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Critical Transformations: Rethinking Zambian Development.

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Introduction

The problems of global development continue to mount exponentially. Whether in spite of this, or because of it, development science (except at relatively micro levels) seems unable to advance an intellectual agenda capable of stimulating credible theorisations of our problems; credible in the sense of informing policies and strategies adequate to the enormity of the difficulties we confront. At a time when some degree of consensus would arguably be an important step forward, we experience the opposite. To take the realm of political economy alone, the intellectual spectrum that bears on contemporary problems of global development and its future, ranges from arguments that call merely for better market regulation, to analyses that suggest we may be witnessing the beginning of the end of capitalism (cf. French *et al.* 2010, Streeck 2014). This paper arises from the belief that we need to do better than this.

Grounded in an analysis of the recent development history of Zambia, the paper explores a route out of these scientific dilemmas. It begins by briefly identifying some of the conceptual problems evident in most development discourses; ones that have triggered our search for an alternative way forward. It then sketches an analytic scheme designed to re-configure the study of global development around the concept of ‘transformation’, with a particular focus on the dynamics that form, impact and drive forward periods of ‘critical transformation’ as these arise in particular territorial spaces.¹ The paper then turns to Zambia in order to reinterpret its developmental dynamics and consequences through the lens of ‘transformation analysis’. In conclusion, the paper then summarises the analytic significance of this scheme, both in relation to the Zambian case and more generally, and points towards its methodological implications.

Problems and lacunae in development discourses

While it is unnecessary here to offer a critical interrogation of the main development discourses (see Rist 2008, Nederveen Pieterse 2010 and Payne and Phillips 2010, for in-depth investigations), a brief indication of the problems, to which transformation analysis is a response, is in order. There are three of them that are of relevant for current purposes.

Missing ‘the global’: Though many approaches to development claim a global remit for their analyses, few of them conceptualise and problematise ‘the global’ in its own right; in other words, as a constitutive element in sub-national, national or world-regional processes of development. Arguably only two approaches have systematically done so: world-systems analysis and global production networks (GPN). Subsequent to its origins in the 1970s (eg. Wallerstein 1974), the principal (and related) foci for analyses within the world-systems tradition became the rise and fall of economic and political hegemonies on the one hand and long cycles of capital accumulation on the other (Arrighi 1994, 2007; Chase-Dunn 1998, Babones 2015). While this work has sometimes delivered extraordinary insights into macro level, trans-historical developmental processes, it has only rarely spawned empirically grounded meso and micro level analyses of contemporary development in particular national or sub-national spaces (see Jepson 2015 for a rare example). Analytic work grounded on the concept of the global production network (GPN) and

a related perspective, global value chains (GVC) has arguably done better in the latter sense (eg. Henderson *et al.* 2002, Gereffi *et al.* 2005). Emerging from what was originally a world-systems inspired concept – global commodity chains – GPN/GVC analysis has stimulated a vast body of empirical research on the institutional and social circumstances under which economies and societies at various spatial levels are incorporated into the global dynamics of production and consumption.²

Development as a developing country problem: One of the consequences of failing to conceptualise ‘the global’ as a level of analysis in its own right is that, for most analytic traditions, the economic, political and social changes associated with the notion of ‘development’ – and at least some of the dynamics that drive them – are perceived as being restricted to developing countries (and to less-developed regions in otherwise developed countries). Change-as-development is thus seen largely as an issue for the global South. The global North is assumed to be ‘developed’; the development process there being presumed to have finished. In this way the discourses of development have served to fracture the unity of global change; the reality of the global political economy and its constituent societies as a dialectical whole in constant transformation, is effectively denied. Given this background, notional hierarchies of development have emerged, with the global North at the top and the global South (in varying degrees of human degradation) at the bottom. From there it has been but a short step to the assumption that development is a process of change in which the ‘developed world’ assists the ‘developing world’ to ‘develop’; but crucially, to develop largely in the former’s self-image, and definitely not vice versa.

Euro/American-centrism: The conceptions of development evident in contemporary discourses and policy agendas are imbued with European/American-centric notions of ‘progress’ and ‘modernisation’.³ They emerged from the European Enlightenment of the 18th century and have continued to inform perceptions and thinking through to the present day (Escobar 1995, Wallerstein 2001: Ch. 7, Rist 2008). The utility of much ‘Western’ foreign aid and advice (behind which lie assumptions that its routes to development are universally applicable) is now being questioned by even some of the key actors themselves, including the OECD Development Assistance Committee (Humphrey 2010), while Chang’s (2007) work shows how the conception of ‘development’ reflected in economic theory and notions of ‘good governance’ has often been counterproductive, creating serious problems for the peoples of the global South. Behind these arguments is an implicit recognition that the intellectual and socio-political framing of the entire development project may be inappropriate. The growing impact of China as a development actor compounds this suspicion. On an intellectual plane, how can China – itself a developing country, but with a dramatically different vision of modernity and progress relative to North America or Western Europe (Jacques 2012) – be seen as assisting other parts of the developing world to ‘develop’ if we stick with the categories of traditional development science? Clearly, this becomes a difficult task unless we innovate on the categories we use to think about development and, in the process, open ourselves up to a wider variety of conceptions of possible futures than has been typical through to the present.

Transformation analysis

These problems, evident in most development discourses, suggest that a re-think of the constructs we use to analyse political-economic and social change is long overdue. We need approaches that can grasp the dynamics of change and the actors involved, that are both internal and external to the particular territorial spaces in question. In other words, we need an appreciation of the dialectic between what Castells (2000: Ch 6) calls the 'space of places' (indigenous social, economic, cultural, physical and natural assets) and the 'space of flows' (investment, power, people, information, imagery etc.), as well as the ways in which this dialectic works out under particular historical circumstances.

Drawing on this proposition, a way forward may be to construct a new analytical scheme around the dynamics of 'transformation'. In particular, what may be needed is a re-orientation of research around tendencies towards 'critical transformation' as these emerge at particular moments and at a variety of territorial levels. The following section outlines the conceptual basis of such a scheme: 'transformation analysis' (Henderson and Jepson 2016).⁴

Conceptual issues

For heuristic purposes, transformations can be comprehended as four relatively distinct, but related historical phases.

Evolutionary transformations refer to temporal periods where economic, political and social change is relatively slow and incremental. Much of recorded history until the onset of European colonisation and, subsequently, the emergence of industrial capitalism can probably be classified in this way. While evolutionary transformations (ETs) are less of a feature of most human societies today, due to environmental change and the myriad processes collectively known as 'globalisation', it can be seen as a baseline for other forms of transformation; in other words as periods and in places where the dynamics of change and their consequences are relatively well understood and unlikely to change rapidly.

Critical transformations are, in part, reflections of the inevitability of the unevenness of change in space and time. In particular, they are products of the uneven consequences of the way the dynamics of capital accumulation play out and of the dialectic of places and flows associated with them. They are periods in which 'new' contradictions that might originate in environmental, social or economic disruptions become superimposed on one another and on pre-existing ones such that the velocity of the change process begins to increase. During critical transformations (CTs) the dynamics and consequences of change become more volatile and their implications more difficult to ascertain. The management of economies and societies by governments, firms and other agencies becomes more difficult and less certain. Typically mobilisations in civil society, responding to the social fallout from attempts to manage the multiple contradictions, increase. From this mix, new, or alternative trajectories to the future, articulated by revitalised or new social actors, typically begin to emerge.⁵ The ways forward, however, are often indeterminate during CTs as there tend to be a variety of possible resolutions to the particular problems that CTs generate.

Critical conjunctures (CCs) are periods when the volatility associated with CTs develop further and deepen, rather than being effectively managed or resolved. They tend to be periods when mobilisations by civil society and other actors intensify and they presage a shift in the development trajectory. That shift may be a consequence of the institutionalisation of a trajectory implicit in the earlier CT phase, or one that is new and unexpected. Either way, CCs are periods of intense contestation, and sometimes conflict, around the nature of the development trajectory and its component elements. Which trajectory is ultimately realised is determined by whether it is capable of effectively resolving the compacted tensions and conflicts typically associated with CCs. If there is no such resolution, then CCs tend to transition into periods of crisis.

Crises arise when a society, already embroiled a CC phase, experiences unanticipated contingencies or events which when inserted into the historical mix trigger generalised political-economic collapse. While the periods of intense economic turmoil that engulfed a number of East Asian countries in the late 1990s, for instance, are conventionally regarded as crises, in terms of TA, they should be analysed as CCs. Only in Indonesia, where the Suharto regime was toppled, can notions of crisis be appropriately mobilised (cf. Henderson 1999).

In order to explore the utility of this framework for the analysis of long-term social change, we now present a re-interpretation of recent development in Zambia based on a mobilisation of the categories of transformation analysis. We begin by identifying the key driving forces – or vectors – that have been central to the onset of Zambia's various phases of transformation. We first deal with these vectors in relative abstraction, though briefly highlight their role in shaping transformations, both in interaction with one another and with a variety of other intervening dynamics and contingencies. Subsequently, we locate the vectors and their interactions within the historical contexts through which they have generated largely successive periods of critical transformation. In the conclusion, we summarise the key features of our analysis of Zambian transformation but, additionally, use that analysis to reflect back on some of the methodological issues raised by transformation analysis.

