The Change of the Status and Role of the Chief in East and Central Africa

William Francis Moroney

Loyola University Chicago

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses

Part of the Sociology Commons

Recommended Citation

https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses/1803

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License.
Copyright © 1963 William Francis Moroney
THE CHANGE OF THE STATUS AND ROLE
OF THE CHIEF IN EAST AND
CENTRAL AFRICA

by
William Francis Moroney

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

June
1963
LIFE

Reverend William Francis Moroney was born in Chicago, Illinois, September 19, 1934.

He was graduated from Quigley Preparatory Seminary, Chicago, Illinois, June, 1953, and received the degree of Bachelor of Arts from St. Mary of the Lake Seminary, Mundelein, Illinois, June, 1956.

He was ordained a priest in Carthage, Tunisia, January, 1961. As a member of the Society of the White Fathers of Africa, he is assigned to the Social Training Center, Mwanza, Tanganyika. In preparation for this assignment, he began his graduate studies at Loyola University in September, 1961. He will go to Tanganyika as soon as his studies are completed.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Brief History</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characterization of the African Value System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Theoretical Framework</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Problem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Procedure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III. THE TRIBAL CHIEF</strong></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Kabaka of the Buganda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Chief of the Sukuma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Citimukulu of the Bemba</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Comparative Analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IV. THE COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION AND THE TRIBAL CHIEF</strong></td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Administration and the Kabaka</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Administration and the Sukuma Chief</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Administration and the Citimukulu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Comparative Analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION</strong></td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contrasting Definitions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tribal Definition of the Chief</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The British Colonial Definition of the Chief</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Further Perspectives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BIBLIOGRAPHY | 88 |
INTRODUCTION

1. A Brief History

What is of interest to the American or European visitor to North Africa is that which is not American or European. What catches the eye of the tourist is the Mosque with its towering minaret and its geometric architecture. Five times a day the visitor is captivated by the beautiful and peculiar song of the muezzin as he calls all Moslems to prayer. A stranger to their land is intrigued by the sight of the veiled women and the dress of the men, the long roomy gondoura, the cape-like burnoose and the traditional red chechia. If our Western visitor stays a little longer and looks a little deeper, he will see that the Islamic, Arabian culture has thoroughly permeated all phases of North African life—from language and religion to family life and politics.

Yet if our visitor gets out his shovel and starts digging, for example, near Carthage in Tunisia, he is sure to find the remains of another culture. Perhaps he will find a plaque inscribed in Latin commemorating the death and burial of someone named Justinus. Perhaps he will come across a section of a doric column which at one time supported the vaults and arches of a fifth century basilica. Or walking along the bluffs that overlook the Bay of Tunis, he will come across the ruins of what is reputed to be the Basilica of St. Cyprian, baptistery and all.

In a matter of one or two centuries, one culture, more or less, totally replaced another culture. The Arabian and Moslem culture, with the help of the sword, overpowered the Byzantine-North African culture. One could say that in the violent contact of the Arabic Moslem culture with North Africa, one
social system destroyed and replaced the other.

That was North Africa. What interests us in this paper is Africa south of the Sahara—that part of Africa which until not too many years ago was known as the "Dark Continent." The word "dark" was used in the sense of unknown, unexplored.

The earliest European attempt to penetrate the interior of East Africa was made by the Reverend J. Rebmann, a Protestant missionary, in 1846. He did not get very far, but it seems he did reach Mount Kilimanjaro.

In 1857, two professional explorers, Richard Burton and John Speke, both officers of the East India Company's Army, reached Lake Tanganyika at Ujiji and Lake Victoria at the Mwanza Gulf.

In 1860, Speke went around Lake Victoria into Uganda and reached the source of the Nile River.

Further to the south in Central Africa, David Livingstone "started out" upon his remarkable journey which, between 1853 and 1856 took him across the continent to Loanda (present day Angola) on the west coast and then back again to Quelimane (Mozambique) on the east coast in search of a satisfactory line of communication. In the course of this journey he discovered the Victoria Falls (on the Zambeze River separating Northern from Southern Rhodesia).

It was the reports of such explorations that stimulated primarily economic and missionary interests in this heretofore unknown territory.

It is with this territory of East and Central Africa that this thesis is concerned. In particular we will study three tribes found in this part of Africa. The first tribe with which

---


2Ibid., p. 96.

3Ibid., p. 104.
we will deal is the Ganda tribe which is found along the northern and western shores of Lake Victoria. The second tribe is that of the Sukuma which is found along the southern shores of Lake Victoria. The third tribe, the Bemba, is found in Northern Rhodesia below Lake Tanganyika.

The first sustained contact of these three tribes of the interior with European civilization came in the form of Christian missionaries. In the 1870's and 1880's, such missionary organizations as the London Missionary Society, the Church Missionary Society and the White Fathers of Africa established mission posts in this area.

"On September 12, 1876, Leopold II, King of the Belgians summoned a meeting in Brussels of geographers, explorers, philanthropists, merchants and any others who might be interested in contributing to the task of opening Africa to the influence of western civilization."

Following Leopold's lead, the governments of France, Portugal, England and Germany took more interest in this newly discovered interior of Africa, each making its own imperial claims on different parts of Africa.

In 1884, Bismarck summoned a conference to meet in Berlin to settle the disputes and conflicting imperial demands concerning Africa.

"The results of these laborious negotiations was that in the future any powers taking possession of a tract of land along the African coast was merely required to notify the other signatories of the Berlin Act to give them an opportunity to make good any prior claims which they might have. Thenceforward it was only necessary for the annexing power to ensure the establishment of sufficient authority to protect existing rights and the freedom of trade and transit."

\[4\] Ibid., p. 123.

\[5\] Ibid., p. 130.
It was at this conference that Africa was "divided up" between the European powers.

It was after this conference of Berlin that the colonial powers began their systematic take-over of the interior of Africa. Now the administrators, soldiers and merchants came to remake Africa according to their own design. What impact did these European "invaders" have on the traditional African society?

2. Characterization of the African Value System

Before we can discover what cultural change has taken place in Africa with its coming in contact with the West, we must find out what was the traditional tribal culture of Africa? What were the systems of values and norms particularly African? A good question to begin with is the following: Is such a characterization of the African value system possible?

There have been many attempts at such a characterization. Let us examine the following attempts, presented by highly competent specialists in the field of African study. The first is presented by Mrs. Helen Kitchen, the present editor of Africa Report, a reliable and serious periodical concerning the present political, economic and social problems and trends of Africa.

"Almost all Africans . . . share a reverence for the land. . . . Land was the symbol of the community, the main form of capital, the principle means of livelihood. . . . Land belonged to the community, and for the individual to seek more than his share was an implicit threat to the whole fabric of tribal life. . . .

