Local culture and crisis management

The case of the Tura in the Ivory Coast civil war

Before addressing in detail the particular situation of the Tura, I shall offer a brief update on the situation prevailing in the country in general, and in the Western part – which is also the home area of the Tura - in particular. This provides the necessary background against which the Tura case must be interpreted.

The plight in which the Ivorian nation found itself caught on that morning of the 19 Sept. 2002 after the two largest cities in the north had been taken by surprise, while the economic metropolis Abidjan had narrowly escaped the same fate, the subsequent deterioration of the situation in the West, the spill-over of the Liberian civil war with its dehumanizing brutality across the border into vast areas of Western Ivory Coast had led to the area being declared a "no-go" zone for most relief organizations such as the U.N. High Commission for Refugees by the end of the year.

The mere suggestion of anything worthy to be called "development", and a fortiori research on it, would seem to find little motivation in a situation where escape if not from violent death, at least from unconstrained exactions of all kinds by rivalling armed groups, dictated the order of the day of large parts of the population, uprooting of hundreds of thousands and forcing them to flee from their homes and their villages to avoid being caught in the fighting or becoming victims of reprisals at the hand of warring factions or drug-addicted child soldiers, leaving their fields and their normal occupations in order to swell the ranks of the internally displaced masses. When finally the armed conflict subsided with the arrival of the French peace-keeping troops in March-April 2003, the parasitic order of warlord type suzerainty which, unrecognized and largely unnoticed by the international community, depended for its physical and political survival on predation and exploitation of the very same population which it had pretended to liberate, put additional strain on what had remained of already struggling local economies, based to a large extent on the product of coffee and cacao plantations.

Disasters of such magnitude would seem to leave little room for even the most remote planning beyond day-by-day survival. They incarnate the negation of all those values and achievements which are habitually associated with the notion of development, such as education – schools were discontinued to be resumed gradually in the course of the year 2003 in some areas, while in others they have not become functional up to this day -, state-guaranteed security – prisons were emptied of their inmates, police, gendarmerie and other agents of the government had fled, banks and postal services still remain closed in most or all

rebel-held areas -, and, for a long period, unimpeded mobility as a prerequisite to economic growth. Public health services also were discontinued; in a few places international relief organizations such as Médecins Sans Frontières took over part of their functions (as in the city of Man).

Zooming in on the trapezoide delimiting the habitat of the Tura which extends just north of the city of Man (the capital of the Region called the "18 Montagnes"; see Map 1#), one is struck by the fact that, although in mere geographical terms, it is situated in the heart of the zone most intensely affected by the war, it has remained largely unaffected by its most dramatic negative effects on the population. This appears to be true for the whole of the Tura area if contrasted with the way in which the populations of the neighbouring zones to the south and to the east were affected. The extent to which exemption from extreme suffering applied to different parts within the Tura area is, however, subject to significant variation. It is most evident from concordant testimonies from the Nao and Yiligele areas, i.e. from the subregion accessed from the western plateau of Biankouma. Within that area, virtually no fighting and no exactions against the civil population have been reported. This cannot be said of the region of Gbonne (the only sub-prefecture located in the Tura area) on the Southeastern slope of the Tura mountains, which is accessed from the Man-Seguela road. There, the population suffered heavily before the arrival of the French troops. (See DG-203.) The area extending northwards across the Bafing river into the savannah (called Boh), from scanty reports we have, was also more heavily affected. However, in none of the three subregions, the population was forced by the events to permanently abandon their villages and livelihood as has been the case for the adjacent Wobe area. To the contrary, Tura villages (particularly those in the Nao-Yiligele) became the major zone of refuge in the whole of the Western part of Ivory Coast.