Vectors for critical transformations in Zambia

Since decolonisation in 1964 a fundamental contradiction between two political-economic logics has been the central motor of transformation in Zambia. A governing logic of patrimonialism is the first of these, and has generally dominated. Periodically, however, patrimonialism has been challenged by an insurgent class-based politics centred on organised labour in the Copperbelt but extending to the ethnically Bemba regions of the rural North. These logics have played out against the backdrop of the country's economic fortunes which have depended, in large part, on copper exports. Thus, fluctuations in the global copper market have provided a third major vector helping to drive transformation. Interacting in complex ways with the operation of the first two, copper prices have intermittently acted as an accelerant for conflict between them.

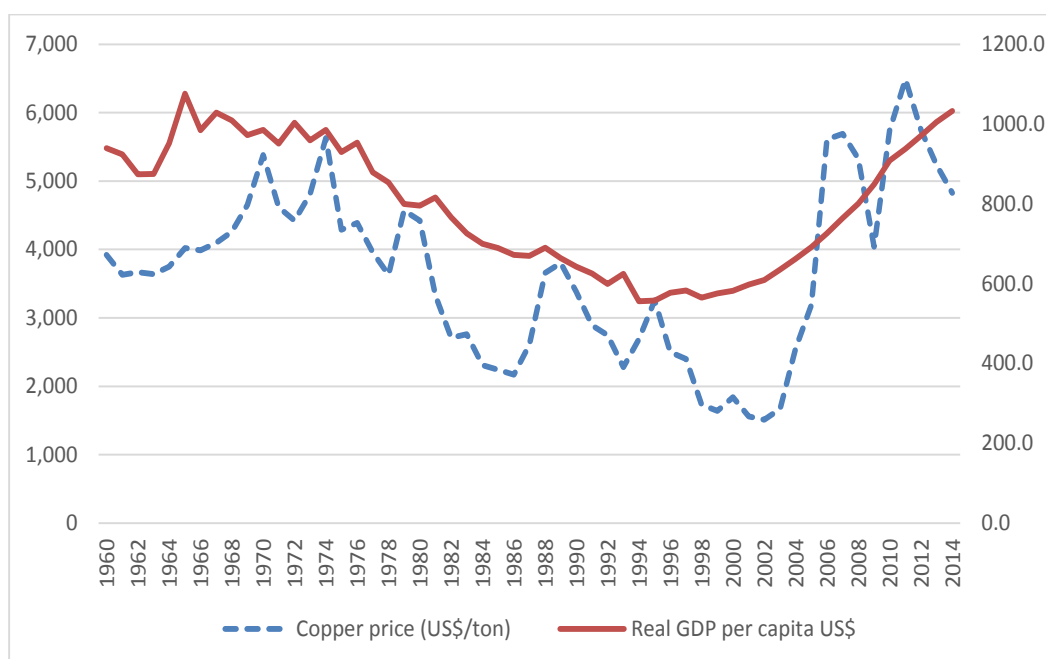
'King' copper

With copper extraction and exports looming large in Zambia's economy, both have

been a central factor in driving Zambia from one transformation phase to another. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, copper accounted for more than half of government revenue and 97 percent of exports. The latter figure remained above 80 percent into the 1980s (Simutanyi 2008), never dipped below 50 percent even at the industry's lowest ebb in the late 1990s and hit 80 percent once more during the recent commodity boom (UNCTAD 2016).

At independence in 1964, Zambia boasted a higher level of per capita income than the likes of Brazil or South Korea and was widely considered as one of Africa's brightest prospects for development (Ferguson 1999: 6). An economy so heavily dependent upon one commodity, however, left the country's fortunes closely tied to those of its principal export. World copper prices began a downward trend from the mid-1970s and this was sustained for two decades, spelling a long concurrent decline for Zambia.

Figure 1: GDP per capita and copper prices 1960-2014



Sources: World Bank World Development Indicators, US Geological Survey

Figure 1 shows that, with temporary fluctuations notwithstanding, long-term trends in copper price movements since that time have been closely matched by falls and rises in Zambian incomes (in terms of GDP per capita). While incomes and copper prices diverged in the mid-1990s, with the former stabilising and the latter continuing to fall until reaching a low point in 2001,⁶ the beginning of the commodity boom in the early 2000s ensured that copper prices and incomes trends again began to mirror one another.

Since the 1980s, the sustained fall and – from the early 2000s – the rise in copper prices have helped ensure growing and subsequently diminishing levels of donor and IFI influence in Zambia. Copper prices have also tended to set the parameters within which each iteration of the populist-patronage contradiction has operated, though without determining its resolution. For instance, in the 1970s, high

copper revenues allowed the government to diffuse a populist threat via the roll out of an extended patronage system. In the 1980s the declining copper revenues meant there were difficulties in maintaining this system and, with the IMF demanding budgetary cut backs, the next populist wave was sparked. In the early 1990s persistently low prices and high levels of indebtedness meant that even a trade union-led government was bound tightly to the IFI agenda of neoliberalisation, leading to an abandonment of its populist base and an embrace of patronage politics. An eventual upswing and then boom in copper markets from 2003 brought new signs of prosperity to the cities which were not shared by the majority of the urban populace, even as the economy began to grow rapidly for the first time in decades. Populist politics was revitalised, and this led – as we argue below – to a new critical transformation phase that Zambia has arguably yet to exit.

Neopatrimonial politics

In common with most of sub-Saharan Africa, the political, economic and social structures produced through the colonial encounter have had profound and lasting legacies. Since independence Zambia has functioned as a prime example of what Cooper has termed the 'gatekeeper state' (Cooper 2002: 5). With export revenues dwarfing any domestic income generation, the central state, as holder of the 'gate' through which such revenues flow, correspondingly dominates in both political and economic spheres. Control of the gate serves as the means of securing the central state's authority, via the distribution of resources – development funds, jobs, import licences, land rights – suffused within vertical networks of patronage and personalism. In Zambia, as in many African states, such networks often operate along ethnic lines, derived from patrimonial systems of governance established by colonial authorities. Nevertheless, after independence Zambia's politics was formally organised around bureaucratic, Westminster-like structures hastily assembled by the departing British. This fusing of a 'modern' legal-rational political system with underlying 'traditional' (though, in fact, colonial) patrimonial forms is often labelled neopatrimonialism (Medard 1982, Bratton and Van de Walle 1997, Pitcher *et al.* 2009; cf. Mkandawire 2015) and is commonly characterised as a kind of African modal pattern (Bratton and Van de Walle 1994), even if its existence is by no means unique to the African continent (Aspinall 2013).⁷

Populist class politics

While neopatrimonial politics has clearly had a major role to play in Zambia's post-independence history, its influence cannot be understood without reference to the linked and equally important dynamic of populist class politics. Unusually among African states, Zambia has long possessed a substantial urban population, centred on the Copperbelt which originally emerged along with the expansion of mining in the 1920s. A complex social structure, spanning rural and urban zones,⁸ gave rise to a post-independence political coalition, comprised of three concentric layers, which has periodically surfaced to challenge the incumbent government.

At the centre of this bloc are the copper mine workers themselves, along with other formal sector workers, who are also often unionised.⁹ The miners, in particular, are well organised and historically have agitated successfully for higher wages and improved conditions (Burawoy 1972), even though their power (and size) waned during the neoliberal period after 1991 (Larmer 2005). The next layer is made up of

the wider urban community: principally dependants and informal sector workers (street vendors, casual labourers, etc.). As Larmer (2005) points out, relatively high wages in mining have often been used to support urban relatives through education or by financing informal ventures. The outer circle consists of the rural Bemba-speakers in Northern and Luapula Provinces (see Figure 2).¹⁰ Though colonial era mass migrations to the Copperbelt drew from several regions, more came from these two Bembaophone areas than elsewhere (Cheesman and Hinfelaar 2010). Ties of kinship, union organisation, cyclical migration and remittances are extensive between the Copperbelt and the two Northern Bembaophone provinces, melding the economic interests of all three and promoting the spread of political ideas to the countryside.

Figure 2: Map of Zambia and its provinces



Source: Goblenz/Wikimedia Commons/CC-BY-2.5

The politics of these three groups, and three provinces, are thus intertwined, evidenced by the fact that these areas have a history of shared voting patterns. Importantly, post-independence changes of the ruling party in Zambia (1991 and 2011) came about through campaigns that were rooted in the structures of organised labour and which expressed the concerns of the urban poor (Larmer and Fraser 2007, Cheesman *et al.* 2014, Resnick 2012) With so many individuals in Northern and Luapula provinces being sometime Copperbelt residents, or else recipients of

remittances from the cities, urban-focused economic appeals tended to reach into the Bembaphone heartlands; an effect not seen to anything like the same extent in other rural provinces, where patronage-based politics continues to dominate. This contrast is usefully illustrated by Negi's (2010, 2011) work on the new mines being opened around Solwezi, the capital of North-Western Province. In contrast to the unionisation and class-consciousness of miners in the Copperbelt, the expansion of mining in North-Western Province has been met with demands for the reservation of jobs exclusively for the predominant Kaonde ethnic group, with labour relations mediated by local chiefs.