"In traditional Africa, the family was the basic social unit of which the extended family and larger political and social units were constructed. Such kinship systems gave the
individual cradle-to-grave security. . . . in such a framework, the individual was required to pull his prescribed share of the load, but little was gained by trying to outdo his fellows, time was better spent on keeping strong and firm the web of personal relation- ships on which security ultimately depended. 6

The next brief characterization is made by Mr. Julius Nyerere, from all standards a most competent and intelligent African political leader and now the first President of the Republic of Tanganyika.

"In traditional African society, the African never was—nor thought himself to be—a cog in a machine. He was a free individual in his own society and his conception of government was personal, not institutional. When 'government' was mentioned, the African thought of the chief. Unlike the Briton, he did not picture a grand building in which a debate was taking place. . . . In primitive African society, the question of the limits of responsibility, as between the individual and society in which he lives, was not very clearly defined. The traditional African community was a small one, and the African could not live himself apart from his community . . . he saw no struggle between his own interests and those of his community—for his community was, to him, an extension of his family. . . . (Nor is he) a member of a 'commune'—some artificial unit of human beings—he is of a genuine community or brotherhood." 7

Dr. Robert A. Lystad, Associate Professor of African Studies at Johns Hopkins University, warns us that "the basic values of the precolonial era—if, indeed, there ever was more than an accidental, continental conglomeration of differing systems
of basic values—are darkly obscured in societies continually receiving and themselves creating new differences."8

Yet he goes on to say "Despite these fundamental obscurities, some sense of direction and some provocative conclusions can be reached by means of a comparison of certain 'American basic values' with their possible African counterparts."9

Basing his description of American values on Robin M. Williams' American Society: A Sociological Interpretation, Dr. Lystad makes some of the following contrasting characterizations of the American and African value systems. Whereas the American highly values personal achievement, efficiency, a rational and scientific approach, equality of opportunity, and individual freedom,

"The African places less value on personal achievement. He regards himself much more as but one integral member of a larger social group . . . . This group is responsible for him and he is responsible to it. . . . The African may be said to value the manner in which a task is performed rather than the sheer, quick, efficient accomplishment of the task itself. . . . Most Africans are born into positions in life from which there is little chance to escape, if indeed the desire 'to escape' is ever aroused in the individual. . . . Freedom for the larger social group of which he is a member is something he values highly. In contrast, freedom for himself outside the security which is his within his rather narrowly defined group holds little promise for the African."10


9 Ibid., p.

10 Ibid., pp. 186-188.
Finally two noted authorities on African culture and society, Dr. M. Fortes and Professor E. E. Evans-Pritchard, characterize the mystical values associated with the African social system in general and the political system in particular.

"Members of an African society feel their unity and perceive their common interests in symbols and it is their attachment to these symbols which has, more than anything else, given their society cohesion and persistence. In the form of myths, fictions, dogmas, rituals, sacred places and persons, these symbols represent the unity and exclusiveness of the groups which respect them. They are regarded, however, not as mere symbols, but as final values in themselves. . . . Africans have no objective knowledge of the forces determining their social organization or actuating their social behavior. . . . Myths, dogmas, ritual beliefs and activities make his social system intellectually tangible and coherent to an African. . . . Furthermore, these sacred symbols, which reflect the social system, endow it with mystical values. . . .

"An African ruler is not to his people merely a person who can enforce his will on them. He is the axis of their political relations, the symbol of their unity and exclusiveness, and the embodiment of their essential values." 11

I have quoted these passages at some length in order to show what I judge to be a representative characterization of some aspects of African culture, especially in regard to some aspects of their value system.

Running through these four characterizations, one finds certain basic values stressed by all.

One is impressed by the emphasis given to the importance of the collectivity to the group as a whole, with a certain

subordination of the interests of the individual to the interests of the group. Emphasis is placed on security within the group and on the importance of strong and firm personal relationships. This group relationship seems to be based on non-rational, emotional symbolic ties with the resulting "diffuse" character of the right and obligations of these mutual relationships. Relationships were valued as ends not as means. Relationships tended to involve the whole personality of the individual. People were valued for who they were rather than for what they could do.

Without trying to be exhaustive or trying to let my imagination run away, I think the above list of values and norms summarize the characterization of some aspects of African culture found in the four articles quoted.

If such a characterization is true, then such a system of values would give an orientation to action which could be judged according to the "pattern variables" set forth by Talcott Parsons. (This theoretical frame of reference will be explained in the next chapter.) Let it be sufficient here to say that according to the above mentioned characterizations, the African value system could be judged as giving a particularistic, ascription orientation to action. Such an orientation would be made manifest in the behavior that is expected from the different role incumbents.

In this thesis we will examine the institutionalized patterns of expected behavior with regard to the chief in the Ganda, Sukuma and Bemba tribes of East and Central Africa. We will be concerned with ascertaining what orientation to action is demanded of the chief first by the traditional African political system and secondly by the British Colonial Administration.
CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

1. General Theoretical Framework

In this thesis, we will examine the status and role of an African chief. The status of the member of an institution will be the position of the given member in relation to the other members of the institutions. In this paper, the status dealt with will be the position of the African ruler in relation to the other members of certain institutions of an African society.

The actor, here the ruler, in a given relation to another knows what others expect of him in a given situation. This situation has a common meaning for both of them because both define the situation through a shared symbolic system of communication. Based on a "sensitivity" whereby the actor is accessible "to influence by the attitudes of others in the social interaction process," the actor defines the situation in prevision of the anticipated reaction of others. The actor knows what the others expect of him and he knows that his success or failure to do what the others expect will affect his relationship with these others. This relationship of the actor to others describes the status of the actor in relation to these others.

An important element in this relationship between the actor and the others is "the expected behavior" of one by the other in a given situation.

This "expected behavior" implies that both define the situation with the same meaning. What is more, it means that both share the standard for selection of the "expected behavior" out of the many possible alternative behaviors to meet this commonly defined situation. This "standard" or criterion for selection is called "a value." \(^{13}\)

The "expected behavior" of the actor in relation to another in a given situation can be called his "role-expectations." These "role-expectations" are said to be institutionalized when a plurality of actors have accepted the value or criterion for selection of behavior implied in this "role-expectation," in the knowledge that such behavior will draw "favorable" (from the actor's point of view) reactions from the others involved. \(^{14}\)

Thus, "an institution is made up of a plurality of interdependent role-patterns." \(^{15}\) It is in this sense that I will use the term, "institution," in my thesis—a system of permanent patterned relationships. Thus, we see from all that has been said above that the following elements are implied by the term, "institution": a plurality of actors, a permanent relationship between these actors, a "permanent" situation made up of social, physical and cultural objects, \(^{16}\) a shared symbolic communication system and a shared value system derived from the shared communication system which demands a certain behavior of an actor in relation with another in a given situation. Another important element implied in this system of patterned relationships is

\(^{13}\)Ibid., cf. p. 12.