The natural explanation, endorsed by some of our informants (D-201), is the physical location of the Tura. The mountains which close its core region off against transiting moves of any kind, establishing it as a natural refuge against demographic pressure and, in times of crisis, as a natural barrier against invasion, had already saved the ancestors of the contemporaneous Tura in precolonial time from being crushed by the assault of the "sofas", the troops of the Almamy Samory who had brought under his control vast parts of what today has become Eastern Guinea, Northern Ivory Coast and Southeastern Mali. He had held in check French colonial troops for more than a decade in the outgoing 19th century, attempting to conquer the smaller animist populations in the border area between the savanna and the forest. The sofas, attacking from the north, had overrun the peripheral Tura-speaking area extending into the

open savanna north of the Bafing river which form a natural border from West to East separating the mountainous core part of the Tura region from its northern savanna extension. In the mid-1970-ies, the remnants of the Tura population residing in the savanna part still remembered the massacres perpetrated by Samory's troups from which they had never demographically recovered. But no less vividly remembered was the demise which the sofas eventually suffered when they ventured into the adjacent Tura mountains. It was not so much fierce resistance by the native Tura warriors than inadaptation to the rugged conditions that led to defeat of the sofas, and, eventually, to the great Samory's capture by a French avant-garde troop commanded by Captain Gouraud at Guéoulé, on Sept. 29, 1898, just a few miles from the Western border of the Tura area. This event marked the final turn in putting down black Africa's resistance against the French conquerors in this part of the continent.

The Tura living on the Western slope, perhaps weary of intra-tribal strife, welcomed the conquerors and took an active part in the subsequent "pacification" of the neighbouring Dan. It was the south-eastern Tura who, again using the physical ruggedness of their territory to their military advantage as they had done one and a half decades earlier in the Samory war, opposed the French. But temporary success against them could not prevent ultimate defeat and eventual colonisation of the Tura die-hards.[1]

Tura oral tradition, particularly in the south-eastern part, presents some evidence of mystification of these earlier experiences of conflict and resistance which has no doubt contributed, besides the unique Boon festival, last held in 1937, to shaping the Turas' sense of distinct identity.

It is too early to say to what extent it was this living memory transmitted from their ancestors, or *ad hoc* diplomacy borne out of the recognition of their own defencelessness against rebel kalachnikows and government helicopters which led Tura village councils to adopt a deliberate neutral stance in the current military conflict, the first of this magnitude since Samory's days.[2] What we know[3] is that the shocking and unexplainable news of former

[1] See Goh Soupou Mardochée; Sidibé Manzan; Gonnin, Gilbert; Bearth Thomas (éds), Wɛɛn-mɛ̀ɛ̀bòà wúnzìzìbò-sɛ̀ikwɛ́ (= Recueil d'histoire Toura), Fasc. 1. Abidjan: Société Internationale de Linguistique. 1999.

[2] Just a few days before the conflict broke out, during an informal inquiry into reading habits in a remote village, I was told that among the post-literacy materials available, the old history texts which reported these wars were holding the place of "bestsellers". Pending further information, this can hardly be constructed as evidence in favor of the role literacy may play as a resource of successful crisis management. Yet, the hypothesis that in compensation of the broken link of oral transmission literacy plays a key role as a "bypass" to the recovery of vital collective memory cannot be easily dismissed. The hypothetical chain from history to development action leads from access to reading, via the rediscovery of lost stories and local histories, to the reconstruction of collective identity and myth, and to the reinstatement to ownership of one's own destiny//over a body of knowledge relating to one's own collective past, and culminates in empowerment as a player in contemporary history, rather than as mere of object and victim of events beyond one's control and influence which had been the

President Guéi's assassination in Abidjan on the very first day of the uprising immediately triggered fear of military invasion, or of raids by an unidentified enemy, and drove Tura villagers into hiding. While General Guéi was Dan, not Tura, his village of origin near Biankouma had many parental ties with close-by Tura villages, and Turas generally identified with him, considering him "their eye" in the high spheres of national government. [Significantly, it had been the great mask of the Tura which had been invoked in a solemn ceremony in order to grant victory to Guéi in his bet to be re-elected in the October 2000 presidential elections which brought President Gbagbo to power.[4]]

Individual war narratives which I was able to record in October 2003 in Abidjan from three independent (male) sources, two of them project members, habitual residents of the city of Man, and the third resident of the village of Kpata in western Tura mountains, corroborate the general conclusion that the Tura core area, while suffering economically from the war, was spared from its most tragic and irreversible consequences. In particular, no casualties are reported from fighting or massacres as was the case in adjacent regions.