On the basis of these descriptions of Zambia's transformation vectors, we now turn to an analysis of how they have articulated in particular historical periods to drive the country into and through its various transformation phases.

Intersecting dynamics and phases of transformation

Since decolonisation Zambia has arguably experienced only three periods of evolutionary transformation, from roughly 1972 to 1983 and from 2001 to 2006, in addition to a brief spell immediately following independence (1964 to 1967). For the rest of its 50 or more years as an independent state, it has lurched from one critical transformation to another, with the intensified contradictions associated with its political-economic and social dynamics having tipped it into a critical conjuncture at the beginning of the 1990s (see Table 1). In every period of critical transformation, any possible resolution has revolved around the need to respond concurrently to the distinct demands and logics of both patronage and class politics, a fundamentally contradictory task. Every time the patronage system has been under strain, prompted in each instance by the economic impacts of copper price trends, political space has been created for the activation of the urban-Bemba coalition. Its mobilisation has driven the emergence of CTs in the late 1960s, the 1980s and the late 2000s. On the latter two occasions, the upswing in populist class politics ousted the incumbent government. The consequence of the 1980s CT was a CC in 1990-1, which ended with a wholesale switch in the development trajectory towards donor-dependent neoliberalisation.

In both instances where the urban-Bemba coalition has managed to oust the sitting government and gone on to form their own (in 1991 and 2011), its original populist agenda has not been implemented in any substantive sense.¹¹ In each case, the incoming government has instead tended to rely on appropriation of existing patrimonial networks – to which state power brings access – in order to consolidate its authority. Additionally, some combination of co-option, repression and marginalisation has been employed to deactivate urban mobilisation. Such outcomes have not been inevitable, and each CT has also contained a possible, unrealised trajectory where urban populism might have provided the defining political logic. Each iteration of populist upswing has occurred at a different stage of the copper price cycle and under novel conditions partly produced by the resolution of the previous CT. As such, the likely alternative trajectory on each occasion has been different. Below we review the main sequences of transformation in terms of their generative dynamics, means of resolution and the possible alternative (but not taken) paths immanent in each period.

Table 1: Zambian phases of transformation since independence

	1964-1968	1968-1972	1972-1982	1982-1990
Type	ET	CT	ET	CT
Patronage system	Attempt to consolidate	Breaking down	Extended but then slowly eroding	Breaking down
Populist coalition	Marginalised	Activated	Marginalised	Activated
Copper price	High	High	Declining	Low
Circumstances	Relative stability following independence in 1964 Attempt to balance regional interests under Kaunda	Urban radical group (base in mining unions) wins all seats on UNIP executive Means factional balance upset – cannot supply patronage to all areas Results annulled – radical group forms UPP opposition	Mix of repression and co-optation of urban population Extension of state role in economy as means of extending patronage Long decline in copper prices from 1975 Budget short fall covered by rising indebtedness	Growing debt crisis from early 1980s Stop start SAP implementation and IMF riots Emerging opposition in trade union-business coalition Inability to satisfy patronage networks – ‘cannibalisation’ of the state
Immanent alternate trajectories	-	Urban-based populist leftism	-	International isolation under repressive and predatory regime
Resolution	-	Declaration of one-party state – turn to <i>dirigiste</i> authoritarianism Banning of UPP and arrest of leadership	-	Brief attempt at economic nationalism (INREP) Followed by capitulation to IMF plan in 1989

Table 1: Continued

	1990-1991	1991-2001	2001-6	2006-
Type	CC	CT	ET	CT
Patronage system	Broken	Breaking down	Maintained	Maintained
Class politics	Activated	Activated	Emerging	Activated
Copper price	Low	High	Increasing	High (-2014)/Declining (2014-)
Circumstances	Triggered by second attempt to removal staples subsidies (1990) Causes widespread rioting, followed by massacre on Copperbelt Multi-party elections called for 1991	Donor-driven neoliberalisation MMD absorption of much of old elite, use of patronage to cement rule – reoriented through private sector rather than state Increasing repression, electoral fraud, corruption Privatisation of copper industry	Stabilisation under Mwanawasa government, partial retreat from repression and corruption Debt relief via HIPC initiative Return to growth with copper boom Recuperation of labour movement and emergence of PF	Copper boom but few benefits reach miners or wider urban population Rise of PF re-ignites populism, wins 2011 election – ambivalent balance between class and patronage-based agendas Death of President Sata – PF neoliberal wing defeats populist faction PF narrowly wins 2015 and 2016 elections, increasing authoritarianism Copper price downturn and economic strife from 2014 - IMF deal now likely
Immanent alternate trajectories	-	Return to authoritarian rule	-	1. Post-neoliberal turn 2. Return to orthodox neoliberalism
Resolution	MMD wins 1991 election Re-orientation towards neo-liberal trajectory Donor supervision and financial support for 'dual transition' agenda	Chilumba failed bid for third presidential term (following business, churches, students and labour campaign) Mwanawasa elected in 2001	-	Defeat of populist wing following death of Sata combined with falling copper revenues and rising budget deficit means return to neoliberalism likely (under IMF supervision) Disputed 2016 election result – resolution unclear at time of writing

Critical transformation 1, 1967-72

In the first years of Zambian independence the salience of neopatrimonial politics was reflected in the efforts made by independence leader and first President, Kenneth Kaunda, to balance the ethnic representation within the cabinet and thus the regional distribution of patronage (Szeftel 1982). After a brief ET phase marked by consolidation of this political settlement, the inherent difficulties of satisfying all factions within a low-income economy quickly produced independent Zambia's first CT phase, manifested in 1967 when elections for the national executive of the ruling United National Independence Party (UNIP) brought a preponderance of ethnic Bemba winners. With party and cabinet posts linked, subsequent Bemba domination of ministerial posts and thus marginalisation of other ethnicities saw a breakaway from UNIP, with senior figures from the Lozi ethnic group forming the United Party and sweeping Western Province during elections in 1968 (Pettman 1974, Szeftel and Baylies 1992, Larmer 2006a).

Kaunda reacted by setting aside the 1967 results in an effort to restore the previous factional balance. In doing so, however, he sparked a CT phase and the first wave of urban-Bemba populism in post-colonial Zambia, a force which would return in the late 1980s and again in the late 2000s. A perception had already been building among the mineworkers that their role in the independence struggle had been insufficiently rewarded, particularly in terms of wages and advancement in the still racially segregated copper mines (Burawoy 1972). After expulsion from the national executive, the Bemba leaders abandoned UNIP altogether and were able to tap into this urban discontent,¹² forming the United Progressive Party (UPP) in 1971 under former vice-president Simon Kapwepwe.

As Larmer (2006) points out, even though the first years of Zambian independence are often seen as a period of relatively successful development, with expanded health, education and infrastructure provision, somewhat modest advances in these areas fell short of post-independence expectations held by those groups which formed the core populist constituency. A more ambitious approach aimed at meeting such demands would, in all likelihood, have necessitated a challenge to the terms of Zambia's insertion into the global economy. Any such attempt, however, would have involved a challenge to external interests upon which the flow of resources through the state – principally copper revenues – depended. Since, in turn, Kaunda's legitimacy rested to a large degree on the control and distribution of these resources via patronage networks, it is unsurprising that UNIP were reluctant to rock the boat in this regard.

Nevertheless, a trajectory whereby the government acted to secure a greater share of copper revenues and utilised these in the service of a more radical developmentalism was clearly one possible outcome from the late 1960s CT. In that period, the urban radicalism of Kapwepwe and the UPP served as the avatars of this alternative, which would return under different guises in subsequent decades. In 1972, however, any such path was closed off by Kaunda's decision to arrest Kapwepwe and the UPP leadership and declare a one-party state. Reforms in 1968 and 1969 had already extended state involvement in the economy, including partial nationalisation of the mines. The subsequent move towards a UNIP-dominated party-state then consolidated a trajectory of a less developmental economic nationalism, principally designed to nurture and solidify the neoneopatrimonial order, with Kaunda at its head.

This first post-colonial CT, which approximately might be dated from 1967 to 1972, can be seen as the first iteration of a recurring contradiction in Zambian politics and provides insight into the otherwise puzzling circumstances of its subsequent reappearance and resolution. While the populist threat was side-lined in the early 1970s, it would return to the fore with the emergence of new CTs in the 1980s and again in the late 2000s, though each time under distinct conditions and exhibiting novel features. Unlike the UPP, populist parties were able to topple the incumbent government in 1991 and in 2011. Nevertheless, on each occasion incoming administrations did relatively little to meet the demands of their political base, instead relying, like UNIP from 1972, upon a reconfiguration of patronage networks as a means of securing their rule. Although the developmental trajectories traced variously under UNIP in the 1970s, the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) in the 1990s and the Patriotic Front (PF) in the 2000s, were all substantially different, they nevertheless reflected, in each case, a dual reliance on internal patronage systems and the external resource flows with which these were maintained.

