first-hand evidence.

THEMES AND VARIATIONS

The songs we have available for examination are all Lukonzo songs and have been collected between October 1966 and October 1967. Twenty-one were tape-recorded by the authors on four different occasions. One of these events took the form of an outdoor *konsati* (concert) given for the researchers on 31 December 1966, at Mutiti village. It had been arranged by the local head of the Rwenzururu movement and involved classes of sub-grade school children with their teachers, young men and older musicians, who gathered together from a number of villages higher up in the foothills south of Bundibugyo in Bwamba country. This region had been one of the main centres of the Rwenzururu movement since Mukirane’s earliest actions. Mixed with the movement songs were other traditional items including *eluma* (stopped flute) dances, *endara* (xylophone) pieces and songs accompanied by *ekinanga* (bow harp). Six songs were recorded in Bwera and Kasese, situated at the southern end of the Ruwenzori range, a second major area of Rwenzururu activity.

Another set of 21 song texts were collected and noted down without their melodies by a Mukonzo student. As several songs found their way into both sets, we feel confident that some of the most popular movement songs (i.e. those which would be most frequently sung) are included. Translations have been made and re-checked by Bakonzo students from Nyakasura Senior School, Fort Portal and the National Teachers' College, Kampala.

First, then, as to the question of time origins, we have no way of establishing this except on the basis of internal evidence, though clearly some songs must be dated earlier than others. A few examples will illustrate this, the first being a small praise song to Mr Isaya (Mukirane):

Ch. Mr. Isaya, who is very intelligent, sent away the authority of the Batoro.

1. In 1961, the English told us to elect brave people who would look our lost things. Ch.
2. Then, Bakonzo elected Isaya. When he was in the Lukurato, he asked Isebisika.⁴ Ch.
3. The Omukama replied that he would not give him his land.
Then, Isaya went to Entebbe to attend the meeting with the Governor.
Ch.

This disarmingly naive song is evidently a rather early one since its text does not go beyond some of the initial declaratory skirmishes immediately preceding the emergence of the Rwenzururu movement in 1962. In contrast, the following lament is clearly of a much later date, when war and misery had shattered people's illusions. In structure it is like a prayer addressed to Mount Rwenzururu:

Ch. Mount Rwenzururu with its beauty,
we are suffering because of Batoro.

1. Schools are closed, roads are ruined,
and people are suffering. Ch.
2. Many people are imprisoned, suffering,
and others have moved away. Others have
nowhere to go. Ch.
3. We are very sorrowful about our school children. Where there are no
schools there is no progress. Ch.
4. Batoro did not mind about our education.
They intentionally left Bakonzo behind in
education. Ch.
5. There is no other way we can take when
schools are closed. Schools are the only
important way we can take. Ch.

Thus, though we have no direct information for either of these songs as to who composed them, or when and why, it is evident that they date from different periods.

But it is no less noteworthy that songs with such different outlooks and expectations as these express, were both sung at the same time – each presumably with some meaning to the people singing them. We will return to this point. Songs like these could be and in fact were sung at a single event perhaps interspersed by another, highly fragmentary song like the following, with a word or phrase to suggest an idea not further elaborated:

Isaya is my father
 New Rwenzururu
 Ee – ba, really [or: it is true]
 Just only one day

An observation is also in order as regards the regional origins of songs. The concentration of our sample on two centres of Rwenzururu involvement and on one of these in particular (Bwamba), implies a certain disregard for other areas in which the movement was active. Such areas include the countries of Bunyangabu and Buraya, which were somewhat peripherally involved, and especially the higher Ruwenzori regions controlled by the Rwenzururu Kingdom proper, where it was simply impractical to visit. Nonetheless, some of the songs we found were clearly of different regional origin, including several from the higher Ruwenzori that had apparently found their way into the repertoire of Bakonzo living in the lower regions. Again some examples may illustrate this, first a song called *Ekiro Engunga Yasyabugha* (The Day When The Trumpet Will Sound), which expresses the suffering of people in the lowlands, Bakonzo as well as Baamba, as contrasted with those who live in the forest. This song, incidentally, alludes to the earthquake of 1966 which desolated much of the region; it echoes the story of Jericho in a new setting:

- Ch. The day when the trumpet will sound
 the dead will rise
 When the mountains will begin to collapse
 My husband, where will you take me?
 Weep, weep, weep and shed tears, tears
 Weep, weep, the land will come.
1. Much blood has been shed
 On account of our land, Rwenzururu. Ch.
 2. When the earthquake began, we people were asleep;
 When we awoke we thought the son of God had come back. Ch.
 3. When the army men heard it
 They thought the Banyambulya⁵
 were descending.
 They then loaded their guns
 And then realised it was in the ground. Ch.
 4. The Baamba are not restless
 The siege is from the forest.
 In the forest no people have died, people
 have died down here on the low land only. Ch.

The second song, *Sirikale ya Mukirania* (Mukirania's Army) is a militant tune of Rwenzururu askaris, who often descended on raids from their camps in the higher mountain forests to levy Rwenzururu taxes from the Bakonzo and Baamba living lower down the mountain slopes. (In fact they still do this, sometimes kidnapping those who fail to comply, while in recent years they have also been kidnapping relatively well-to-do Batoro for ransom.)