All reports we have been able to collect concur in concluding that the Tura population as a whole, although their territory is located in the midst of the rebel-held zone, managed to stay out of the conflict. It seems clear that this remarkable achievement cannot be adequately explained through the mountainous landscape and the bad roads alone, although these factors, usually considered as natural handicaps to development, may have turned, once again, into nature's favor in times of danger from the outside.[5]

After the first panic subsided, people seemed to have returned to their normal occupations at that time of the year: i.e. harvesting the mountain rice which constitutes their staple food, and preparations for the cash crop harvest both of which were exceptionally good in that year 2002. When two months later a new rebel movement – called Movement for Peace and Justice - made its appearance near the Liberian border, proclaiming as its foremost goal to take revenge for Guéi's death – responsibility of which was attributed to government agents –

[3] Much of the following information reflects personal communication by ing. agr. Diomandé Fan who spent the first two months in Man, until his evacuation by the French on November 27, 2002, and during this period had continued to pay regular visits to the villages in the development project area within his sphere of responsibility, and advising them in respect to the situation. It is largely supported by convergent information gathered from three persons (whose names are known to me and whose reports I have recorded on MD during their stay in Abidjan in October 2003): two of them had been staying in Man (except for short periods when the fighting obliged them to flee to relatives in the villages), the third one in Kpata, a head village of the Western Tura area, located 10 km from Biankouma.. For the period following his und his family's evacuation from Man by the French at the end of November 2002, we are restricted to scanty reports from those project members and other acquaintances who lived there through the war and experienced some of its horrors and traumata. These include the three recorded testimonies just mentioned.

[4] The ceremony took place in Gbonne, the chief village of the south-eastern Tura region and an administrative center for the area, on ... (source).

[5] See Alexis.

and rapidly gained de facto control over the whole area including the district of Biankouma which includes the core Tura territory and the sub-prefecture of Gbonné, the Tura kept their distance. From several reports which we have received, it appears that most or all villages followed a directive issued at the beginning of the war to stay neutral, not to take sides in a conflict in which they had nothing to gain, and, most remarkably, to practise traditional hospitality towards all who might request it, whatever their political or ethnic allegiance. At the same time, a number of measures were taken and orders issued whose common objective was to keep low profile in order to avoid behaviour which might provoke suspicion or military intervention by the new masters. Thus a ban was imposed on chanting in the fields as it had usually been practised as a means of mutual encouragement during community work activities, particularly in times of harvest. [6]

These observations, to the extent that they will be corroborated once the dust has settled, bring to the centre of attention a range of questions which may be crucial to the purport of the research to be carried out under the premises of LAGSUS but which so far have been conceived as being peripheral to it, given its main focus on agricultural development. They may, however, turn out to be central even for the purpose of understanding what happens in this latter domain.

Oral reports collected so far from the current period of crisis contain indirect references to a discourse to which authority is attributed without questioning by those who report it, and to which, to judge from known effects, authority is attributed by its primary addressees. This authoritative discourse, in the way it is reported, is anonymous. Its source, if indicated, remains vague, e.g. "they", "the villagers", etc. Moreover, it appears to be a discourse which transcends the usual limits of local management and jurisdiction on the village or clan level; it is supposed to be capable of aligning behind its opinion different communities usually considered to function as autonomous entities, and to cause them to adhere to a commonly agreed policy. Against the background of a society traditionally characterized as "acephalous" in terms of local governance, and at the same time reputed for its gerontocracy[7], this observation raises several questions:

1. Who are the authors of messages claiming authority and general adhesion in times of crisis (and perhaps, apart from situations of crisis, in other matters of trans-community concerns)?

[6] Cf. J. Baya, "Développement en situation de crise". (ms., projet LAGSUS).
[7] Quote Montpellier report on Mont-Sangbé.

2. Who are the recipients of such messages and what conditions them to accept these as authoritative?
3. How and by whom are these messages conveyed to their intended audiences? Are there formal characteristics which are used to earmark them as being authoritative? How were they transmitted during the present crisis? Was the system of the "village crier" (crieur public) used which might predictably carry a considerable high risk in an overall situation calling for low profile? (Unless one wants to consider messages coded in Tura as inherently carrying a low risk of being decyphered by suspicious foreigners.)
4. In the absence of formally recognized structures of consultation and command such as parliament and its executives, what are the mechanisms which lead to the decision to issue such authoritative messages? Are there recognized types of situations in which these mechanisms, which appear to be dormant in "normal" times, are being activated. Who has the authority to issue a call for them to be activated? In the conception and elaboration of such messages, are there formal protocols to be observed?
5. Are these mechanisms invented *ad hoc*, or are they codified procedural local knowledge inherited through ancestral tradition and possibly adapted to contemporaneous challenges?