Critical transformation 2, 1982-1990: towards a critical conjuncture

By 1972, Kaunda had consolidated his grip on power by fusing party, state and patronage system more closely together and extending the reach of all three. Although the arrest of the UPP leadership did not completely quell resistance to UNIP rule (Larmer 2006a), we identify the decade 1972-82 as a phase of evolutionary transformation, where the dynamics of change were relatively contained under the one-party state, even as its foundations almost immediately began slowly to decay.

Crucially, Kaunda's attempt to assert his legitimacy and control in the face of the UPP threat had hinged upon access to sufficient patronage resources for distribution. While in one sense this was an organisational question – with the proliferation of new parastatals offering new opportunities for spoils, for example – at root this expansion of the state depended upon export revenues. While copper prices remained buoyant, as they did in the early 1970s, patronage could be managed in a way which would dampen down most potential threats (Szeftel 1982). When metal prices commenced their long decline in 1975, this marked the introduction of a key transformational dynamic that would eventually play a significant role in the emergence of a new CT phase, beginning in 1982, as the UNIP system was gradually starved of resources for distribution.

Even so, in an era of high global liquidity and with an initial assumption that commodity markets would soon return to more favourable conditions, Zambia was initially able to make up the shortfall in revenues through international loans (Rakner 2003: 56), propping up the UNIP state on an increasingly shaky footing. As with many other states in the global South, levels of indebtedness became increasingly unmanageable as commodity prices failed to rebound, particularly following the Volcker shock and Mexican debt crisis of the early 1980s (Table 2).¹³

Table 2: Zambian debt to GNI ratio (%), 1970-2014

1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2014
47	74	91	226	230	195	169	71	23	29

Source: World Bank World Development Index

As the dynamics of the CT began to bite and their negative consequences deepen, in 1982 the government amalgamated the copper industry under the single banner of Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines (ZCCM). This marked the first instance of significant policy reform instigated at the behest of international creditors (Young 1990, Larmer 2006b). As such, it also signalled the beginning of the second CT phase, characterised by economic decline and a stop-start sequence of IMF-driven neoliberal reforms, the consequences of which would revive the populist coalition of the 1960s and eventually see the emergence of a critical conjuncture in 1990-91.

With the mines continuing to make losses throughout the 1980s, Kaunda's government complied with IFI recommendations and embarked upon successive rounds of wage reductions, lay-offs and the removal of social benefits. For the government, even loss-making mines still supplied the country's main source of foreign exchange and, with cuts falling on workers, a greater proportion of external flows had to be retained to satisfy patronage needs (Szeftel 2000). As the decade wore on a vicious circle developed whereby much of Zambia's economy, led by the copper sector, became increasingly unprofitable and unviable, prompting an increasing reliance on a 'predatory spoils politics' which in turn further undermined parastatals and state finances. By the mid-to-late 1980s businesses were being looted for capital stock and the state routinely covered its shortfalls by printing money.

In this decaying environment and in the absence of opposition parties, the Zambian Trade Unions Congress (ZCTU) became the institution around which anti-UNIP sentiment coalesced. Such opposition encompassed a very similar coalition as that seen in the 1960s, including organised labour, small business and ethnic Bembas from the rural North (Paget 2014, Resnick 2010, Larmer and Fraser 2007). Politicisation of the latter group was enhanced by the thousands of mineworkers and other Copperbelt residents returning to home villages in the wake of urban decline (Ferguson 1999: 11). Although industrial action had been severely repressed under the one-party state, wildcat strikes in the early 1980s showed the potential of the miners and the broader union movement as an oppositional force. Their political campaigning was sparked by donor-sponsored mine reorganisation and from that point it focussed on the government's implementation of structural adjustment policies. From the unions' perspective, the IFIs and the repressive state worked hand in hand to increasingly marginalise and exploit the miners, though the state bore the brunt of the resultant anger.

Kaunda was thus caught in a trap. Maintenance of the patronage system required ever greater levels of economic vandalism and, with copper prices continuing to decline, donor aid and loans were becoming an increasingly important substitute resource. By 1987 debt service payments were equivalent to 95 percent of export earnings and amounted to more than half the national budget (Loxley 1990). Securing the flow of aid and credit was therefore vitally important, but meant acquiescence to IMF demands, which had become gradually more expansive and inflexible since the first stabilisation package in 1973/4 (Sassa and Carlsson 2002: 41). On one level, UNIP and IMF interests dovetailed on measures such as cuts to mining employment and pay. However, continuing attacks on miners brought growing urban discontent, particularly as, with the economy declining, increasing numbers of urban dwellers depended on the wages of miners and other formal sector workers in their extended family. All this made one of the IMF's most prized putative reforms, namely, the removal of food subsidies (which would mainly impact the cities), politically toxic for Kaunda.

In December 1986, bowing to IMF pressure, subsidies on Zambia's staple food, maize meal, were removed, thus doubling prices and marking an acceleration of the burgeoning CT (Simutanyi 1996). After urban riots sparked by the subsidy removal led to 15 deaths at the hands of the security services, Kaunda quickly reinstated the subsidy, though this did little to relieve the building political pressure. Following a wave of strikes demanding wage increases and grumblings of discontent from senior UNIP figures, the IMF adjustment programme was abandoned entirely (Sassa and Carlsson 2002: 42-3). Its replacement, the Interim New Economic Recovery Programme (INERP), revalued the Kwacha, fixed the exchange rate, introduced price controls on a range of goods and limited debt service to 10 percent of revenues (Kayizzi-Mugerwa 1990, Bigsten and Kayizzi-Mugerwa 2000). The plan, with its stress on 'growth from own resources', pointed towards a possible alternative trajectory immanent within the 1980s CT, which would have involved an increasing turn towards economic nationalism and isolation. The economic and political costs of following such a path would have been punitive and likely unsustainable in the long run. It is, however, certainly plausible to posit a counter-factual whereby a small elite around Kaunda might have prolonged UNIP rule for several years via a further hollowing out of the state, combined with a ratcheting up of both predation and repression.

The INERP, in fact, met with some initial success; much of the fiscal strain of debt service was removed and the country registered 6.2 percent GDP growth in 1988. Zambia was swiftly cut off from using IMF resources, however, and the latter's influence persuaded all major donors to similarly abandon the country (Loxley 1990). Struggling under the subsequent loss of foreign exchange and aid, Kaunda was forced to return to negotiations with the Fund. A policy framework paper was duly agreed in September 1989 which among other liberalising measures again stipulated the removal of maize subsidies (Sassa and Carlsson 2002: 43). Having lauded INERP and then subsequently condemned the government's decision to re-engage with the IMF, the ZCTU began to openly call for the establishment of multiparty democracy (Rakner 2003: 62-63). This set the scene for the CC of 1990-1, which would see not only democratisation and a new government, but a wholesale overhaul of Zambia's economic model.

Critical conjuncture, 1990-91: onset of a new development trajectory

The trigger that produced the CC was the implementation of the subsidy removal plan. In June 1990 the government doubled maize prices, prompting widespread rioting on the Copperbelt and in Lusaka, killing 27 people. This time, however, the violence and protest extended beyond food riots to take on an explicitly anti-government tone (Andreassen *et al.* 1992). The CC provided the context for the emergence of a new political alignment. Specifically, the ZCTU and its allies in domestic business, together with intellectuals and some UNIP defectors, organised themselves into the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), headed by trade unionist Fredrick Chiluba. With mounting and growing domestic turmoil associated with the CC, Kaunda eventually announced elections, held in October 1991.

The MMD's electoral victory in 1991 came as little surprise. For the IFIs and donors, Zambia was held up not only as an exemplar of the 'third wave' of democratisation (Huntingdon 1991, Baylies and Szeftel 1992, Ihonvbere 1996), but acquired new significance as the leading African candidate for successful 'dual transition'. A flagship

post-Cold War IFI agenda, most prominently applied in Central and Eastern Europe, 'transition' in this sense meant moving from one-party rule and state socialism to multiparty democracy and free market capitalism. Zambia under Kaunda might have been more state capitalist than socialist, but with a new civil-society-led democratic government ousting a dirigiste one-party state, donors in the early 1990s tended to see Zambia as a kind of African Poland (Graham 1992, Bratton 1992) and quickly offered aid and credit in support of transition.