\(^{14}\)Ibid., cf. pp. 36-39. This point of view, i.e., my interpretation of Parsons', seems to coincide with LaPiere's theory that the actor does what is expected of him in a given situation in order to retain his position or status in relation to the others involved.

\(^{15}\)Ibid., p. 39.

\(^{16}\)Ibid., cf. p. 4.
the very reason why these relationships come into being and become patterned. It is to fulfill or meet certain needs or interests of individuals or groups.

Within the institutional framework an individual knows his position or status in relation to the other members of the institution. He knows, too, what behavior is expected of him and what the anticipated reactions of the other members will be to this behavior.

As we saw before, the actor will orient his behavior according to his own expectations and the expectations of others. Behind these role-expectations there lie the values involved. That is to say, a group will determine certain expected behavior for its members according to what the group believes to be of importance, i.e., according to what meaning a situation has for a group. The role-expectations and their underlying value standards will be made manifest in the types of choices that the role-incumbent makes in a particular situation. These basic choices or pattern variables involve the motivational and value orientations of the actor on the one hand and the modalities of the object, i.e., aspects under which the object is defined on the other.

As we shall see, these pattern variables involve a series of dichotomous choices. Thus,

"... as soon as a certain consistency of choosing can be inferred from a series of concrete acts, then we can begin to make statements about the value standards involved and the formulation of these standards in terms of the variables of the pattern variable scheme." 17

As to the application of these pattern variables to role-expectations, it can be said that on the level of the social

---

system, these pattern variables are considered as "role definitions wherein actions of role-incumbents tend to be specified in terms of one side or another of a dilemma."\(^{18}\)

The definitions of the five basic pattern variables considered as role definitions of a social system are as follows:

"1. The dilemma of gratification of impulse versus discipline. . . .

   a. \textbf{Affectivity}: the role-expectation that the incumbent of the role may freely express certain affective reactions to objects in the situation and need not attempt to control them in the interest of discipline.

   b. \textbf{Affective neutrality}: the role-expectation that the incumbent of the role in question should restrain any impulses to certain affective expression and subordinate them to considerations of discipline. . . .

"2. The dilemma of private versus collective interests. . . .

   a. \textbf{Self-orientation}: the role-expectation by the relevant actors that it is permissible for the incumbent of the role in question to give priority in the given situation to his own private interests . . . independently of their bearing on the interests or values of a given collectivity of which he is a member, or the interests of other actors.

   b. \textbf{Collectivity orientation}: the role-expectation by the relevant actors that the actor is obliged, as an incumbent of the role in question, to take directly into account the values and interests of the collectivity of which, in this role, he is a member. When there is a potential conflict with his private interests, he is expected in the particular choice to give priority to the collective interest. . . .

\(^{18}\)Ibid., p. 78.
3. The dilemma of transcendence versus immanence...

a. **Universalism**: The role-expectation that, in qualifications for memberships and decisions for differential treatment, priority will be given to standards defined in completely generalized terms, independent of the particular relationship of the actor's own status... to those of the object.

b. **Particularism**: The role-expectation that, in qualifications for memberships and decisions for differential treatment, priority will be given to standards which assert the primacy of the values attached to objects by their particular relations to the actor's properties...

4. The dilemma of object modalities...

a. **Ascription**: The role-expectation that the role incumbent, in orientating himself to social objects in the relevant choice situation, will accord priority to the object's given attributes (whether universalistically or particularistically defined) over their actual or potential performances.

b. **Achievement**: The role-expectation that the role incumbent, in orientating to social objects in the relevant choice situation, will give priority to the object's actual or expected performances, and to their attributes only as directly relevant to these performances, over attributes which are essentially independent of the specific performances in question.

5. The dilemma of the scope of significance of the object...

a. **Diffuseness**: the role-expectation that the role incumbent, at the relevant choice point, will accept any potential significance of a social object, including obligation to it, which is compatible with his
other interests and obligations, and that
he will give priority to this expectation
over any disposition to confine the role-
orientation to a specific range of
significance of the object.

b. Specificity: the role-expectation that the
role incumbent, at the relevant choice
point, will be orientated to a social
object only within a specific range of
its relevance as a cathetic object or
as an instrumental means or condition
and that he will give priority to this
expectation over any disposition to
include potential aspects of significance
of the object not specifically defined in
the expectation pattern.19

Parsons and Shils claim that there are two problems of
primary importance with regard to the social system. These
problems "concern the most basic aspects of the relations which
obtain between roles; thus, the selection of roles (or occupants
of roles) on these questions are in a sense constitutive of
the nature of the social system in question."20 These two
basic questions are put in this way:

"Are the relations which obtain between
roles universalistic or particularistic? Are
they based on achievement or ascription? Or
another way of putting the questions; Are the
relations between role-incumbents defined
arbitrarily based on sentiment and emotion
(particularistic) or are they defined in a
generalized abstract way (universalistic);
Are these relationships based on personal or
impersonal qualifications? That is to say the
mutual relationships between roles can be
defined either on an impersonal or abstract

19 Ibid., pp. 80-84.
20 Ibid., p. 95.
basis or on the basis of traditional bonds of sentiment that grow among persons sharing a common habitat or name. 21

For the purposes of our thesis it shall be primarily with these two questions that we shall be concerned. Of interest also shall be the self-orientation or collective orientation of role-expectations.

As the role-expectation is defined on the level of the social system according to one side or the other of these dichotomous orientations, the value standards of the particular system will be made manifest.

2. The Problem

Let us now try to apply this general theoretical frame of reference to the problem of our thesis. Our problem can be stated in the following terms: Has the presence of the colonial European social system given new meanings to positions and roles in the traditional African society. In particular we wish to see if that part of the colonial social system which is the political system has given new definitions to the position and role of the traditional African political leader, the chief.

What leads us to suspect a change is the fact that a different political system has been introduced and superimposed on the traditional African political system. This different political system is based on the spirit of the European political systems. In particular, for our study, we will be concerned with that part of East Africa that was colonized by the British. It was the British Administration that introduced and superimposed new political definitions of the role of the chief on the existing political system.

The hypothesis is that these new superimposed political definitions of the status and role of the traditional African political leaders demand a universal-achievement orientation in relation to his own position and in relation to his subordinates, whereas the traditional political definitions of the status and role of the chief demanded particularistic-ascribed orientation in relation to his position and in relation to his subordinates. Or spelled out in more detail, our hypothesis says that the new superimposed political definitions of the status and role of the traditional African political leader demand that he act according to standards defined in completely generalized terms. This universalistic-orientation to action is based on clearly defined, specific rules and regulations inherent in the office he holds. What is more, these Western political definitions demand that his relationship to others be based upon achieved status. That is to say, the role-incumbent, here the chief, orients himself to others according to their capability to perform a task. Thus, the role-expectations of the British Administration with regard to the African chiefs demand a universalistic-achievement orientation.