A valid answer can be given to the last of these questions. The recent history of the Tura micro-commonwealth offers good evidence of successful co-ordination of joint supra-local activity in a variety of situations:

- Holas (1962:163f.) describes in detail the organizational background of the Boon[8] festival which took last place in 1937. Our own more recent interviews with surviving participants and leaders of the Boon festival confirm Holas' observations. The cohesive effect of this remarkable community-wide initiatory event extended from its epicenter, the western chief village of Kpata, to all sub-regions[9] of the Tura mountains and included for instance the region of Gbonne (from which we have little confirmation so far that it responded to the present situation according a common plan of action). For instance, the variety of the Boon secret language which was taught in Kpata as part of

[8] In Tura *bóón* (high-toned). Holas erroneously renders it as *gbon*.

[9] Authors (Bearth 1971; Gonnin 1984; Idiatov 2004b) agree more or less on the following "dialecto-territorial" (to use Idiatov's term) subdivision of the Tura area: Nao (*naÊoÈsÿÉÿÉ*), Liwaa (*lœêwaÉaÊsÿÉÿÉ*), Gaan (*gaÉaÉnsÿÉÿÉ*), Gwao (*gwaÉoÈsÿÉÿÉ*) (of which the administrative center Gbonné is also the head village), Yiriguéré (*yœélœégeÉleÉsÿÉÿÉ*), Gbouata/ Waou (*gbuÉaÉtaÈsÿÉÿÉ/ waÉuÉ(sÿÉÿÉ)*), Waalou-Kouloukoro (*waÉaÉluÉ-kuÈluÈkýÊlý(sÿÉÿÉ)*) and Boo (bõõsñáñá). Gaan is usually today counted as Dan, whereas the Boo inhabit the savanna north of the Bafing river.

the initiatory rites was regarded as normative in the whole Tura area. The festival in general and the initiation in particular were under the control of a hierarchically structured body of people whose functions were recognized beyond the limits of their respective villages.

- When Christianity began to spread in the 1970-ies, they were perceived by traditional leaders as a threat to the masks, which incarnate the local religious order. A plan to contain the expansion of the new faith was proposed and adopted by the majority of villages. Co-optation of the plan of action across villages was obtained through symbolic action: acceptance of a cola nut sent along with the message, and performance of a sacrifice. (I. Bearth 1993:84).
- Another notorious example of trans-communal interaction routines is the fixation of the sequence in which the annual yams festival takes place in the different villages. (Holas 1962:62, 81, 84.)

Extrapolating from these precedents, it may be safely assumed that the management of the current crisis by the Tura was not merely the result of *ad hoc* consensus, nor merely of individual or even local adjustments at the village level but of local experience and knowledge which had been historically tested in a variety of situations that required the force of cohesive resistance or positive action beyond the individual or village level and which had been formally or informally transmitted to the present generation of village decision-makers. The Tura community as a whole (or a large segment of them) responded to the war and, later, to the vacuum left by the demise of government authority and the withdrawal of public service as one of its major consequences, by drawing on these locally available resources for handling emergencies and ensuring collective survival.

From the viewpoint of the general objectives of LAGSUS, this answer to question 5 above in turn triggers a cascade of further questions and hypotheses:

1. Neither the socio-political prerequisites which allow authority above and beyond the village level to be manifested in times of major challenges to the survival of the group, nor the paths through which it is communicated are presently known through detailed empirical observation. However, one may legitimately assume that the interplay between clanic and alliance structures provides a framework of stable and mutually recognized relations and thus a communicative network along which news will unfailingly spread, and which vice-versa, constitutes a virtual forum over which adequate responses to emergent new situations can be negotiated and imposed on the population.

a. Clanic structures (*síyá*) are defined in terms of "totem" (*gban*), a taboo shared by all members of the clan which is usually linked to an ethiological tale of the miraculous deliverance of the mythical ancestor by the animal or plant whose consumption is prohibited by the taboo regulation. Clan membership is inherited through patrilinear links of kinship.