Critical transformation 3: MMD in power in the 1990s

The political resolution of the CC, which the election symbolised, led not to a relatively stable period of development, but to yet another phase of critical transformation. This time, however, the CT was driven by dynamics associated with 'tool box' neoliberalism: the 'one size fits all' approach to development policy typical of such an agenda. Even though it was clear by the early 1990s that this policy agenda was doing more harm than good in Central-Eastern Europe (Amsden *et al.* 1994, Kolodko and Nuti 1997), the obvious structural, historical and cultural differences between Poland, Hungary etc and Zambia, rendered the application of the same policy tools even more problematic. The transition paradigm, whether applied in Central-Eastern Europe or in Zambia, tended to begin from the assumption that similar reform programmes would all lead to the same pre-determined end point: that is, a politically and economically liberal democracy (see, for example, Henderson 1998, Ch. 1; Erdman and Simutanyi 2003). A failure to successfully advance in this direction would then be ascribed to faulty implementation of the IFIs favoured policies, rather than questioning the policies themselves or exploring how their introduction was inevitably shaped by the specificities of each country case: in Castells' terms, by the particular 'space of places' (Rakner 2003: 11; cf. Castells 2000).

Furthermore, the linear nature of the transition agenda meant that cases like Zambia were often understood in terms of how far they had advanced along an imagined single path, from one-party state to free market democracy. As the economy failed to recover and the MMD government headed towards authoritarianism over the 1990s, Zambia was diagnosed as having faltered along the path: 'stuck in transition' (Rakner and Svasand 2005) or existing in a 'grey zone' (Carothers 2002) between its pre-determined start and end points.

More specifically, the MMD effectively resolved the 1990-1 CC by a consolidation of power grounded on the co-option and redeployment of patronage networks inherited from the UNIP era (Szeftel 2000, Handley 2008: 237-238). In the early 1970s, high copper prices had allowed Kaunda to face down the populist challenge via a combination of repression and incorporation, most notably in a major extension of patronage. The chronic long-term decline in the copper industry meant that these options were not available to the state in the 1980s when the populist challenge rose again and could not be contained. The new MMD government similarly could not rely on export earnings to assuage urban demands. They did, however, possess two major advantages, which arguably prevented the emergence of another CC. First, the much increased donor aid compensated for the revenue shortfalls left by the decline of copper¹⁴ and provided sufficient resources for patronage distribution. This effectively bought the new government a 'honeymoon' (Rakner 2003 Ch. 6) within which MMD neopatrimonial rule was established (Bartlett 2000). Second, as the MMD itself had emerged from the anti-UNIP populism of the 1980s, it

did not immediately face a political threat from the cities, despite committing to the IFI- and donor-led agenda of neoliberalisation. This was somewhat ironic as trade union mobilisation against UNIP had centred on resisting Kaunda's efforts to implement IMF demands. Now the leading figures from that movement headed a government which had agreed to deliver a far broader liberalisation programme than Kaunda had been willing to countenance.

The embrace of the neoliberal agenda partly reflected a recognition on the part of the MMD of Zambia's grave need for the concessional financing that came with the structural adjustment programmes. Neoliberalism also promised a radical scaling back of the overbearing UNIP state, a goal which appealed to the MMD's populist base. In addition, the Mineworker's Union of Zambia (MUZ) – which had provided the organisational backbone of opposition to UNIP – found its numbers and influence dropping as the MMD pushed retrenchment and casualisation in the mines (Fraser 2010). Those unionists that remained were increasingly divided on the question of whether to maintain support for 'their' government despite neoliberalisation and a failure to fix the economy, as GDP per capita fell and then stagnated and while social development continued to slide, with Zambia's Human Development Index (HDI) figure falling from 0.477 in 1990 to 0.42 by 2000 (UNDP 2010).

Despite MMD dependence on donor support, the ailing copper industry continued to be a convenient resource for 'spoils politics' and thus President Chiluba and his government stalled on privatisation for as long as possible. It was only when the IFIs were able to offer sufficient recompense, in the shape of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) debt relief initiative, that the government was willing to commit to privatisation.¹⁵ ZCCM was sold-off in a number of packages between 1997 and 2000 via an opaque process which almost certainly involved corruption (Szeftel 2000, Larmer 2005, Lungu and Fraser 2007). It was subsequently discovered that these deals had often involved hidden clauses which left some overseas investors paying an effective tax rate of zero percent (Lungu 2008). Coupled with the widespread use of accounting techniques to under-report profits, from 2000 the Zambian treasury saw little income from a copper industry which, even at its lowest ebb, still accounted for well over 50 percent of total exports (Adam and Simpasa 2010).

Evolutionary transformation, 2001-06

By 2001, and for the first time since independence, Zambia had arguably entered a new ET phase. The 1990s had seen increasing predation and authoritarianism on the part of the MMD, culminating in Chiluba's bid to stand for a third term in the 2001 election, which might have potentially presaged a decisive shift away from multiparty democracy. These efforts proved unsuccessful, following a campaign led by churches, business and students and embraced by the broader urban population (Rakner and Svendsen 2005). Chiluba's favoured successor, Levy Mwanawasa, did subsequently win a (possibly fraudulent) election in the absence of an opposition party able to connect with the cities (Larmer and Fraser 2007), though the anti-third term campaign had demonstrated the urban areas' enduring potential for oppositional political mobilisation. Mwanawasa entered office with a hollowed out economy having stabilised and with much of the main work of neoliberalisation already accomplished. This allowed for a period of relative overall stability briefly to take hold.

For the miners, however, privatisation ended most of the residual schemes providing medical care, housing and other social services which had endured for decades. The new owners of the mines also extended the casualisation of workers' contracts.¹⁶ In the early 2000s, however, the diminished union movement, though previously divided over support for 'their' MMD government, had begun to recover some unity and purpose, coming together to oppose privatisation of Zambia Commercial National Bank in 2002, for example (Larmer 2005a). These initial seeds of a re-invigorated unionism were a crucial ingredient in the CT phase that emerged from the mid-2000s and brought electoral defeat for the MMD in 2011. Acceleration towards the country's fourth period of critical transformation, however, came with the superimposition of two additional dynamics, one externally induced and the other a result of partly contingent domestic politics.

Critical transformation 4, 2006-P: copper boom and the rise of the Patriotic Front

From 2003 the copper price began what became a decade-long boom, unprecedented in Zambia's post-independence history (see Figure 1). With doubly unfortunate timing, Zambia had nationalised its mines in 1969, a few years prior to the start of a thirty-year price trough and had re-privatised by 2000, three years before the value of its mining assets and exports began to take off (Fraser 2010). Largely driven by demand from a rapidly expanding Chinese economy (Jepson 2015, Ch. 1), the reversal of copper prices seen in the 2000s reignited the economy as a whole, with GDP growth averaging 7.7 percent in the decade from 2003 (World Bank 2016). New hotels and shopping centres began to appear in Lusaka and some Copperbelt cities, along with the entry of South African retail and fast food chains (Interview 7).¹⁷ Although such signs of prosperity were becoming apparent, the gains tended to accrue to a small and well-connected business elite rather than to the working classes and the large informal sector (Fraser and Lungu 2007). Income inequality spiralled alarmingly, with the Gini coefficient rising from an already very high 0.57 in 2003 to a staggering 0.65 by 2010, making the country one of the three or four most unequal in the world (Central Statistical Office 2004, 2012).

The boom thus catalysed feelings of marginalisation in the Copperbelt where foreign investors and the corrupted elites were perceived to be profiting at the expense of the wider population; sentiments which echoed those seen during the final years of UNIP government (Larmer and Fraser 2007, Cheesman and Hinfelaar 2010). In the early 2000s, the charismatic political figure of Michael Sata was ideally placed to fan these flames. Sata had first come to national attention as UNIP governor of Lusaka in the mid-1980s, when, after the 1986 break with the IMF, he led marches denouncing the Fund as an instrument of neo-colonialism (Larmer and Fraser 2007). Exemplifying the recurring circulation of Zambian elites between old and new ruling parties, he then became a key MMD figure, serving as Minister without Portfolio and the party's National Secretary under Chiluba. Sata, however, eventually broke with the MMD after being passed over by Chiluba in favour of Mwanawasa as his successor as President.

Sata subsequently formed the Patriotic Front (PF) in 2001, which began largely as an ethnic Bemba party but gained in popularity through tapping into the growing mood of urban discontent. Sata's rise to prominence hinged partly on his national-

ist rhetoric, which targeted foreign investors ('infestors') – particularly the Chinese¹⁸ – and growing competition for Zambians from Chinese migrants in the local retail (markets) and informal sectors (Hess and Aidoo 2014).¹⁹ Beyond this novel element, however, his platform essentially presented a reprisal of the ZCTU/MMD stance of the 1980s, alleging a collusion between corrupt politicians and external interests at the expense of ordinary Zambians.