This is in contrast to the traditional African definition of the status and role of the African chief. These role-expectations demand that the chief act according to the values attached to the particular relationship with the others involved. This particularistic orientation is based upon emotional and non-rational factors.

Besides this particularistic orientation, the role involved is based on ascribed status. The chief is expected to orient himself to others according to their attributes, e.g., on the basis of a common kinship or tribal identification. Thus, the role-expectation of the traditional African political system demands a particularistic-ascribed orientation of the chief.
This thesis is not trying to prove that all African chiefs always acted in a personal arbitrary manner in relation to their subordinates and that now they are or will act in an impersonal and formally defined manner. But this thesis does assume that the role definitions demanded by the social, here the political, system as such is one of the variables involved in influencing the behavior of the individual who happens to be occupying the position of chief in a given political system. Thus, the purpose of our thesis is to see how the two political systems of relevance in East Africa define the status and role of one and the same traditional political leader. Thus, if, as hypothesized, the British-based definition of the role of a political leader demands a bureaucratic official, "a personally detached and strictly objective expert," whereas the traditional African political system demands a personally involved leader discharging his office in an arbitrary subjective manner, and both role definitions are imposed on the same political leader, then I think it would be safe to assume that this situation will have a real though partial social effect in the status and role of the African chief.

This change will obtain only if the redefinition of the chief's role by the British Administration is accomplished in an effective manner. That is to say, the British Administration could try to explain to the chief about how a political official should discharge his business impersonally in an objective manner, but probably the African chiefs would not have even begun to understand what they were talking about. What had to be done if the British-based definition was to be at all influential was to effect a change within the political institution itself. This system of permanent patterned rela-

tionships would have to be changed. If we can find in our investigation that certain important changes did take place in these permanent patterned political relationships, this will indicate some change in the position and role of the chief.

Barton and Lazarsfeld have stated in an article concerning the functions of qualitative analysis that qualitative observations can be useful as "indications of some large-scale phenomenon which we cannot perceive directly." Thus, "simple qualitative observations (can be) used as indicators of the functioning of complex social structures and organizations, which are difficult to subject to direct observations."

Social structures as complex as political systems are impossible to put under direct observation, especially as the political systems under consideration are in Africa and this study is being written here in the United States. But through qualitative analysis of some of the ethnographic material and of some of the more sophisticated studies of this ethnographic material, we should be able to find some "indicators" of the institutional changes in role definition of the chiefs.

Before this, however, we must describe the status and role of the chief as they existed traditionally. This description will be based on the institutional factors involved in defining the status and role. Some of the institutional factors involved in defining the status and role of the chief that we will investigate are:

1. The mode of recruitment of the chief;
2. The ceremonies involved in the accession to the chieftainship;
3. The titles given to the chief;

24Ibid., p. 100
4. The economic, religious and military functions of the chief; and

5. Controls operating on him and methods of removal.

All of these institutional factors combined to give a distinct meaning to the position of the chief in African society. This meaning included a definition of the role-expectations of the chiefs.

After describing the traditional status and role of the chief in terms of these institutional factors, we will see what institutional alterations or innovations were introduced by the British Administration. We will want to know if and how these institutional changes affect the definition of the position and the role-expectations of the chief. As indicators of these institutional changes we will examine the administrative ordinances and laws regulating the position and role of the chief.

After having described the status and role of the chief first in terms of traditional institutional factors involved, and secondly, in terms of the institutional changes introduced by the British Administration, we will attempt to understand and interpret these two descriptions in terms of the ideal types included in our hypothesis.

The two ideal types mentioned in our hypothesis are the universalistic-achievement pattern variable and the particularistic-ascribed pattern variable. Seen as role-expectation variables as defined by the political system, these two ideal types seem to me to lend themselves to analysis in terms of Weber's traditional and bureaucratic types of authority.

Thus, for Parsons, the universalistic pattern variable involves a role-expectation demanding action according to standards defined in completed generalized terms; the achievement variable involves a role-expectation demanding an orientation to a social object based on capability to perform. For
Weber, bureaucracy involves role-expectations based on "the principle of fixed and official jurisdictional areas . . . ordered by rules, that is, by laws and administrative regulations." 25

Robert K. Merton nicely summarizes Weber's analysis of the bureaucratic type:

". . . bureaucracy involves a clear-cut division of integrated activities which are regarded as duties inherent in the office. A system of differentiated controls and sanctions is stated in the regulations. The assignment of roles occurs on the basis of technical qualifications which are ascertained through formalized, impersonal procedures (e.g., examinations) within the structure of hierarchically arranged authority, the activities of 'trained and salaried experts' are governed by general, abstract and clearly defined rules. . . ." 26

Weber describes the bureaucratic official as one who considers

". . . office holding . . . 'a vocation' . . . in the nature of a duty. . . . Entrance into an office . . . is considered an acceptance of a specific obligation of faithful management in return for a secure existence. . . . Modern loyalty is devoted to impersonal and functional purposes. . . . It does not establish a relationship to a person." 27

In contrast to this universalistic-achievement, bureaucratic type, Parsons and Weber present the particularistic-ascribed, traditional type.

25 Gerth and Mills, op. cit., p. 196.


For Parsons, particularistic pattern variable involves a role-expectation which demands action on the basis of emotional and non-rational factors—on the basis of the value of the persons involved. The ascription variable involves a role-expectation demanding an orientation to others based on their attributes—on the basis of their common kinship or tribal identification.

For Weber, the "traditional" type of social structure is administered by "the master . . . who was moved by personal sympathy and favor, by grace and gratitude."\(^7\) The pivots on which this system seems to work were, on the one hand, an appeal to strict traditionalism, and on the other, an appeal to personal, irrational and emotional elements to "free arbitrariness and lordly grace."\(^8\) In contrast to bureaucracy, which is an administration "without regard for persons according to calculable rules,"\(^9\) the traditional type of organization calls for an administration with regard to persons in an arbitrary manner.

Again it is good to recall that these are but pure types; hypothetical individuals framed by the researcher. The purpose of the ideal type was presented by Weber in another context.

"We can, of course, only proceed by presenting these . . . ideas in the artificial simplicity of ideal types as they could at best but seldom be found in history. For just because of the impossibility of drawing sharp boundaries in historical reality we can only hope to understand their specific importance from an investigation of them in their most consistent and logical forms."

\(^{28}\) Ibid., p. 216. \(^{29}\) Ibid. \(^{30}\) Ibid.

The purpose then of the ideal type is to be used as a device by which we attempt to understand the empirical data in terms of the type. Thus, we will ask: Does the type of "the personally detached and strictly objective expert" help us to understand and distinguish more clearly one leader of one cultural background from another leader of another cultural background.

Don Martindale, in discussing Weber's types, offers us a few "caveats."