b. Alliance structures[10] are based on marriage, more precisely on the principle of exogamy, i.e. on marriage outside of one's own clan and totemic group. Alliances thus tend to generate a complex set of mutual rights and obligations in addition to structures of accountability based on blood relation and locally defined residence. In our data of village discourses we have recorded instances of litigation involving e.g. disputes over rights of succession in the case of re-marriageable widows (levirate) which indicate to which extent obligations created through alliances and the events on which they are based are stored in the memory of at least the following generation and tend to become shared knowledge among the descendants of those who incurred them, giving rise to subtle and intricate judicial argumentation on the part of those involved in such disputes, or in charge of seeking a settlement to them.[11]

Legitimate extrapolation from these observations leads to conclude that, as suggested earlier (see preceding footnote with quotes from Diomandé Fan's report on May 15, 2001), development communication does not occur by itself. If it can be studied for and by itself, it must be regarded as a sample of the group's general communicative habits and the study must take this sampling factor into account.

2. While the above observations provide a broad framework for relating the specific inquiry into development communication, as it is prominently on the agenda of

[10] Alliances are not limited to clans of the same ethnic group. Interethnic alliances are an important antidote against ethnic division and conflict. This point was forcefully brought home in a paper read at a Colloquium on Mande languages, Oct. 15-17, 2003, by F. Adopo, Dean of the Faculty of Languages, Literatures and Civilisations of the University of Cocody.

[11] The intensity and efficacy of oral transmission of information in the Tura ethnic community was noted by Diomandé Fan in one of his reports during the pilot project phase under the title "La société toura: une entité faite de reseaux de communication". Drawing on concrete examples where he was able to post-monitor the path of diffusion of an item of news, he comes to the conclusion that what he calls "traditional media" in an oral society are "les liens de parenté (famille, mariage des ressortissants de deux villages), les liens d'amitié entre les membres de la société, les rencontres fréquentes pour prendre ensemble une boisson traditionelle, le petit marché du village, les groupe constitués pour éffectuer ensemble les travaux des champs, le chemin du champs que les gens allant dans la même direction font ensemble le matin et le soir, et la source à laquelle les femmes vont chaque matin chercher de l'eau ainsi que le fait qu'elles vont ensemble chercher aussi du bois mort pour le feu." He concludes: "Dans le projet WV il conviendra certainement d'étudier dans les détails, je dirai cliniquement comment ces média travaillent, comment la communication se déroule au niveau de chacun et quelles interactions il ont les uns avec les autres." (Diomandé Fan, rapport du 15 mai 2001.)

LAGSUS, to the overall flow of information and mechanisms of transmission in Tura society, they provide no explanation for the fact that under given circumstances, binding authority is collectively attributed to certain acts of communication but not to others.

Relationships based on alliances are basically relations between equals. They can therefore not be a source of unquestioned authority. A more likely hypothesis is based on seniority. In fact, the Tura were known as a gerontocracy. In a good number of public or semi-public argumentation, we have found, in examining recordings, that age, or age relative to others, may itself be used as an argument, not only in procedural matters but in the content.

There is an undeniable correlation between (relative) age (kpaáanñà) and power which might lead us to consider them as homonyms. This is not sufficient.

Charismatic leadership.

but which so far has only marginally escaped our attention. raise a question which seems to be of crucial interest to our key Communication in the local public space was designed towards containing speculation feeding on objective insecurity and perceived threats, reducing the unknown to familiar categories, thus making the situation manageable. One example of this deliberate policy of communication was the labelling of the "assaillants" (an official designation of the rebel movement which was borrowed from French in the local languages) as "guests", putting them in the same category as those who had sought refuge from them.

The overall picture which emerges supports the assumption that the dramatic changes generated by the war and in particular the loss of administrative control by the government afforded the Tura – particularly those occupying the Western slope of the Tura massive[12] - an opportunity to assert themselves as players in their own right in contemporary history, after having had their role and range of action defined by outside forces for more than a century, first by the colonizers, then, after independence, by the postcolonial government which were considered to be the "whites" of the post-colonial age.[13] Once again, from mere objects of history, they had, by the force of circumstances rather than by their own choice, become its subjects. Moreover, the influx from outside,

[12] We have very few and contradictory information from the Southeastern part of Tura country. The administrative center, Gbonne, seems to have been taken as an operative basis by rebel forces. (P.c. xxxx)- ö. of this part of Tura country has attracted more rebel forces than other areas.