Although the newly formed PF had little impact in the 2001 election, it finished second in the 2006 vote. This arguably marked the full flowering of a new CT phase. The PF made significant inroads by utilising both the mineworkers' organisational networks – including taking over former MMD branch organisations – and a populist discourse attuned to the urban poor in the context of the rising copper prices (Cheesman and Larmer 2015). As the MMD's ability to command support in former urban and Bemba strongholds eroded with the rise of the PF, the government began to focus on strengthening an alternative rural political base, grounded on traditional forms of patrimonialism. Following the MMD's narrow victory in the 2008 presidential by-election (prompted by the death of incumbent Levy Mwanawasa), greater PF efforts to mobilise their base for the 2011 campaign resulted in the first change of government in the post-1991 era.

In the election campaign, as well as anti-elite and nationalist populism, the PF targeted issues of importance to workers and the informal sector, such as dire inter conditions and their public health consequences (Resnick 2010). Reflecting the re-emergence of the populist fault line in Zambian politics, the PF's proposals echoed earlier demands from the previous bearers of this dynamic: the UPP and the ZCTU.

Zambia's large urban population had always meant that class politics had a relatively higher salience than in many other African states (Burawoy 1972, Larmer 2005a), even if patrimonialism held sway in most of the countryside (von Soest 2007, Negi 2010). With the class-based demands of the urban-Bemba coalition largely placed out of bounds by donor policy conditionality in the 1990s and 2000s, Zambian politics increasingly revolved around the distribution of patronage resources under the MMD. The PF's performance in 2006 was therefore both unexpected and highly significant. Not only did the PF represent a resurgence of Zambia's populist tradition and the re-entry of substantive issues of economic policy to the electoral terrain, but this was perhaps the first reappearance of class-based politics in an African election campaign during the neoliberal era.

An unresolved critical transformation: the Patriotic Front in power

The 2011 election marked the first defeat for the ruling MMD since democratisation in 1991 and the second time in Zambian post-colonial history that a populist coalition had ousted the incumbent government. In the 1970s, a combination of high copper prices and the repressive apparatus of the one party state had allowed UNIP to stave off the UPP's challenge and thus avert the possibility of developmental transformation managed by populist forces. In 1991 the MMD was successful in removing UNIP from power, but with copper prices low and almost complete economic dependence on donors, class-based political demands could not be met or even fully articulated. Duly constrained, Zambian politics drifted back towards a logic of patronage. In 2011, however, the PF government was elected at a time of still booming copper prices and a concurrent decline in aid dependence. The PF victory

thus represented the first time that the populist coalition had attained control of the state while seemingly possessing the resources and policy independence to implement its agenda.

In the event, Sata's three years in office did not signal a radical break with the past. However, several of the changes that did occur demonstrated that acting against the wishes of donors was again possible (for the first time since the 1980s). Almost all the donor representatives interviewed in late 2013, two years into Sata's administration, complained that the PF government paid them little attention and expressed nostalgia for the days of the MMD (Interviews 6, 2, 3). As one interviewee acknowledged, this is significant, given the widespread complaints over corruption during the final years of MMD government which led to donors such as Canada and the Netherlands pulling out of Zambia completely. With aid accounting for 5 percent of the budget in 2013 and 6 percent in 2014, down from 53 percent in 2001 (Kragelund 2014), it is not surprising that the government began to exercise more independence in setting policy priorities.

One important example is found in the reversal of several MMD privatisations. Though sales occurred in the 1990s, further state divestment continued to be part of the donor agenda, resulting in the sale of national telecommunications company, Zamtel – to a Libyan consortium – as late as 2010 (Kragelund 2014). Alleging corruption, the new PF government unilaterally repudiated this deal and discussed the possibility of similar moves where there were widespread concerns over the circumstances of the original sale. The privatisation of Zambia Railways (principally a freight railway used for the export of copper) was also cancelled (Carmody and Kragelund 2016).

Under the PF, the government's relationship with the mining industry became a highly contentious issue and a major cause of subsequent splits in the party. The first policy change had occurred under the MMD, reacting to the surprise showing of the PF in the 2006 election. In commodity boom conditions, a windfall tax on copper mining firms was to be applied at a rate of between 25 and 75 percent of revenues, but only when the global price of copper hit certain price thresholds (Lungu 2008). Once again, though, as with both the initial nationalisation and subsequent privatisation of the mining industry, the timing of change on the Copperbelt was unfortunate. From a Zambian perspective, the 2008 global financial crisis was an unexpected contingency, since the contradictory dynamics from which it resulted bore little relation to the country's own political and economic situation. Nevertheless, the fallout from the crisis prompted a precipitous (if temporary) fall in the copper price. Several investors suspended production or pulled out of the mining sector²⁰ and the government, perhaps scarred by an earlier generation's experience – where a dip that was assumed to be temporary became a twenty-five year slump – backed off.

After China's domestic stimulus package in 2009, copper prices rebounded and, though royalty payments were increased from 0.6 to 3 and then 6 percent, it seemed as though an opportunity for more comprehensive reform been missed. Calls for a new windfall tax were dismissed by Finance Minister Chikwanda, seen by many on the party's left as being too close to the mining companies (*Africa Confidential* 2013, 2014) and it is possible that corruption was involved (US Embassy Lusaka 2008).²¹

With China's increased demand for copper, the higher prices, increasing production and higher taxes that resulted, contributed to Zambia's budgetary independence (Jepson 2015, Ch. 8), though this did not allow the fiscal space for a Latin American-style redistributive agenda. PF policy nevertheless seemed to follow their 'more jobs, lower taxes and more money in your pocket' slogan. The income tax threshold was increased, to the frustration of donors who had recommended reducing this in order to broaden the tax base (Interview 3). Public sector wages were also substantially hiked, along with minimum rates across the formal sector, though there were problems enforcing this.²²

The government occasionally intervened more forcefully. For instance, in 2013 it withdrew the operating licence of Collum coal mine in Southern Province, citing a poor record on environmental, safety and labour conditions and the non-payment of royalties (Carmody and Kragelund 2016). Formerly Chinese-owned, this mine had become infamous for incidents in 2010 – when Chinese supervisors shot protesting miners – and in 2012, when a manager was killed and another injured during a protest (*New Yorker* 2013, *Lusaka Times* 2015). Also in 2013, the Indian-based company, Vedanta Resources, announced plans to mechanise its Konkola Copper Mines (KCM), involving the dismissal of 1500 workers. This met with a furious reaction from the government which threatened to suspend Vedanta's operating licence and cancelled the CEO's work permit (Reuters 2013).

Even though elements of a populist agenda were implemented, once in power, the PF quickly absorbed and began to operate the central levers of patronage. As with the defection of senior UNIP figures to the MMD in 1991, many MMD MPs crossed the floor to join the PF following the 2011 election. In discussing the earlier movement, Szeftel (2000) recalls Upton Sinclair's likening of Californian oil politics to the shuffling of a deck of cards while the game remains the same.²³ In Zambia the circulation of the political elite has taken place around a central nexus of patronage residing in the executive. In the case of the PF, absorption of many MMD personnel significantly diluted the Party's overall desire to respond to its core urban-Bemba support. The extension of patronage politics was by no means hidden; in various by-elections Sata more or less explicitly offered a choice to voters: impoverishment with the opposition or access to development funds if they were to install a government candidate.²⁴

After Sata: onward to critical transformation 5?

To some degree, the ambivalent political and economic agenda seen under Sata can be explained by internal PF splits, accentuated by the party's incorporation of former outsiders. The PF essentially divided into a group known as 'the cartel' (including Vice President Guy Scott) which advocated a leftist agenda, and a less ideologically-motivated 'Bemba faction' headed by Finance Minister Chikwanda (*Africa Confidential* 2015b). Clashes between the two wings intensified with Sata's death in October 2014 and an ensuing succession struggle. Following constitutional procedure, a Presidential 'bi-election' would be held within ninety days, with the winner then serving out the remainder of Sata's term. This meant that Zambia now faced two presidential elections in two years, preceded by a scramble to nominate the PF's candidate.

Though Scott was temporarily elevated to the Presidency, he was constitutionally ineligible to stand in the subsequent elections, leaving Miles Sampa (Sata's nephew) as the cartel's favoured candidate.²⁵ The subsequent PF national convention to elect a presidential nominee degenerated into chaos when thousands of unemployed youths – apparently paid by supporters of Edgar Lungu, the rival candidate and Defence Minister – presented themselves as delegates (*Africa Confidential* 2014b). The disputed nomination process, which brought rising tensions and could have triggered a critical conjuncture, was contained when the Supreme Court declared in favour of Lungu.

These struggles seem to have caused serious damage to the party's popularity, adding to economic woes caused by a new downward turn in copper prices from 2013.²⁶ Meanwhile, the PF has become increasingly concerned by the growing nationwide appeal of the United Party for National Development (UPND), previously a mainly regional party confined to Southern province. Under these circumstances, Lungu struck a deal with former MMD President Rupiah Banda who himself had just been rejected as that party's candidate, but still commanded the loyalty of one of its factions. In support of Lungu's campaign, Banda enlisted the financial backing of the South African Oppenheimer-controlled Brentnust Foundation (*Africa Confidential* 2015a).²⁷ With its help, the PF retained power in 2015, winning the presidency by a margin of just 1.6 percent (*Washington Post* 2015).