1. Mukirania's Army, Baba, has come
2. It has come from the forest, Baba, at Kitenga's
3. We are children of Mukirania, Baba, we have come
We have come from the forest, Baba,
From the forest, Baba, at Kitenga's.⁶

Of songs which were sung in Bwamba, we found one in particular, *Ngeya ya Rwenzururu*, was also popular in Bwera. This is especially noteworthy if one considers that as long as two weeks may be required to cover the distance between these areas on foot. *Ngeya ya Rwenzururu* seemed to rank much like a national anthem in the Rwenzururu movement. It is brief and expressive, a quality which may have stimulated its spread and popularity:

Ngeya, Ngeya of Rwenzururu
It has a white band. Ngeya.
It is very sweet. Ngeya.
Ngeya of the Bakonzo. Ngeya.

These lines and choruses can be repeated endlessly. Rwenzururu as a country is personified in 'Ngeya'. One reason why the colobus monkey (*ngeya*) is an apt emblem for the movement is the white band on its brow, which it has in common with the snow-clad Ruwenzori mountains. Besides, as the song suggests, the Bakonzo consider them both very sweet. Many young Bakonzo, indeed, wear caps of colobus skin to signify their Rwenzururu identity.⁷

Of course, a single song is insufficient evidence of the existence of a common song literature throughout the Ruwenzori region. But there is no reason to consider this song purely incidental. There seems a possibility, though one we did not investigate, that a common body of Rwenzururu songs tended to develop and came into existence, no matter how heterogeneous and widely spread the sources on which it might be based. In any case, the occurrence of the same song(s) at vastly separate places indicates considerable capacity for grassroots communication within the movement, making it possible for tunes as well as messages to be disseminated over large distances. There is at least a likelihood, therefore, that the forty-odd songs collected in Bwamba are of wider significance and that, rather than finding differences in song contents between places, one might anticipate roughly similar kinds of differences being repeated over larger areas.

Over and beyond contrasts among songs that are evidently attributable to different times of composition or places of origin, perhaps the most significant variations relate to their different orientations and the interpretations given to events and the roles of protagonists in the conflict. What is in fact quite noteworthy is the array of views, reflections and expectations as conveyed through songs that could be

sampled at roughly a single point in time and place. These included praise and dedication to Isaya Mukirane and the secessionist Rwenzururu Kingdom Government Movement as well as trust and expectations bestowed upon President Obote and the Uganda Government. Also they could vary in tone between one jubilant about imminent victory to a plaintive one full of agony and distress.

Some examples may again illustrate this mixed heritage. First a song called *Obote Wairehe?* which expresses puzzlement and disapproval of President's Obote's policy and, with hardly concealed irony, comments upon his failure to control the Bakonzo:

Obote, where have you gone?
 Ch. We are with you
 You merely shake the head, Obote!
 Ch. We are with you.
 You cannot manage the Bakonzo, Ch.
 Obote, where have you gone? Ch.
 You cannot manage the Bakonzo, father. Ch.
 You merely shake the head now! Ch.
 You merely shake the head, Obote. Ch.
 Obote, where have you gone. Ch.
 You cannot manage Isaya. Ch.

In notable contrast to this song is the following, which rather looks to Obote for support and solutions. This is particularly noteworthy because this song's signature is nonetheless that of the Rwenzururu Kingdom, which had pledged to sever all relationships with the Uganda Government:

1. Rwenzururu has its own King.
 Ch. Bakonzo, Baamba, Rwenzururu.
2. Batoro have their own King.
 Ch.
3. Surely, friends, let us fight like men. Ch.
4. The Batoro did not like us. Ch.
5. Kilembe, Muhokya and Katwe products are all ours.⁸
 Ch.
6. Let us not fear.
 Ch.
7. Our Father, Obote come and help us.
 Ch.
8. Rwenzururu makes great sorrows.
 Ch.
9. Let us fight like men.

Two other songs are even more pointedly ambivalent towards the central government of Uganda. The first one, *Eriyalhuha* (Retiring), is a striking case of legendarisation. Historically quite erroneous, its account of early developments

sounds rather like a fairy tale. It views the central government (Obote) as a fair arbiter, while the British are accused of sabotaging a just decision:

1. When Isebisika was about to retire, he did remarkable things.
Ch. He thought his period of reign was about to end.
2. Isaya went to Entebbe to plead and then Obote sent for Isebisika. Ch.
3. When they pleaded, Isaya won the case.
Ch.
4. But it was difficult to tell Isaya that he won the case.
So the English took him to the Congo at Kihocha. Ch.
5. Fathers, do not hesitate, but let us pray God, for
our Rwenzururu will come. Ch.

(Actually, Mukirane *was* in the Congo for some time around 1962, hiding out from Ugandan security forces. On orders from Obote's government British district officers tried hard but unsuccessfully to get him into Uganda for prosecution.)