[13] The persisting distance between governing and governees in a typical post-independence African setting becomes linguistically tangible in the persisting use of the term kwí 'European' do designate by it the African is to be seen – as in many other ethnic groups -

apart from imposing a heavy burden on the population resulting in severe foot shortage, also offered new opportunities.

If this view of things is indeed supported by facts, it raises the question of its possible broader implications. [Before attempting a generalization, however, it is essential to get a clearer picture of specific factors which may be brought into play in order to understand the seemingly atypical case of the Tura:]

1. The geographic and historical setting must undoubtedly be seen as an important factor in providing a natural shield against invasion, particularly against fighters grown in flat country.
2. Closely linked to the geographic aloofness of the Tura is the absence of any large-scale immigration, as it occurred – and was encouraged under the former president's rule – in the lowlands. This explains the absence of land disputes between traditional land owners and foreign occupants which turned into violence and were at the roots of devastation and much bloodshed when civil administration broke down among the Wè, who are neighbours of the Tura to the south and southeast. Disputes over land do occur between the Tura themselves but are settled by traditional procedures of jurisdiction. (For an example in the LAGSUS-Tura corpus, see D-321, transcript of recording from Benomba.)

While these external factors are undoubtedly part of the explanation they are by no means sufficient to justify the anticyclic and self-asserting stance taken by Tura communities in response to the dramatic events.

Other factors which may have been decisive are the following:

1. A strong reliance on locally available resources. This may sound at first like a truism but taking language use as a case in point, it becomes clear that it is not. The rule of endocentricity requires that anything relevant to the Tura community needs to be debated in Tura. Tura is the dominant language in the Tura area, or, the other way round, the Tura area is defined as the space where Tura language is the dominant medium of communication. This is not a question of linguistic competence but one of territorial identity (like Swiss German). Strangers are generally welcome and well accepted but have to adjust to the linguistic requirement. Endocentricity, however, is not limited to language use.
2. Ethnic identity is often critically viewed and at best an unavoidable evil. One should recognize that in times of crisis it may be a factor of strength. Strong ethnic identity is

not mutually exclusive with openness to outsiders. Tura society has institutionalized mechanisms designed to reconcile both.

3. Keeping low profile is a traditional slogan which carries persuasive weight in Toura discourse. I was myself witness in the 70-ies of the first deliberate attempts by the representatives of the central government at substituting government law to local jurisdiction, but it is not sufficient to explain the anti-cyclic and self-asserting stance taken by Tura communities in response to the dramatic events in key areas such as land ownership and, more recently, bride price and female circumcision. As a general rule, one could say that these attempts could only claim any success at all to the extent that they were adopted and supported by the village authorities. By and large, it is no exaggeration to say that the latter remained the ultimate source of practically all relevant legislation and jurisdiction in matters pertaining to the sedentary Tura society and even beyond, notwithstanding occasional inroads from zealous government officials who intended to reverse this situation, or were called to do so.
4. It has often been observed that traditional jurisdiction, typically embodying ancestral values, is gradually being superseded by government-supported law enforcement, and conflicts resulting from this process have often been subjected to scientific inquiry. The current situation in Ivory Coast offers an opportunity to observe the reverse process: Sudden disappearance of government rule does not necessarily result in public disorder and anarchy. Semi-defunct traditional authority, although considered by many as doomed to obsolescence, has in fact kept its vitality as the major regulating force in society and as the main source of ethical norm and conflict resolution. Its successful application to new and unexpected situations resulting from an overwhelming external threat whose nature was only partially understood is likely to strengthen its future role in other areas of activity as well, including issues of development.
5. The possibility of a reversal to the "old" order if the new collapses, and the ease with which it takes place, is not so much to be understood as a historical regress than as a culturally and not least as a linguistically conditioned phenomenon. Recourse to instances representing the central power is resisted or avoided because it puts the local litigants in a situation of communicative dependency resulting in their disempowerment, whereas local law allows the same issues to be negotiated on familiar ground, both in terms of space and language.

All these factors taken together may not yet be the final word but they point to the fact that causes for significant differences in crisis management may be endogenous and may have their roots in local ideology which in some sense at least is irreducible to external circumstances.
Indirectly, this supports a local viewpoint approach to questions pertaining to development as well.