"It has been argued that ideal types are 'if . . . then' propositions. However, since ideal types are imaginary individuals, the argument really makes no more sense than to maintain that if wishes were horses, beggars would ride. Even more startling is the suggestion that we compare actual individuals with the (admittedly imaginary) ideal typical individuals to see how much they deviate from them. This is nothing but a form of intellectual acrobatics, for actual individuals ought to deviate from the ideal type just as much as one made them deviate in the first place. . . . (Rather) . . . the whole purpose of the type is to isolate configurations of facts which have causal influence on the course of social events."

This, then, is what we must do. We must try to isolate configurations of facts. These configurations of facts will be our two descriptions of the status and role of the chiefs as institutionally determined. We will then try to understand these facts in terms of our ideal types:

1. In terms of particularistic-ascribed, traditional orientation to action; and

---

32 Gerth and Mills, op. cit., p. 213.

2. In terms of universalistic-achievement, bureaucratic orientation to action.

3. Procedure

The hypothesis of this thesis is as follows: the new superimposed, British colonial definitions of the status and role of the traditional African chief of the Ganda, Bemba and Sukuma tribes demand a universalistic-achievement, bureaucratic orientation of the behavior of the chief, whereas, the traditional, tribal definitions of the status and role of the chief demand a particularistic-ascribed, traditional orientation of the behavior of the chief.

In their book, *African Political Systems*, M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard distinguish between three basic types of African political systems. In the first type, found only among the smallest and simplest African tribes, the political organization and structure are completely fused with the kinship organization.

In the second type, the lineage structure is the framework of the political system, though each remains distinct and autonomous in its own sphere.

The third type of political system is one in which an administrative organization is the framework of the political structure. Some of the characteristics of such a system are a centralized political authority, administrative machinery, judicial institutions, and a more pronounced social stratification with social classes corresponding to the distribution of power and authority.

The Ganda, Sukuma, and Bemba tribes were chosen for this study as representative of this third type of political system.

We will restrict the term "chief" to that position considered as the supreme political authority within this type of traditional political system.
The terms, status, role bureaucratic and traditional orientation, will be used as defined in the preceding chapters.

First we will describe the status and role of the chief as defined by a number of tribal institutional factors related to the chieftainship. We will examine the institutionalized patterns of chiefly succession, accession to the throne, and social control exercised by the chief and over the chief. We will examine the institutionalized basis of authority and power. After having thus described the traditional position and role of the chief of each of the three tribes under consideration, we will comparatively analyze the traditional definitions of the chiefly status and role in terms of Max Weber's ideal type of traditional authority. From this analysis, we can conclude to the type of orientation institutionally demanded of the chief by the tribal society.

Next we will describe the status and role of the same chief as conceived by the British Administration in a number of administrative ordinances regulating the chiefly position and role in the three tribes. We will then comparatively analyze this description in terms of Max Weber's ideal type of bureaucratic authority. From this analysis, we can conclude to the type of orientation institutionally demanded of the chief by the British Administration.

The data of these descriptions was obtained through library research. Most of the material was obtained at the Library of African Studies of Northwestern University.

The source material falls broadly into two main categories. The first broad category is that of anthropological works. These are books and articles by trained anthropologists who have lived with the tribe they studied. We have tried to select the works of those anthropologists who are reputed experts in their field. These anthropological studies are of two types. First there is the ethnographic monograph describing
in detail the culture of one particular tribe. Such a work is
An African People in the Twentieth Century by L. P. Mair.
Secondly, there are more specialized studies on one aspect
of the tribal society. Such, for example, are the works,
African Political Systems, edited by Fortes and Evans-Pritchard,
and East African Chiefs, edited by A. I. Richards.

The second board category of the source material used in
this thesis is that of the works of British colonial experts.
A work used extensively in describing the administrative
ordinances introduced by the colonial government is Native
Administration in the British African Territories. This five
volume classic by Lord Hailey describes in detail "matters
relating directly to the agencies employed for administrative
purposes in local rules, including the creation of institutions
of local government. . . ."34

It should be noted that the material that we used was
documented at the latest during the early years of the 1950's.
As the political progress of the African nations has moved at
such a rapid pace since that time, it can be assumed that the
institutional status and rule of the chief has changed much
since that time. Therefore, it should be remembered that we
particularly concerned with the institutional changes intro-
duced by the British colonial administration up until the
early 1950's.

---

CHAPTER III

THE TRIBAL CHIEF

1. The Kabaka of the Buganda

The kingdom of the Buganda is found in present day Uganda, along and to the north and west of Lake Victoria. Its population as of the 1948 census was about one million three hundred thousand, of which some eight hundred thirty thousand were Buganda. According to the Uganda Agreement of 1900, the area of Buganda was assumed to be nineteen thousand six hundred square miles.

With regard to the kinship and clan structure of the tribe, the Ganda were organized into a relatively fixed number of patrilineal clans. Each clan had its own estates scattered throughout Buganda. 

"The picture is one of a fixed number of clans, each with a senior clan official and each with a number of estates under sub-clan and lineage heads scattered over Buganda." 35

There was no definite ranking of clans. Each clan had special duties in the court of the Kabaka. The Kabaka, or king, could marry a woman from any of the clans and her sons would be eligible for the Kabaka ship.

"For the royal family, the clan system was modified. Children of the Kabaka took the clans of their mothers. Thus, in a real sense, there was no royal clan, but rather a royal family." 36

36 Ibid., p. 53.
The Kabaka was considered as head of all the clans. He confirmed all major clan appointments. But "the clans had power in their own right... They controlled marriage and inheritance and in their relationship with the Kabaka performed services and duties." 37

The Kabaka's rights to leadership parallel kinship rights to leadership in maximal and minimal structural classifications. The ceremony making the Kabaka a member of all Ganda clans formally extends kinship expectations and duties from their consanguinal loci to a supra-consanguinal locus.

The structure of the traditional Ganda political system can be described in general as a kingdom with a strong central government. At the top of this hierarchial structure is the Kabaka, the king or paramount chief. His office is hereditary, going "in direct descent from father to son. The eldest son was debarred from succeeding, but any one of the others could be selected by agreement between the Katikiro and the leading saza chiefs." 38

The Katikiro is the Chief Minister of the Kabaka. He could almost seem to be considered as the Kabaka's other self. His importance and authority can be gathered from the following description of a part of the enthronement ceremony of a new Kabaka.

"Lastly the Katikiro gave him a rod with the words: 'With this rod you will judge Buganda; it shall be given to your Katikiro to judge Buganda; you shall both judge Buganda.'

37 Ibid., p. 64.

"Next day the rod was returned to the Katikiro, or if he was dismissed, given to his successor; the latter went straight from the King's presence without thanking him, as a sign that he was equal in authority."39

The kingdom of Uganda over which the Kabaka ruled was divided up into ten sazas or counties over which ruled omwamiowe saza or county governors. These administrative chiefs were appointed by the Kabaka from among his favorites and in theory could be withdrawn and replaced at will.