In contrast, the second song, *Omwaka Omuhya* (New Year), expresses only disillusionment with the central government. Composed for the occasion of New Year, and beginning with some well-wishing, it has a rather tragic touch as it then finds it has no future to look forward to, for all ways out of the misery seem to be blocked. After its confident start, the song ends on a pitiful note, expressing fear that people may be destroyed in the very pursuit of Rwenzururu aims:

1. We are glad to start a New Year
Let us start it with new ideas so that our Rwenzururu
develops well.
2. The central government has not helped us,
It has neglected us. Even in the Congo, there
are also disturbances.
We are therefore in trouble before us and behind us.
3. Surely, we people, we have nowhere to go. Our Rwenzururu might
destroy us.
Our God, keep us safe in this New Year.
4. Rwenzururu also makes great sorrow.
The blood of people flowed like that of goats
which are killed for nothing. Why are we suffering?
Because of Rwenzururu.

Other contrasted viewpoints in Rwenzururu songs developed in regard to the schisms which grew within the leadership of the government. For example, a song lauding the original three leaders, Mukirane, Kawamara and Mupalya, might at the same occasion be followed by one which would dramatise their differences. Of the first variety is a song praising Mukirane for his eloquence (which is compared to that of a radio), at the same time expressing admiration for Kawamara's bilingual abilities, which indeed were shared by few:

1. Isaya speaks like a radio
2. Isaya speaks like a Mukonzo
3. Isaya speaks like a radio
4. Isaya speaks like a Mukonzo
5. Kawamara speaks like a Mukonzo
6. Kawamara speaks like a Mwamba
7. Isaya speaks like a radio.
8. Their words stir my heart.

The following song likewise assumes an as yet undivided leadership of the Rwenzururu movement. In its simplicity, it is typical of many others in content and composition:

1. We elected three people namely Mr. Isaya, Kawamara and Mupalya.
Ch. They claimed the land for Bakonzo and named it Rwenzururu.
2. Since we are the owners of this land Rwenzururu, we shall have it. Ch.
3. Fathers, mothers, and friends, let us wait for our Rwenzururu. Ch.
4. We are very sorrowful for the Bakolikoli who are staying in Bundibugyo.⁹ Ch.

In contrast, the theme of the next song is the orthodoxy of Mukirane's pursuit of secession as against Kawamara's policies of compromise. It is called *Erithebwa* (We were deceived) and leaves no doubt that the only correct course was the one followed by the 'Kibanzanga', a title bestowed upon Mukirane which says that one day his claims will 'find him seated' as king:

1. All of you should not get worried, but we took a wrong course and left what we wanted.
2. When we took the wrong course, Kawamara came and told us that he had brought the claims of Baamba and Bakonzo.
3. They said that we should pay taxes and improve the roads because they had brought the land we claimed for.
4. We then asked them where they had left Isaya, since they were three.
5. They replied that Isaya had gone and that he would find them back in happiness.

6. Then Isaya told the people that they had taken the wrong course and left the right one.
7. Kibanzanga is the only one who did not change his mind until today.
8. Friends, let us not be deceived again as we have been before.
9. Only Kibanzanga, the saviour, did not change his mind.

This subject of the schism is further developed in other songs. One, for example, states that Kawamara and Mupalya, who at one point agreed to having the Baamba and Bakonzo areas provisionally administered by the central government instead of the Toro government, had merely recovered the skeleton of the land while more basic claims remained unfulfilled:

1. Bakonzo are tough, having caused the coming of the army. Ch. The Administrator has caused the deaths of many people.¹⁰
2. Isaya went to Entebbe. Ch.
3. Bakonzo are also tough, for they have caused the deaths of many people. Ch.
4. Isaya and Mupalya went to Entebbe. Ch.
5. They sent the message that they were going to get the claimed land. Ch.
6. What do fathers and mothers say about this? Ch.
7. Kawamara and Mupalya brought the skeleton of the land. Ch.
8. Let us work, Rwenzururu is ours. Ch.

The variety of orientations and concerns which entered Rwenzururu songs might be further illustrated by additional differences as to the party seen as hostile, or the kind of issues which precipitated conflict. In the above songs, the Batoro, the Omukama, the British, the Administrator, President Obote and the Uganda Army in turn rank as the hostile agents. As regards the causes that led to conflict, matters so varied as the exclusion of Bakonzo and Baamba from the Toro constitution, their claims on the land, the imposition of taxation upon them, the lack of recognition of their languages, and the neglect of their education, have been among the grievances advanced to justify and demand support for the Rwenzururu movement. Throughout these songs, moreover, the tone varies between the extremes of militant optimism and utter despair, while suggested or hoped-for solutions are vastly different or absent altogether.

But though it may appear 'inconsistent' if popular orientations seem to move back and forth from optimism to pessimism, from expectations to doubt, or from one orientation to another, in the case of Rwenzururu, where conditions kept changing

vastly and rapidly, even sharp contrasts in expression are perhaps rather to be expected. When prospects for the immediate future are bleak and uncertain, men may well exclaim in despair and at once reach out for a straw of hope. People have been known to muster courage and be joyful even where existence itself seemed threatened, and this, too, would enter the mixture of their expressions. Nor should one necessarily expect ambivalent moods to be finely balanced or coherently presented in songs. Where confusion prevails and conflict seems endemic, the body of songs to air feelings may well be shrill and chaotic. In a situation as tense and complex as that of Rwenzururu, songs composed earlier from very different perspectives may have been picked up as a medium of expression; but their diversity of origins and inspirations may have been perfectly suited to the range of feelings and views they were intended to express. Even as for the contrasts in the expressed loyalty to leaders, the songs may not actually have overstated the complexity of the situation. While for long the Rwenzururu conflict gravitated to a point where no single leader or political group was able to resolve it, still people yearned for peace and salvation. With no one to inspire all, each bidding for support and recognition, the wavering of the songs between Mukirane and Kawamara, or even between Obote and the British, may well have been as accurate a picture of popular fluctuations as one could get.