Zooming off a little bit, taking a step back from the particular case of the Tura, the following observations may lead us to see the more general relevance of the assumptions and speculations we have been making about the special case of the Tura, in attempting to create a frame of reference which might serve as a prerequisite to interpreting documents emanating from local discourses.

1. Our observations on the Tura case serve to underscore what, as I see it, is a basic tenet of areal science, i.e. of scientific methodology which claims to have something relevant to say about a particular area of the world, its culture and populations: the necessary complementarity of macroscopic and microscopic inquiry. The axiom says: neither globalizing bird's eye's perspectives on Africa nor single-handed accumulation of individualizing case studies are capable of generating a balanced view; only both taken together can do so.
2. In our case, the globalizing view, as exemplified in E+Z nr. , says: No, development without political stability is not conceivable. In a very general way, this can be true, and in any case, no one will take exception with the reverse statement: political stability is an asset to development. From a global viewpoint also, it would be hard to deny that without wars and civil unrest the African continent would be in a better state, economically and politically.
3. But is it also true that lack of stability, including war, precludes development? There are logically cogent arguments in support of this thesis a well. For instance, development presupposes planning, and planning presupposes some degree of predictability, which in turn is only conceivable in a context of government-secured peace. Stability and calculability go together. A situation of turmoil and acute threats will tend to channel all energies people have into the only goal which counts: survival, day by day, hour by hour. – War, with its accompanying train of destruction, dispossession and disruption seems to be per definition the natural antithesis of

development and the negation of sustainability. But this view does not reckon with the kind of anti-cyclic forces which explain why Africa is not at the end.

4. As undeniably true as this may be, it reflects the fact that development strategies were developed with situations in mind which included a minimum of stability, state-guaranteed law and order, and an institutional framework based on legality and therefore guaranteeing legitimacy. It seems necessary to differentiate. What may be true in many cases, may not apply in others, perhaps in a few cases things may be different. The Tura case reminds us that even in a declared No-go zone not all groups are equally strongly affected by the immediate consequences of war. This should at least lead us to leave options open even in situation which look desperately from a more global vantage point.
5. Whether we like it or not, life in Africa is organized around ethnic and linguistic identity. This, whether we like it or not, is what defines peoples' identity. These are primordial criteria over which people define their own identity, much more than any other.
6. In the name of ethnic identity and distinctiveness, exclusion is practiced and, if war permits, atrocities are committed. Africa is no exception in this respect. But ethnic cohesion may be a strength in crisis, and a resource capable of overcoming prejudice rather than fostering it.
7. In two important respects, war or war-like situations provide opportunities for development in some sense or another:
    a. In developing and testing resources for managing conflictual and other threatening situations.
    b. In showing that sustainability is not simply being negated but is being tested in situations of crisis.
8. Communicative sustainability has been defined as self-propagation of the innovative message in the absence of exogenous stimulation. Such a situation may arise for various reasons: deliberate withdrawal of experts, withdrawal due to lack of funding or for political reasons. Lack of security is another factor whose significance is steadily on the increase. From this angle, Tura is a case in point: The expert had to withdraw from the area. Only now, more than a year later, he has been back for a short visit to his home village. From all we know, the project which he had started was continued and people were convinced by the usefulness of the new crop when they saw the quality of the first harvest. The acid test of the truth of our assumption will come now

when people have to decide on their own whether to move on to the second phase of the project, or rather to wait until the expert is back.

9. Thus, what from a certain angle seems to be an automatic death warrant passed to all sorts of development may turn out to be, under given circumstances, a challenge to development.
10. Vocabulary.
11. Ethnic groups are like individuals. They react differently to comparable situations.
12. Ultimately the question ##

Historically, overlap of the "old" and the "new" orders. In case of failure of what is considered to be national government as the institution in charge of public affairs and control, its competence may then fall back on local structures and procedures which, in the eyes of the local population, still function as a sort of safety net, or may even continue to be the source of authority by default. To quite an extent this is intimately linked up with the language factor, more precisely with the fact that recourse to instances representing the central power puts local defendants in a situation of communicative dependency, whereas the instances representing local authority allow all parties to enact themselves on linguistically and inferentially familiar territory.