Beyond this territorial division, there were simply superiors and subordinates with ranks and titles.

"The number of these lesser chiefs or balongoole, was unlimited. They were appointed to office as a reward for services at court, or sometimes a person received this honor on the recommendation of this own chief, and to make the appointment, the king might either fill a post left vacant by death, or by promotion, create a vacancy by deposing the holder, or make a new chieftainship."40

Additional appointed palace officials with direct access to the Kabaka consisted of the Military head (mujaizi) with county captains, the head of canoes (gabunga), the tax collector with county representatives and the palace head. Others with direct access to the Kabaka were hereditary officials, clan heads (bataka) and Princes (balingira).

This political structure was complicated by the existence of royal and official estates situated in, but outside, the jurisdiction of the district or county. Thus the Kabaka and Queen Mother had estates in each county. Princes and Princesses had estates. Important officials such as the Katikiro, the

39 Ibid., p. 181.
40 Ibid., p. 160.
governors and sub-governors were given estates by the Katikiro. Besides these there were hereditary clan lands (butaka) controlled by the clan heads (bataka).

"The position (of the clan heads) is the subject of a controversy. . . . The point at issue is whether the clan heads . . . too held their position at the king's pleasure or whether their ancestral rights took precedence of his authority."41

The chief whose status and role is under consideration is the Kabaka, the chief at the top of the Buganda political hierarchy.

As we mentioned above, the kingship went in direct descent from father to son. The eldest son could not succeed and the new chief was selected from among the other sons by the Katikiro and the leading saza chiefs. Of interest is the ceremony of accession.

"The new king was led to the throne by his father's Katikiro and proclaimed to the assembled people in these words: 'This is your king, hear him, honour him, obey him, fight for him.'"42

Next there is a ceremony whereby the new Kabaka was instated as the "Sabataka", the head of all the clans. During this ceremony these words are spoken.

"My child, look with kindness upon all your people, from the highest to the lowest, be mindful of your land, deal justice among your people. You are Sabataka, treat your bataka (the clans) with honour (for you [plur.: all kings] come from among the bataka to take possession of Buganda), all your men, the chiefs of the nation, treat them with honour.

"The king was then given spears and a shield with the words: 'With these spears you will fight

41 Ibid., p. 162.
42 Ibid., p. 181.
those who scorn you, who trouble you, your enemies. The king is not despised, he is not thwarted nor contradicted. You are to overcome rebels with these spears and this shield.'

"Lastly the Katikiro gave him a rod with the words: 'With this rod you will judge Buganda; it shall be given to your Katikiro to judge Buganda; you shall both judge Buganda.'" 45

During these ceremonies many people were killed arbitrarily both as part of the ceremony and as "an assertion that the new king had entered on his reign and acquired the power of life and death over his subjects."

During the ceremonies, "all the chiefs were formally introduced to the king, and those who performed personal services for him brought him gifts symbolical of these services." 44

Of particular interest in this ceremony is the fact that the Kabaka is named as the head of all the clans. There is no royal clan to which he owes allegiance. Therefore the princes, i.e., the sons and brothers of the Kabaka have no claim to his power on the basis of clan membership.

"The uniqueness of the Kabaka is emphasized by the fact that the princes, unlike members of commoner clans, do not have a collective totemic symbol. Rather they have only totems of their mothers, who belong to various commoner clans. The kingdom belongs, not to the princes as a group, but to the Kabaka... The Kabaka, that is to say, is not a primus inter pares, a prince among princes, but rather the unique, despotic pinnacle of Baganda society." 43

44 Ibid., p. 181.
The titles given to the Kabaka, also describe him almost as omnipotent.

"He is Ssemmanda, the 'charcoal fire of the smith', who can forge the kingdom as the smith forges iron. He is Swerwanga, 'the first in the nation', . . . 'first among men', . . . 'first among clan heads', . . . 'the lion', . . . 'the queen termite', who feeds upon her subject termites."46

According to the Baganda sayings, the Kabaka was essential to the welfare of the tribe.

"'To be without a king' was in itself disastrous; an army without a general - the king's representative - could not fight; and in a nation without a king every man's hand was against his neighbor."47

When the European first came in serious contact with the Buganda near the end of the nineteenth century, it would seem that the Kabaka had nearly absolute despotic control over his people.

All administrative posts were held at the pleasure of the Kabaka.

"He appointed his own supporters as governors in all but two of the districts under him and allocated fiefs and benefices in land of offices within these districts. He was head of a standing army. . . . He controlled some 10,000 canoes. . . . He was supreme judge in court cases, the head of all the clan authorities and the recipient of tax from the whole country."48

46 Ibid., p. 5
47 L. P. Mair, op. cit., p. 178.
We must now ask what was the institutionalized power structure through which the authority of the Kabaka was supported and maintained.

The authority of the Kabaka had its basis not primarily in his religious power but rather in what might be termed his economic power.

To understand this economic power, we must understand the Baganda's system of land tenure. Land was the principle form and source of wealth for the Baganda and it was considered to belong to the Kabaka. Another peculiarity of this system was that there was no distinction made between the land and the people living on it.

"Theoretically, the whole country and all that was in it was not only subject to the king's authority but actually belonged to him. . . . There was no conception of the land as a possession of the chief from which he derived profit by letting other people work it. His right to admit and evict peasants was part and parcel of his general position as the political authority over the area. . . .; as the natives themselves put it. . . . 'He has rights not over the land but over People.' . . . hence his power over life and death, his right to the spoils of war, to tax his subjects, and make use of their labor." 49

The Kabaka placed his supporters and favorites in administrative control of a section of the country. He would also give them and others private estates. This then would give to these sub-chiefs control over both the land and the people living on that land. These sub-chiefs would allot land to the peasants.

"Every chief, so long as he retained his position, was the sole authority, under the king,

over the peasants under him, and even orders from the king were only given through him."\(^{50}\)

As regards institutionalized restrictions on the power of the Kabaka, there do not seem to be too many. The principle control seems to be an appeal to tradition. The Kabaka should rule as his ancestors ruled before him. As he was reminded in the accession ceremonial, he was expected "to respect established rights, to uphold justice and to behave with kindness and generosity in rewarding the deserving."\(^{51}\)

2. The Chief of the Sukuma

Unlike the Ganda tribe, the basis for Sukuma tribal membership does not lie in the existence of an overall centralized political authority.

"Instead, tribal affinity is based on similarity of language, laws, customs and political and economic institutions; on the spread of kinship ties throughout the various chiefdoms; and on joint residence in one region for many years."\(^{52}\)

The Ganda tribe is situated along the northern and western shores of Lake Victoria in East Africa. Along the southern shores, lie the Sukuma.