In the event, the PF was again able to hold off the UPND challenge in 2016 (BBC 2016). Whatever the outcome had been, however, it seems likely that the election would presage a recommitment to the neoliberal path which had looked in some doubt under Sata. UPND candidate Hakainde Hichilema (an accountant who had a hand in mine privatisations) set out a platform of returning to 'policy predictability' and encouraging foreign investment (Bloomberg 2016a), while the PF was reported to have agreed to new IMF supervision in exchange for loans (*The Post* 2016a, Bloomberg 2016b). In the run-up to the election, economic strains and the PF's internal split provided an impetus for a broader political realignment. Members of the PF 'cartel' faction switched support to Hichilema, while the appointment of Geoffrey Bwalya Mwamba – a Bemba former defence minister under Sata – as the UPND's Vice Presidential candidate helped to convince other prominent Bemba figures to join the party (*Africa Confidential* 2016a). That Mwamba's campaigning has seemingly focused around ethnic appeals in the rural Bembaphone provinces, rather than populist messaging in PF urban strongholds, is perhaps reflective of the dire economic situation. With the prospect of IMF conditionality again looming, the return of ideological differences to Zambian elections from 2006 appeared to be once again receding to reflect the contraction of fiscal space created by the vicissitudes of copper prices. Though such trends may change, the current emerging trajectory suggests a re-assertion of patronage-based over class-based logics in Zambian politics.²⁸

Recent events in Zambia seem in some senses to be throwbacks to the 1970s and 1990s, and these previous iterations may provide clues as to the road ahead. Importantly, even as the strength of the urban-Bemba coalition appears to be again waning, previous cycles suggest that its latent potential for politicisation and mobilisation will not be permanently extinguished. In many ways, the PF's shifts since the death of Sata resemble those of the MMD move from a populist to a patrimonial

base seen in the 1990s. This may eventually open the door for another party to gain momentum by occupying the vacated urban-populist space, just as Sata did with the PF in mid-2000s.

As has been seen in each iteration of the populist-patrimonial contradiction, however, any new instance of this recurring fault line will occur under novel conditions and thus manifest itself in distinct forms. Of particular importance in this regard currently is the fallout from the August 2016 presidential election. Though the election was declared generally free and fair by international observers,²⁹ the UPND has made accusations of fraud and anti-PF protesters were arrested in the aftermath (Al Jazeera 2016). The past five years of PF government have failed to resolve the fundamental schism between patronage and populism in the Zambian political economy, making it highly likely that it will emerge again as the central conflict. If it does, Zambia is likely to transition to yet another phase of critical transformation.

Conclusion

Zambia has spent most of its post-independence history lurching from one CT phase to another, with only two limited periods of less turbulent evolutionary transformation in between (see Table 1). This is probably a common predicament among states in the global South, with their developmental trajectories always vulnerable to global economic and geo-political shifts over which they exercise little influence. This has been particularly apparent in the case of Zambia where the country's economic fortunes are tied so closely to the world market demand – and thus the price – of a single commodity. Under these circumstances, establishing any stable path of developmental transformation has always presented an enormous challenge.

Each period of critical transformation in Zambia has revolved around attempts to resolve the contradiction between class-based and neopatrimonial political logics in the context of an economy impacted by the demands of copper importers (most recently, particularly China), on the one hand, and the international financial institutions and aid donor countries, on the other. As with most African states, the predominant mode of governance since independence has been rooted in vertical structures of patronage distribution. In Zambia, though, this situation has been complicated by the unusual presence of an urban working class with sufficient organisational capacity to gather a larger coalition and periodically threaten neopatrimonial rule. Although every one of these challenges – which propelled the CTs of 1967-72, 1982-90 and 2006-14 – have ended differently, the resolution to each has never been successful in reconciling the underlying class-patronage disjuncture, leaving the question pushed to one side, but persisting so as to re-emerge at a later date.

Kaunda's attempted solution during the first CT was perhaps the most successful of such efforts, at least on its own terms. Simultaneous efforts were made to meet urban demands – via the provision of new benefits to miners and their extended families – while also outlawing political opposition and declaring a one-party state in 1972. An ET phase of relative stability, lasting around a decade, was the result. Containment of this sort, though, depended upon the swelling of state coffers in order to meet extended distributional demands, just as the long decline in the copper market began and went on to gradually undermine the state's revenue base. In the medium term the shortfall was covered through external credit. Rising debt

brought greater IFI influence, however, and a second CT emerged in 1982, at the point where Kaunda was forced by the IMF to break the post-1972 settlement and begin cutting miners' social benefits. The UNIP government then spent the rest of the decade attempting to square the impossible circle of meeting opposing demands from the IFIs and the ZCTU. A second attempt to remove food subsidies in 1990 proved the trigger for Zambia's first CC, which would end with MMD victory in multiparty elections a year later, bringing a realignment of Zambia's trajectory along the lines laid out by the IFIs.

The roll out of neoliberalism across the next decade did little to satisfy populist demands. Instead, a new CT phase saw the MMD shift away from its urban-Bemba base by absorbing much of the old UNIP elite and appropriating its old patronage networks as an alternative base of legitimacy and authority. Meanwhile, donors betting on a successful dual transition in Zambia kept the MMD government propped up with aid and credit, filling the fiscal hole which remained in place as the copper sector failed to revive. Arguably, this third CT ended with Chiluba's unsuccessful bid to run for a third presidential term in 2001 and the election of his successor, Levy Mwanawasa. At this point, following the privatisation of the mines, diminution of union strength and large-scale urban-rural migration, populist forces were in no shape to provide any challenge to the MMD government, allowing for a brief ET phase under Mwanawasa. The seeds of what became a fourth CT were planted in this era. With the founding and growth of the PF, as the commodity boom kicked in, the direction of migration began to reverse back to the cities and union membership recovered.

Strong PF showings in the 2006 and 2008 elections heralded the re-emergence of the populist coalition. Importantly, and unlike the MMD in 1991, the PF victory in 2011 came at a time of still rising copper prices and a consequent reduction in donor dependency. Sata's government clearly had the opportunity to move away from neoliberalism at this point in search of a new resolution to the populist-patrimonial fault line, though his tenure proved ambivalent on this score. Sata's death in 2014 might have proved a trigger for a new critical conjuncture had the populist faction of his party proved successful in the ensuing power struggle. Instead, his successor Edgar Lungu, like Chiluba before him, opted to rely upon vertical patronage structures to buttress his rule. This left the urban-Bemba coalition once again marginalised. In the absence of any resolution to the underlying contradictions, it seems very likely that these will once again surface at some point in the near future.

An advantage of re-thinking Zambian history through the conceptual lenses of transformation analysis is that it allows for consideration of possible development paths not taken at crucial junctures. Changes in Zambia's political-economic trajectory were neither a mechanical consequence of global trends, nor the teleological outcome of progress towards a pre-defined goal. Nevertheless, each CT phase and the manner of its resolution emerged via a complex interaction of both global and local sources of transformation, superimposed upon pre-existing vectors and subject to the entry of unpredicted contingencies. This means that a limited number of possible future paths were immanent in the CT phase at any given time. The potential for trajectory change became more likely as contradictions grew and accelerated to produce greater levels of social and political turbulence.

We have highlighted several instances where alternative routes appear to have been immanent within the dynamics of the historical period. An abortive turn towards economic nationalism in the late 1980s, for example, might well have developed into a kind of authoritarian autarky rather than the climb down and re-engagement with the IMF, which is what occurred. More recently, Sata could have chosen to leverage high copper prices towards a more ambitious redistributive agenda after 2011. Had the populist faction succeeded in choosing Miles Sampa as PF presidential candidate following Sata's death in 2014, we would likely have seen an attempt to deliver such an agenda, even though the task would have been complicated by falling copper revenues. By understanding the major historical sources of transformation in Zambia and how these have tended to recur and combine to produce both change and stagnation across the past five decades, it should be possible to anticipate the possibilities contained within the current historical period and consider how best to navigate within them. For now, a return to some form of neoliberalisation seems probable, as space for alternative paths closes while the economic situation worsens and an IMF deal becomes ever more likely. Nevertheless, by examining the present period of critical transformation armed with knowledge of past transformations, we might also be able to anticipate significant dangers – in the nascent turn to authoritarian patrimonialism with which the PF now echoes its MMD predecessor – and the seeds of an as yet unborn re-emergence of class politics in new parties that may seek to reprise the populist strategies of the early PF.

Implicit in our application of transformation analysis to Zambian development history is a methodological project: a belief that this approach might carry with it the promise of helping to re-fashion the future, before the fact as it were, rather than being a bystander only able to respond once the future has been actualised and become the present. If we accept Boaventura de Sousa Santos' dictum that there is no better way of knowing the world and acting on it than anticipating the future (cf. Santos 2014: viii), then what is required is an anticipatory social science capable of identifying transformational trajectories inherent in the present and constituted, in part, from the past. Once these have been grasped – and we consider transformation analysis capable of taking us some way towards that goal – we should have the basis on which to ground a sense of what the future might hold, and be in a position to imagine what might be the most effective ways of enhancing its opportunities while circumventing its dangers.