The Rwenzururu movement has been surrounded by extreme confusion, which is mirrored in its songs. If individually some of the songs raise puzzles, as a collection they are profoundly meaningful. Still, if all their moods are part of Rwenzururu, whether one song or another is sung will not be entirely random. There is one general difference in the songs which explains a good deal of their differences in mood and contents, and the purposes for which and the occasions at which they are sung. To analyse these, we should turn to their musical structure.

MUSICAL FORM AND POLITICAL TONE

The songs in our sample mostly fall into two major musical categories. The first group is associated with the tall bamboo *nyamulere* flute which Wachsmann (Trowell and Wachsmann 1953: 340) had reported much-favoured by the Bakonzo. No difficulty had been found in locating flautists, for the *nyamulere* was frequently in use at beer parties and other kinds of informal music-making. Traditionally, it is accompanied by a regular handclap pulse against which is set a rapid unceasing pattern of triplets (♩♩♩ ♩♩♩ etc. ♩. = 180), beaten with sticks on a small Ugandan-type drum often with another player beating out the same pattern on an improvised percussion-beam or on the hard rim of the same drum. This triplet rhythm lies at the core of the musical rhythms of most other types of Bakonzo music and must be closely connected with the rhythms of the song language of the Bakonzo for it matches the rate of flow syllabic units in traditional songs.¹¹ The *nyamulere*, in the area covered by our researches, has no purely instrumental repertory, all its melodies being based on song texts, and when players were asked what were the words of the songs they played, they immediately sang them if bystanders had not already joined in to provide texts while they played. Apart from the verbal content, there was no noticeable musical distinction between the political songs and other songs for which the *nyamulere* is traditionally used, such as those sung at weddings

and others at the conclusion of healing rituals. Although this group of songs will be labelled *nyamulere* songs, it is stressed that the group contains songs which were composed by *nyamulere* players as well as popular songs in which the use of a flute is purely optional.

In contrast to this music is the other large group of political songs, performed without exception by groups of young people (8–15 years old), with each song consisting of a number of stanzas, each melodically identical and containing four or eight phrases, sometimes followed by an equally long refrain. They were obviously derived from European tunes, but the collectors were at first puzzled by these songs and the origins of some of the melodies are still unsolved. Some of the tunes had a distinct East-European ring about them: others, however, were clearly once hymn tunes, while another has been identified as a popular Danish folk song of Austrian origin called *Alpenrosen*.

At this point, it is relevant to examine the musical structure of both of these contrasting groups of songs in more detail, and, beginning with the traditional songs, to relate their form and musical content to the social situations that produce them. The traditional beer club is still the time-honoured centre of adult social life on the Ruwenzori and the place where traditional *nyamulere* songs are enjoyed. The newer type of bar, where a radio or record player or even the shiny new juke-box can be heard providing an unceasing diet of westernised popular music from Zaire, Nairobi and Kampala along with the latest 'hits' from Europe and the USA, is only found in a few small townships such as Bwera, Kasese and Bundibugyo around the base of the mountains. The beer club is, of course, the place where people frequently meet to quench their thirst and to discuss informally matters of the day and here traditional music is often a part of the scene. The songs performed there closely mirror the informal nature of the occasion. A singer or a flautist begins a song; someone else takes a drum and joins in, others may or may not, as the mood takes them, begin singing the basic response or get up and dance for a while, or merely mark the pulse with handclaps.

Like most other Bantu dialects in southern and western Uganda, Lukonzo is a tonal language and superficial analysis suggests that the tonal and rhythmic patterns of sung phrases of traditional songs closely match those of the corresponding spoken forms. Wachsmann, writing of Luganda song, described this feature as 'speech clothed in melody' (Wachsmann 1954: 45), while Mubangizi, a Mwiru composer from neighbouring Ankole, describes the song melodies of his area as being simply 'an embellishment of the texts' (personal communication, 1969). These traditional songs have the common antiphonal structure in which solo phrases and choral responses alternate. The choral response usually remains constant throughout the song and is usually a brief phrase, sometimes a single word, that often sets the mood of the song upon which the soloist only sketchily elaborates. Such songs seem to be both textually and musically a development and reiteration of a single idea – often expressed in a small number of pithy epigrammatic terms. The text of such songs contains lines with different tonal/rhythmic patterns resulting in slight differences of melodic contour: as always it is difficult to say which is the 'standard pattern' for a song and which are the variants derived from it. Each line of the text has its own melody and when a flautist replaces a singer the lines are still recognised by anyone who knows the song, despite the fact that there is also the tendency for good flautists

22nd from start ♩. = 188

Pellet Balls
Drums

(Flute.)

(Voice:) Ta - ta n'I - sa - ya. (Fl.)
(father Lonyu)

(Voice:) Ta - ta n'I - sa - ya. (Fl.)

(Voice:) Rwe-nzu²-ru mpya-ka. (Fl.)