"The area south of Lake Victoria presents us with almost an extreme case of the existence of multiple chiefdoms within a single tribal group. The Sukuma are divided into the 39 predominately Sukuma chiefdoms within Kwimba, Mwanza, Masewa and

\(^{50}\) Ibid., p. 161.

\(^{51}\) Ibid., p. 181-82.

\(^{52}\) Audrey Richards, op. cit., p. 232.
Shinyanga districts and the 8 mixed chiefdoms of Geita district... In the pre-European period each of these chiefdoms was relatively autonomous.\textsuperscript{53}

In the description just quoted, the five districts mentioned are European innovations. Taking away these districts we have a picture of the traditional political structure of Sukumaland. There were in an area of some 20,000 square miles, about 47 separate, autonomous chiefdomships. The present day population of Sukumaland is about one million inhabitants.

It would appear that originally what are now chiefdoms consisted of scattered villages consisting of about one hundred people under the leadership of a clan or lineage head. But as the population increased, disputes arose between different villages and clans. At about this time, the Hima, a Hamitic group from the north, began to migrate southward into what is now Sukumaland.

"The raison d'etre of the chieftainship appears to have consisted initially of the ability of the Hima strangers to act as impartial arbiters in interclan disputes and in the distribution of game captured in communal hunts."\textsuperscript{54}

While the chieftainship remains in this royal line, the customs and language of these Hima strangers have been totally absorbed into those of their Bantu Subjects.

Within the chiefdom, there are no clan lands as such. Complete strangers are welcome within the chiefdoms and receive full rights in society and land.

It should be noted also that among some of the Sukuma Tribes there was a structural shift from a matrilineal society to a patrilineal society.

\textsuperscript{53}Ibid., p. 233.
\textsuperscript{54}Richards, op. cit., p. 234.
As the area and population of each chiefdom was relatively small, the administrative structure of the political system was much simpler than that of the Ganda. The structure of the traditional political system will be made clear as we examine the position and role of the chief in Sukumaland.

"The chief is the absolute owner of all the land'. This is the answer of chiefs and people alike." 55

The meaning of this ownership will only become clearer if we look into the institutions defining and supporting the chief's position.

Before the Sukuma came under European control, transmission of the chiefdomship was matrilineal. That is to say that a chief's sons could not succeed him. The chiefdomship could be passed on only to his brothers, maternal uncles or cousins. This group was considered a royal line and also made up the chief's Council of State. Among the functions of this Council of State was the selecting of a new chief.

"The selection was ostensibly made on the basis of certain signs revealed by an examination of chicken entrails, but this process actually provided a means of weighing the merits and strength of the various claimants without making it necessary for any of the 'banang'oma' (members of Council of State) to commit himself too strongly in favor of one or another candidate." 56

Once chosen and properly invested with his new office, the chief was believed to have new powers. And it was on the basis of these powers that the authority of the chief


56 A. I. Richards, op. cit., p. 237.
principally rested. These powers were of a religious nature. But the chief was not thought of as a divine being himself.

"Every chief was considered to be the earthly representative of the most powerful spirit of the founder (of the tribe) and of the spirits of all his successors. The people believed them to be able to influence their fate and the fate of the land for good or ill, just as their own ancestors had power over the fortunes of their own families." 57

Thus it was the duty of the chief to conduct ceremonies

"to secure success in battle, hasten the arrival or abatement of rain, ensure a good harvest or terminate an epidemic or a locust invasion. . . . The ntemi (chief) who was 'successful' in securing the favour of his ancestors lived lavishly, acquired scores of wives and came to possess large herds of cattle. . . . in the case of a protracted crisis the strength and loyalty of the special guard were the only means by which a chief could be saved." 58

The people regarded the chief as having a special influence with the most powerful tribal ancestors. But if the chief failed in procuring prosperity for his people, they would consider that one of the chief's maternal cousins of the royal line might have more influence with the royal ancestors. They would then depose the chief.

As an additional support to maintaining his position, each chief gathered around him a royal guard. This was a group of warriors chosen by the chief from among slaves and captives. These warriors owed their lives to the chief. Thus their loyalty to the chief was even more reliable than that of the ordinary peasant.


58 A. I. Richards, op. cit., p. 236.
Another important support maintaining the authority of the chief was the institutionalized relationship between the chief and the headman. The principal functions of the headmen were to hear minor court cases, collect tribute, oversee cultivation of the chief's field and allocate new land. There seems to have been a tendency for the chiefs to appoint their sons as headmen in those chiefdoms where the chief's sons were ineligible to succeed him.

"So general was the appointment of relations, especially to administrative posts in outlying parts of the chiefdom, that the word 'banangwa', which originally meant the sons of a chief, became the generic name for the village headmen." 59

The headmen then, were the administrative arm of the chief.

The power and rights to be exercised by the chief seem at first glance to be all inclusive. Malcolm claims:

"... the people gave their chief the powers of final arbiter over all matters; there were no reservations and in effect he then acquired rights analogous to full control, if not ownership, of the lands of the community." 60

Another evaluation of the power of the chief is given by J. G. Liebenow who did a field study among the Sukuma.

"His authority as first magistrate of his chiefdom extended to judgments involving the death penalty and the confiscation of the convicted party's property. He also came to be the only truly wealthy person in his domain by virtue of the annual and occasional tribute payments which came to him in the form of cattle, grain or labour. ... his share in the tribal chase, and his collection of court fines and fees. With this store of wealth at his command, the chief was able to purchase support for his regime and to withhold favours from the obstinate." 61

59 H. Cory, op. cit., p. 29.
60 D. W. Malcolm, op. cit., p. 25.
61 A. I. Richards, op. cit., p. 234.
The land, its lives of the people, major juridical decisions and decisions to go to war were under the control of the chief. His authority was based on his putative religious power and was supported by his economic and military powers. Besides this, his administrative staff were dependent on him alone. Such a situation would seem to indicate an autocratic despot.

But there are certain institutionalized checks on the exercise of the power of the chief. Some of these checks were indicated above. During a time of protracted crisis, the people would begin to doubt the religious influence of a particular chief. His wealth would begin to dwindle as he would have to share his food more liberally with his subjects.

Possibly the strongest institutionalized check on the authority of the chief was the Council of State. It is to be remembered that the Council of State consisted of the members of the royal family who were eligible to succeed to the chieftainship.

"They thus had a proprietary interest in protecting the royal dynasty as much against external threats as against internal disintegration resulting from the injudicious use of authority by the incumbent. Collectively, they acted as the chief's council of state, advising him on his religious duties, regulating many aspects of his personal life, acting as his assessors in court, serving as 'listening posts' in areas of discontent in the chieftdom, caring for him in illness, arranging his funeral and electing his successor from among a host of candidates."62

62 Ibid., p. 236.
The Council of State was not the only group capable of checking the despotic tendencies of the chief. Such a group existed also among the Sukuma peasantry.