Notes

1. In so doing, it builds on arguments briefly outlined in Henderson *et al.* (2013: 1235-1239) and elaborated at length in Henderson and Jepson (2016).
2. See, for example, Phillips and Henderson (2009) on Malaysia, Wilson (2013) on Australia, Azmeh and Nadvi (2013) on Jordan, and Phillips *et al.* (2014) on child labour. For an overview of the broad range of scholarship in the GPN tradition, see Coe and Yeung (2015).
3. The works by Frank (1998), Bayly (2004) and Arrighi (2007) are important exceptions.
4. The notion of transformation does not assume an end point to change processes. Consequently, it encourages a conception of history where the dynamics of change are recognised to be able to deliver a wide (though not unlimited) range of possible outcomes. It thus has the potential to deliver a number of other intellectual advantages such as the avoidance of *a priori* reasoning and premature movement towards theoretical closure (two of the bugbears of much social science). For an elaboration, see Henderson and Jepson (2016).
5. The notion of 'development trajectory' used here relates to 'pathways' to the future (economic, political, social, cultural) and thus to the possibility of different collective futures being imbricated in the same starting point. As such, it is a structural idea. Consequently, recessions or booms, for instance, do not necessarily imply changes in trajectory.
6. The end of the downward trend in GDP per capita at this point is likely explained by the negotiation of access to concessional IMF financing in 1995 and the beginning of a series of debt relief deals in the second half of the decade as part of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative (Sassa and Carlsson 2002: 41). As is detailed in the following sections, donor and IFI support acted as a substitute for falling copper revenue in the 1990s, making it no surprise that these years are the only period where GDP does not broadly follow the trend in copper markets.
7. The notion of neopatrimonialism has been subject to increasing scrutiny over the past decade, with several authors complaining that the term has become an expansive, ill-defined concept which is *a priori* asserted as the defining explanatory characteristic of African states, obviating the need for serious analysis of social and political dynamics (see, for example, Erdman and Engel 2007, de Grassi 2008, Pitcher *et al.* 2009, Mkandawire 2015). Much of this critique has come as a reaction to its use in some of the literature as denoting a sort of anti-developmental pathology, synonymous with elite predation. As analyses of states rooted in patronage-systems elsewhere do not point to this conclusion, its use in the African context looks like premature closing down of the theoretical debates (for a review, see Bach 2011). In relation to Zambia we take seriously Medard's (1982) contention that 'for each particular political system we should ask which is the specific patrimonial formula' and build on empirical work that convincingly establishes the saliency of neopatrimonialism as a major – but not sole – driver of Zambian political economy (Szeftel 2000, Szeftel and Baylies 1992, Rakner 2003, Larmer 2005, 2006a, Handley 2008).

8. It is important to emphasise the point that the populist coalition mapped out in the following sections is comprised of twin bases: in the cities and in the Bemba-speaking areas of the countryside. This is significant because it runs contrary to the highly influential thesis of Robert Bates (1981) for whom Zambia served as an exemplar of a rural-urban divide which he argued was a common feature of much of Sub-Saharan Africa. Bates saw post-colonial development as having been held back by policies favouring urban sectors (particularly their elites) at the expense of rural producers. Bates thought it necessary to undermine the state and the elites at its heart in order to unleash market forces and the potential of African agriculture (Arrighi 2002). Such views were influential within the then emerging neoliberal orthodoxy at the World Bank and gave rise to the idea that 'reform coalitions' could be drawn from a mix of technocrats, local business and rural sectors and marshalled against the old elites (Bates and Collier 1995, Biennen and Herbst 1996). That the impetus for Zambian democratisation came instead from trade unionists and the cities (along with business) confounded these expectations (Rakner 2003: 66).
9. This would today include, for instance, workers in the formal retail sector. We do not include public sector workers in this grouping, though their interests may at times be in line with other formal sector workers.
10. We refer to these two provinces throughout the paper since these were the relevant administrative units over the vast majority of the period discussed, though in 2011 four districts from Northern Province and one from Eastern Province were separated off to form the new province of Muchinga (as indicated in Figure 2).
11. National surveys show consistently high levels of support for economic nationalism in Zambia (Cheesman *et al.* 2014: 348).
12. According to Larmer (2006a), this coalition also included rural Bemba veterans of the independence struggle, intellectuals and mid-ranking UNIP cadres in Lusaka, disappointed by the lack of a more ambitious developmentalist agenda, as well as small business owners who had hoped for greater economic advancement. The parallels between such a multi-class populist base and those seen in some Latin American cases are notable here (see, for example, Richardson 2009).
13. Between 1979 and 1981 US Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker raised interest rates to almost 20 percent, sparking a reversal of capital flows from global South to North and precipitating a widespread debt crisis across what was then known as the Third World. Mexico, the first major casualty in 1982, became a test-bed for IMF-supervised structural adjustment which would go on to form the Fund's standard approach to debt crises over the rest of the decade (Harvey 2005: 24; Woods 2006: 89-93).
14. Official Development Assistance (ODA) averaged over 20 percent of Gross National Income (GNI) in the decade following the 1991 election (World Bank 2016).
15. As a result of reaching HIPC completion point in 2005 and then completing the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative in 2007, Zambian government debt fell from \$7.1bn at the end of 2004 to \$600m (Fraser 2007).

16. Between 1997 and 2000, ZCCM was broken up and sold off as a number of smaller units. Buyers included South African owned Anglo-American (the pre-nationalisation owner of part of the industry which had maintained a minority share throughout), as well as Indian, Chinese, Canadian and Swiss multinationals. Anglo-American pulled out within two years, with its large Konkola Copper Mines holding being sold on to the Indian-British firm Vedanta (Fraser and Lungu 2007, Lee 2014).
17. See Appendix for list of interviews.
18. Which gained traction in the wake of the 2005 tragedy where 50 workers were killed in a blast at the BGRIMM explosives factory, part of the Chambishi mines owned by China Nonferrous Metal Mining (CNMM).
19. The number of people operating informally as city centre vendors (selling snacks, mobile phone credit, agricultural produce etc.), especially in Lusaka, had increased with the rise of informality in the 1990s. Under Mwanawasa an effort was made to formalise and upgrade trading areas, adding electrical connections and sanitation, leaving many Zambians unable to afford the higher rents and squeezed out by foreigners (Resnick and Thurlow 2014).
20. Though Luanshya mine was taken over by China Non-Ferrous Metals Africa after its closure by a Swiss-Israeli joint venture.
21. This US Embassy document alleges that the Chinese government had approached the PF in 2006 to offer funding and indeed that Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe had lent Sata money for campaign finances in 2008. Perhaps further illustrating the problem is the fact that, on paper, Zambia's biggest export market is Switzerland, even though little copper or anything else is actually shipped there (*Zambia Daily Mail* 2015, Observatory of Economic Complexity 2016).
22. For instance, in a dispute with the South African retailer Shoprite, workers went on strike in 2013 after claiming they had not been awarded the minimum mandated increment. After the company moved to fire 3000 striking workers the government threatened the removal of the chain's operating licence, resulting in the reinstatement of the workers and the negotiation of pay rises of between 15 and 34 percent (CNBC Africa 2013).
23. In his novel, *Oil!*
24. Such as in the Southern Province tourist hub of Livingstone, previously a UPND heartland (*Times of Zambia* 2013).
25. In his caretaker role Scott became the first African president of European ancestry since the end of apartheid in South Africa, but was barred from standing for the presidency on the basis of having non-Zambian parents.
26. While the economy has continued to grow – albeit at a slowing pace – falling copper prices have prompted several mining companies to mothball or down-size operations, laying off thousands of workers (*Wall Street Journal* 2016). With a shortfall in revenue and after retreating from plans to increase mining royalty rates, the government's budget deficit hit 8.1 percent of GDP in 2015 (CNBC Af-

rica 2016). Meanwhile, in what may be a signal of future climate change impacts, drought has hit hydroelectric power generation, causing widespread power cuts (*New York Times* 2016).

27. The Oppenheimers had owned half of Zambia's mines prior to the 1968 nationalisation.
28. This paper was completed in mid-August 2016, immediately following the announcement of presidential election results.
29. At least in terms of election day itself – observer groups did have a number of concerns about the campaign, not least in terms of PF dominance of the media (EOM 2016, AU 2016, Carter Center 2016).

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Appendix: Interviews

Conducted November-December 2013, Lusaka

Interview number	Organisation	Position
1	Transnational mining firm	manager
2	Norwegian embassy	official
3	British embassy	official
4	IFI	official
5	-	former opposition party politician
6	German Development Agency (GIZ)	official
7	University of Zambia	academic
8	United Party for National Development	politician
9	Patriotic Front	local organiser



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