(Voice:) Rwe-nzu²-ru mpya-ka. (Fl.)

i'13"

(Voice:) E - ki-ro

ki-ghu-ma Ki-sa (Fl.)

(Voice:) E - ki-ro..

Ex. 1. Part of a *nyamulere* 'movement song' – *Rwenzururu mpyaka* (New *Rwenzururu*).
(Tape PC/11/2)

to improvise with the given melodic framework in mind. Example I transcribed from a performance of the song *Rwenzururu Mpyaka*, recorded on 31 December 1966 at Mutiti, illustrates how such performances develop. After a few opening phrases on the flute, played by Jeremiah Mumbera, a brother and a friend began beating out the triplet rhythms on the drum, while a dancer began to stamp out the pulse with pellet-balls strapped below his right knee. Half a minute later an unknown singer threw in phrases from the song, to which the flautist responded antiphonally.

In the normal performance situation – at a beer party, for instance – often no one will bother to sing the words and it is then left to the flautist to entertain the company and, by playing recognisable melodies, to remind his fellows of the text. In this way

the flute itself becomes, as it were, a political instrument, through its melodies reminding the listener of famous events and giving voice to the collective feelings of the group.

The flute has no special political role, nor is there any evidence that flautists played for their political Bakonzo leaders as once Bakonzo played for the Omukama, the king of Toro. If flautists played at political meetings it was only because such meetings tended, like other social gatherings, such as weddings, etc., to be accompanied by music, dance and beer-drinking. The *nyamulere* flutes are usually played as solo instruments and even at gatherings where more than one man was present with his flute they are unlikely to play together unless their flutes, by a happy coincidence, happen to be of the same size and tuning, for there is no standard tuning for Bakonzo flutes.

Likembe
rhythm....

In-di-o bu-mbe-re bwa bwa-we-ne o-kwa-bu-nya-ma. Ngo-ya.

(Solo) lgh-o-lho-gho-lo mwa-li-ka-ti-ni nga-a-ba-bu-ya. Ngo-ya.

(Solo) N-a-ghi-ra ndio-mu-the-ni n'o-mu-hi-mi-ro. Ngo-ya.

(Solo) E-ki ko-ro-ro kyo-kyo-we-ne-o-kwa-ba-mbe-sa. Ngo-ya.

(Solo) (I) mu-ka-si-ka O-bo-te da-na l-sa-ya. Er:...

Ex. 2. Opening lines of *Erighologholo* (Evening). ♩ = 164

Translation: Being first is better than being last (concerning birthright)
The evening scared the beautiful ones
What shall I do? A slasher? A supporting stick?
A crow is more beautiful than girls.
We praise Obote together with Izironi.

Another traditional song (*Erighologholo* Evening; Example II) is an *ekikiibi* dance song, a type popular at weddings, whose texts often deal with different aspects of marital and kinship relationships. Sung by Andrea Bwambale of Bwera it exemplifies that process of reworking and up-dating which is the hallmark of oral tradition. It was recorded during the official independence anniversary celebrations at the Kasese police ground on 9 October 1967. Members of the Ruwenzori Drama and Cultural Society had travelled from Bwera that day to give a public performance of *kasai* and *ekikiibi* dance songs to the accompaniment of the *endara* xylophone, drums and a little *likembe* (lamellophone) played by Bwambale the leading singer.¹² The text of the song has traditionally been one concerned with in-law avoidance but

Bwambale used it to express his jubilation at the then recent constitutional changes that had effected the unseating of Uganda's hereditary kings – including the Omukama of Toro – and the placing of a number of Bakonzo and Baamba officers in leading positions within the Toro district administration. Hence we find lines like: 'We praise Izironi together with Obote For they are the ones who have brought us independence.' Furthermore, traditional lines take on a double meaning and 'A fat woman is like a creeping plant' becomes 'We [Bakonzo] spread like a creeping plant'. The line, 'A crow is more beautiful than the beautiful ones', alludes now not only to both mother-in-law and young brides but also Bakonzo and Batoro respectively. For Batoro girls have a general reputation of being the most beautiful in Uganda. We cannot be certain, however, whether or not such expressions of topical political comment would be made at actual wedding festivities or were composed expressly for this particular official occasion, but it illustrates in another way the manner in which concern for political events is affecting the whole song repertory of the Bakonzo. There is a hint of this same process of adding to older texts in the song *Wangagonga Omuhya* (You beat the Batoro) where regret for the loss of their leader, Isaya, was added to a theme expressing general dislike of the Batoro. In general, however, traditional songs are usually monothematic – both musically and in the mood the words express, though it is noticeable how in Example II the melody line is continually modified to accommodate the varying speech-tone pattern of the text lines. Such songs are the voice of the ordinary villager whose way of life has changed slowly from traditional patterns. Their seemingly fragmentary, often unordered texts reflect the informality of the occasions at which they are sung. Certain common themes emerge, however, and a single event often inspires the song – for instance, the alleged rape of Mrs Mukirane. In general, they are not the songs of political activists fired by zeal for a just cause but simply the sad commentary of rural folk on a steadily deteriorating situation – feelings that are epitomised in the song *Rwenzururu Yamathubugha* (Rwenzururu is Making us Suffer).

Songs with European-type tunes contrast vividly with the traditional ones just discussed. Alnaes (1969: 251) has already commented briefly on this contrast between traditional patterns and that of the 'new style songs', describing the latter group as composed by: 'Young men of the Bakonzo-educated elite who put an emphasis on modern values. They therefore seem to have chosen a form of expression which corresponds with their own outlook, rather than the traditional style of their own society.'

It is true that these songs were composed mostly by school teachers, sometimes (as Alnaes remarked) at the instigation of the Rwenzururu administration. One teacher we contacted said that he composed songs similar to those in our collection because he was out of work at the time and did so simply to occupy his time with what he regarded as a worthwhile task. Nearly all the songs in this section were sung under the direction of school teachers from the 'sub-grade' schools in the hills and the nature of the performance typified institutional class singing. On one occasion when a young soloist forgot his lines the school teacher himself joined in and took over the part, but otherwise the teachers 'conducted' the performance like Europeans, with arm gestures.

At first sight it seems strange that leaders of a movement concerned with establishing the identity and true status of their own people should abandon

traditional patterns of musical expression: for history has shown that a nationalist movement often clings to traditional musical forms for its songs; and the repertory of the Ruwenzori Drama and Cultural Society is one manifestation of this. But in the case of this second group of songs their musical differences can be explained by the differences in textual content which, in turn, stem from the different purposes the songs serve.

This group of 'modern' songs – in which are recorded the detailed history of the movement, long series of events and the deeds of its leaders – have a different function from traditional songs, for they are clearly intended to socialise the younger members of Bakonzo society into Rwenzururu life. They demand long, involved and stanzaically ordered texts. Moreover, since the movement demands from its members the utmost participation, it is perhaps no coincidence that the children are required to do more than just join in a brief choral response – as they would when participating in a traditional song. Sometimes they all sing the prescribed text in its entirety or, more often, a refrain that is as long as each verse. Thus, in both content and structure the songs reflect the demands to be made on those for whom they were composed.

What sort of melodies would fit such texts such as these? B. K. Mubangizi has written of the difficulty facing the modern African literate composer and stresses that 'composition of the text is many more times difficult than composing melodies especially when all the stanzas have to be sung to the same melody.'¹³ In his own hymn book now widely used throughout the Catholic churches of Western Uganda (*Mweshongorere Mukama* (Sing to the Lord), Mbarara, 1968), he took great pains to produce texts for successive stanzas which had the same basic tonal and rhythmic patterns, so that when they are set in traditional style to a single melody the close relationship of rhythm and tone between text and music is not distorted. Mubangizi is a highly gifted poet-musician who has devoted a lifetime to the study of the poetry and music of his own people of Ankole and to the exceedingly careful composition of songs and hymns in a traditional style. The Rwenzururu teacher-composers, however, chose a rough and ready solution. They simply took hold of well-known European melodies and fitted their 'poems' to them. Many of the melodies are march tunes which they had already met during their own primary school days and at teacher-training colleges. In class they had often performed physical exercises to European tunes taught by Irish and Italian priests and English and Scottish missionary teachers, while others had learned marching melodies in the fife and drum bands on Catholic mission stations. Their class music lessons consisted mostly of singing from European Sol Fah song collections. Indeed, George Abwolikiyonga has commented that 'one could recognise someone's school by the [European] songs he sang'. In addition, the ubiquitous transistor radio frequently tuned to the unceasing diet of news, comment and music beamed on Africa from far-off foreign transmitters has clearly provided other usable material.

Example III is typical of the songs that result. The first stanza, sung by all is used as a refrain before and after all subsequent stanzas. The texts of such songs are forced into foreign isometric and melodically rigid moulds and although this distorts the natural rhythms and tonality of the words, the product is at least acceptable to the teacher/composer as well as the youthful singers and serves a vital political function. One felt that the parents of these young people, although offended by these

distortions of their language, accepted this type of song if only because they felt the intentions were good and because, in any case, it seemed to them that many strange and novel ideas came out of schools. Never did we find older Bakonzo singing these songs – they were the repertory of just one section of Bakonzo society, its school children and their teachers. The children learned these songs readily and sang them with reasonably accurate ‘European’ intonation because, like most school and popular music, traditional Kikonzo music is generally diatonic (containing tones and semitones) and heptatonic, not pentatonic and semitoneless like the music of almost all other ethnic groups in Uganda.

Drum *... etc.*

Ch. E - ki-ro'engungu yasyabu - gha, a ba-ho - ha-ta-sya luhuru-sa

E - bi - twa byatsukagen-te - - ra, mwera wa-ghe wasy-ndwa-ika ke?

Mu-li-re, mu-li-re, mu-li-re mutagha ngaye e-mi-sooni e mi-soo-ni

Mu-li-re, mu-li-re, e-ki-hu-gho kya-sya - sa.

Ex. 3. Refrain of school song *Ekiro engunga yasyabuugha* (*The day when the trumpet will sound*).
Composer: Mikairi. (Tape PC/10/13)

Translation: The day when the trumpet will sound
The dead will rise
When the mountains will begin to collapse
My husband where will you take me?
Weep, weep, weep, and shed tears, tears.
Weep, weep, the land will come.

It is in this category of song texts that one finds a greater diversity of viewpoints and often conflicting historical records. But again, when one considers that they are the compositions of individual teachers, each with his own set of facts, his own view of the movement's history to be transmitted in his young charges, these diverse and conflicting views are not surprising. There is, however, present in all of them a common pedagogical aim and a common musical form of expression – a convenient one for inexperienced if enthusiastic songmakers. Their acculturated style is a sign that the Rwenzururu movement was essentially inspired and led by a Bakonzo ‘middle class’ with some education.

Of course, there must have been some teaching of traditional songs to children but, if so, the only instance of this in the whole collection is the song *Rwenzururu Mpyaka* (Example IV) known throughout the whole area. The influence of the pedagogue is noticeable if one compares this with the *nyamulere* version of the same song (Example I). The latter showed in performance the usual diffuse and informal characteristics with a fair amount of seemingly random repetition. The children's version is, however, condensed and ordered. The three lines of the song are

clap

(Solo) Rwe-nzu-ru-ru, Rwe-nzu-ru-ru. (Ch) Ivi-ya-ba-konzo.

(Solo) Na-bya na-lwi-re. (Ch) E-ki-ro-kighu-ma-ki-sa.

(Solo) Rwe-nzu-ru-ru mpya-ha. (Ch) E-ki-ro-kighu-ma-ki-sa. D.C.

Ex. 4. Children's version of *Rwenzururu mpyaka* (New *Rwenzururu*). (Tape PC/10/3)

Translation: Rwenzururu is of the Bakonzo
I almost died, just only one day
New Rwenzururu, just only one day.

assembled in a logical order and each is sung twice by the soloist, all hinting at a somewhat institutionalised treatment of a traditional song. Perhaps the fact that children are not excluded from their parents' beer parties and other social gatherings means that they will already know most of the traditional songs and this knowledge renders unnecessary any further classroom teaching of any but the most important of these songs.

Drum. 3 3 3 3 3 etc.

(Ch) Nge-ya, nge-ya, nge-ya, nge-ya.

nge-ya ya Rwenzu-ru-ru. (Solo) Yi-wi-the 'e-ri re ru... Ch...

Yi-ka-si-ha kutsi-pwe Ch. etc.

Ex. 5. Part of movement song *Ngeya ya Rwenzururu* (Monkey of *Rwenzururu*).

Translation: Monkey, monkey of Rwenzururu
It has a white band
It is very sweet . . .

A small number of tape-recorded songs fall into neither of the two major categories discussed so far. They contain, in fact, an interesting mixture of traditional and European elements. *Ngeya ya Rwenzururu* noted earlier and called by some the *Rwenzururu* national anthem, is one of these (Example V). The melody has a characteristic European flavour in the way it marches stepwise up from the tonic of the major scale, only to march down back to it again. The syllable rhythms are more like European rhythms than those of Lukonzo; the soloist's phrases remind one of tunes based on the popular 'tonic-dominant' chord progressions of African 'pop' guitarists; yet the whole is sung to the characteristic triplet clatter that accompanies traditional Bakonzo songs.

Slightly less obviously European is the song *Obote Wairehe* (Obote, Where Are

You?) whose text we have already discussed. Though, once again, it seems based on the European major mode, the soloist's phrases, while again suggesting tonic-dominant formulae, are sung to more traditional Lukonzo rhythms and the whole fits the triplets' accompaniment more closely. The spoken response is certainly a non-European feature (Example VI).

Drum..

(Solo) [O]-bo - te, wai- re - he? (Ch) Thu-ne - na - u.

(Solo) Wa-si-ngya O-mu-thwe mu-sa, O - bo - te. (Ch) Thu-ne - na - u.

(Solo) Ba-ko-nzo babi-ri ku-le - ma-le-ro. (Ch) Thu-ne - na - u.

Ex. 6. Opening lines of *Obote, Wairehe?* (*Obote, where have you gone?*) as sung by Leo 'Youngblood' Masereka of Kasanga. (Tape PC/4/23)

Translation: Obote, where have you gone? We are with you
 You merely shake the head, Obote. We are with you
 You can't manage the Bakonzo. We are with you . . .

Textually and structurally, both songs resemble traditional types. Melodically, however, they suggest contact either with school music or with the growing corpus of popular guitar music. They were recorded in Bwera in October 1967 from a group of teenage boys and girls and, judging by their patriotic and aggressive sentiments and their mixed musical influences, both songs could well be part of a song repertoire belonging to the movement's askaris, the army of 'young bloods' (older brothers of our young singers) who fought in the skirmishes that periodically took place around the mountain. As will be recalled, such a force is specifically mentioned in the song *Sirikale ya Mukirane* (Mukirane's Army). If this is so, then indeed we have a third and smaller hybrid group of songs whose texts, just like those of the other two groups, are clearly relatable to and serve different sections of Bakonzo society.

CONCLUSION

This discussion of Rwenzururu songs has touched upon several points of potentially wider relevance in the analysis of protest movements, the first being the significance of song itself in offering insight into political orientations and sentiments. The paper has further been concerned with the coexistence of a range of different attitudes and moods in the movement's song literature. In this connection the importance of the kind of context and purpose for which songs are composed has been stressed, as largely pre-determining their musical structure and the general nature of their text and orientation. We found that in those songs that were based on traditional musical forms, ordinary village people (especially those of an older generation), whose frame of reference had been largely shaped by earlier colonial experiences, might give expression to their agonies and bewilderment over the repercussions of the

Rwenzururu conflict, whose ultimate causes they had difficulty comprehending. In contrast, the 'modern' songs based on melodies that were European adaptations, were typically the products of 'modern' men: schoolteachers, traders and others who were deeply involved in the movement and the politicking about it, and who had begun to participate in a different set of social and economic relationships.

It was by some fortunate coincidence that both authors once found themselves listening to Rwenzururu songs, though initially from quite different intellectual interests. One had an interest in Konzo instrumental music, the other in the sources and development of the Rwenzururu movement. Our different perspectives, from musicology and political sociology respectively, soon merged in a common interest in these Rwenzururu songs and motivated us to research the repertory and its performance context, albeit initially still with a different relevance to each of us. Before long, we found we had not only embarked upon a joint effort of data-gathering, but that the exercise was complementary in yet another respect. The varying inter-connections between musical structure and political message which in turn could be traced back to differences of setting, i.e. of traditional beer parties, primary school instruction and Rwenzururu soldiers' marches appeared to be of key importance as a line of analysis. As it happened it was one which we might not have pursued as readily without our respective interests and disciplinary backgrounds.

NOTES

¹ Chief Minister in the Toro government.

² Bukonzo refers to the land the Bakonzo aspired to as their own.

³ Busongora is the plainlands area in southwestern Toro where most Bakonzo live.

⁴ *Isebika* is the Lukonzo nickname for the *Omukama* (king of Toro).

⁵ Those hiding in the mountains.

⁶ The name Mukirania presumably refers to Samwiri Mukirania, who assumed power in the Rwenzururu Kingdom after the death of Isaya Mukirane in 1966; *Baba* is a Swahili word for 'father'; Kitenga a proper name, here connoting 'being powerful'.

⁷ It is interesting to note, though, that colobus monkeys were used as symbols of authority in a much wider area and were, for example part of the ritual regalia of special Bunyoro chiefs (cf. Beattie 1971: 119).

⁸ This refers to the copper, lime and salt produced in the areas that Bakonzo claimed were part of Rwenzururu territory.

⁹ *Bakolikoli* (cowards) refers to the Batoro chiefs who, when replaced by Uganda government agents, were concentrated in Bundibugyo in Bwamba county by the Toro government.

¹⁰ The Administrator refers to the representative of the Uganda government, who after 1963 was charged with full executive powers over the Rwenzori areas when the Toro administration had broken down.

¹¹ 'Syllabic unit' is here used as a synonym for the term 'mora' as used by linguists (e.g. Tucker 1962) and by Cooke (1970).

¹² A *nyamulere* is frequently used in performances of Ekikiibi songs.

¹³ Personal communication 1968.

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Résumé

Les chansons de protestation rwenzururu

Cet article traite d'un recueil de chansons fait au cours de l'année 1966–67 par les Bakonzo qui habitent aux environs des montagnes ruwenzori dans l'ouest de l'Uganda. Les Konzo et leurs voisins, les Ba-amba, se trouvaient depuis le début de la décennie aux prises avec le gouvernement central de l'Uganda et avec celui du royaume toro. Le conflit avait pris naissance dans des protestations qu'avait faites tout d'abord pacifiquement le mouvement rwenzururu, organisation constituée pour exprimer la rancœur ressentie contre le traitement discriminatoire réservé en deçà des frontières politiques de l'administration toro aux minorités ethniques des Konzo et des Ba-amba. Les chansons nous fournissent d'une manière poignante un registre des perceptions diverses et des attitudes variées de différentes sections de la société konzo envers la rébellion et elles nous éclairent sur certaines orientations et certains sentiments politiques.

Pour quiconque voulait bien comprendre les textes une analyse de leur structure musicale et du contexte dans lequel on les chantait se montrait indispensable, et à cet égard ils se divisaient en trois catégories. Un groupe appartenait à un genre de chansons de *nyamulere* (flûte en bambou entaillé) traditionnelles que l'on chantait à des fêtes de bière et à d'autres réunions sociales. De telles chansons exprimaient surtout la tristesse et souvent l'abasourdissement du paysan moyen dont la vie avait été bouleversée par le conflit prolongé et quelquefois sanglant. On avait écrit un second groupe de textes avec un but plus manifestement politique, à savoir celui d'instruire de jeunes Bakonzo (âgés de 8–15 ans) dans l'histoire) et dans les aspirations du mouvement rwenzururu et de les socialiser selon les principes de la vie rwenzururu. Ces chansons avaient été coulées dans un moule européen; divisées en strophes elles avaient invariablement de longs refrains destinés à être chantés par des classes entières dans les écoles inférieures établies dans leurs lieux de refuge montagnards par le 'royaume-gouvernement' rwenzururu. Puisqu'il n'y avait aucun modèle traditionnel konzo de cette sorte de poésie chantée, les compositeurs – souvent professeurs et étudiants – avaient tiré parti des mélodies européennes qu'ils connaissaient, ne faisant attention ni aux rythmes linguistiques traditionnels ni aux relations entre l'accent tonique du langage et les mélodies. Dans des exemples d'un troisième plus petit groupe de chansons chantées par de jeunes tribus guerrières rwenzururu on s'était servi de structures musicales hybrides pour exprimer des idées convenablement militantes.