"The 'elika' or young men's society . . . played an essential role in maintaining good order in the villages through promulgating codes of good conduct and enforcing them upon their members. Chiefs relied heavily on the young men's societies in recruiting warriors, organizing collective labour and in assisting new immigrants in their planting and house building. The leaders of the 'elika', the 'basumba batale', were influential personages in their chiefdoms and they were able to arrange the terms of work contracts with the chiefs through a process resembling collective bargaining."63

It was usually these leaders of the young men's societies, the basumba batale, who played an important part in demanding the abdication of a chief whose religious powers had "failed" him.

Hans Cory, the Government Anthropologist of Tanganyika, nicely sums up the traditional restrictions on the authority of the chief.

"The chiefdoms were very small and this fact alone may account for the lack of extreme autocratic tendencies; it is difficult to be bloodthirsty for many years if one has not many subjects and knows them all by name. . . . A Sukuma chief was accessible in his residence to all his subjects and many of them shared a pot of beer with him."64

3. The Citimukulu of the Bemba

The next tribe that we shall investigate is the Bemba tribe of Northern Rhodesia. Like the Ganda, this tribe is

---

63Ibid., p. 237.
64H. Cory, op. cit., p. 33.
composed of a homogeneous people, all speaking a common language, having common historical traditions, all wearing the same tribal mark of a verticle cut on each temple, and all pledging their allegiance to a common paramount chief, the Citimukulu.

"The Bemba tribe at present inhabits the Tanganyika plateau of northeastern Rhodesia, between the four great lakes - Tanganyika to the north-east, Nyassa to the east, and Mweru and Bangweolu to the northwest and west respectively. They number . . . about 140,000, very sparsely scattered over the country at a density of an average 3.75 per square mile."65

With regard to the kinship and clan structure, the Bemba are divided into about forty dispersed, exogamous, matrilineal clans.

"The matriclans in this area are in no sense political or territorial groups. Through clan affiliation a man traces his descent, his rank and, if he belongs to the royal clan, his right to succeed to chieftainship. . . . no property is owned in common by the clan. There is neither joint occupation of land nor collective ritual activities."66

The clans are divided into a hierarchy of ranks, highest of which is the royal or crocodile clan.

The Bemba form one society in what has been termed the "matrilineal belt" of Africa in distinction to the eastern and southern patrilineal organized Bantu groups.

---

66 Wilfred Whitely, Bemba and Related People of Northern Rhodesia (London: International African Institute, 1951) p. 16.
The local unit in the political structure is the village consisting of 30 to 50 huts. The village is primarily a kinship unit which is controlled by a headman, who is the senior kinsman. When a man feels he has a sufficient following of relatives, he applies to the chief for permission to set up a community of his own. He disciplines the children and young people, hears cases informally and initiates agricultural undertakings.

A few of these villages are grouped together and placed under the authority of a subchief. The whole Bemba territory is divided into districts, called icalo, ruled over by a territorial chief. Over the whole, rules the paramount chief, the Citimukulu, who also rules over one of the districts.

Each of these districts is a replica of the Citimukulu's district. Each has its own capital with its own court. Each chief has rights over the labor and tribute of his own villagers.

Within each capital, each chief has a number of executive officials, some of whom are in charge of the business of the capital itself while others are responsible for carrying out the chief's orders in the Icalo at large. Their duties entail "keeping the peace of the village, organizing the tribute labor from the capital, allotting land for cultivation, arranging hospitality for visitors and acting as a panel of advisors on all occasions."

There was no general military organization.

Having briefly examined the basic political structure of the traditional Bemba society, let us now examine more closely the basic institutions which defined the status and role of the paramount chief.

67 Ibid., p. 107.
All chieftainships, a fortiori the paramount chieftainship, were based on membership in the royal crocodile clan. In general, any membership in the clan by that very fact gave an individual special rank in the society which "entitled him to special respect, precedence on ritual and social occasions and sometimes to claims on the people's service."  

Within the crocodile clan, transmission of chieftainship was matrilineal. But unlike the Sukuma, there seemed to be well defined rules for the selection of the new chief. One of these traditional rules stated that the successor to the paramount chieftainship should be the territorial chief of the most important district which was that of the Mwanbaship. "This was the most senior son of the most senior Mother."  

It is interesting to note the belief upon which this matrilineal transmission of chieftainship was based.

"Among the Bemba it is believed that a child is made from the blood of a woman which she is able to transmit to her male and female children. A man can possess this blood in his veins, but cannot pass it on to his children, who belong to a different clan . . . . These theories of procreation account, not only for the matrilineal descent of the Bemba, on which succession to chieftainship is based, but also for the rank accorded to the royal princesses as mothers of chiefs, and the headmanships and other positions of authority given them."  

Thus all the members of the royal clan formed a class apart.

"Any one who can possibly claim connection of any sort with any chief, dead or living, does so,

68 Ibid., p. 93.
70 M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p. 94.
although the perquisites of rank are in most cases honour only and the possible favours of the chief, rather than material assets. Every one outside the royal clan, or 'ulupwa', is an 'umupabi' or ordinary person . . ."71

The privileged position of the royal clan and the authority of the chief in particular, was based on the people's beliefs concerning the influences of their tribal ancestors in their lives.

"The spirit of a dead man (umupashi, plur., imipashi) is thought to survive as a guardian presence associated with the land or village site formerly inhabited, and as a spiritual protector of different individuals born in the same lineage group and called by the same name. The 'imipashi' of dead chiefs become tutelary deities of the land they ruled over, and responsible for its fertility and the welfare of its inhabitants."72

But the Bemba carry this relationship between the dead and the living one step further. The appointed lineage successor of a dead person is socially identified with that dead person.

"When a man or woman dies, his or her social personality must be immediately perpetuated by a successor who passes through a special ritual (ukipyanika) and thus acquires the name, the symbols of succession (a bow for a man and a girdle for the woman), and the umupashi of the dead man. By this social identification a man assumes the latter's position in the kinship group, uses the same kinship terms and, in the case of a chief, it is almost impossible to tell when a man is describing incidents which took place in his own life or those of an ancestor two or three generations dead."73

71 Ibid., p. 94.
72 Ibid., p. 97.
73 Ibid., p. 98.
Thus after a chief died, there was a prolonged, secret and mysterious ceremony during which the successor took possession of the name and the sacred relics of his dead ancestor. The paramount chief socially perpetuated and was socially identified with the most ancient and most revered chiefs in Bemba tradition. "It was this belief that was the basis for tribal feeling and of the allegiance given to the territorial and paramount chiefs."  

This set of beliefs that the prosperity of the land and the people depended on the tribal ancestors and that the paramount chief was socially identified with the most important of these tribal ancestors were an important basis of the authority of the paramount chief. "A chief is said to be powerful because he 'has great imipashi'. It is for this reason he is described as the 'unwine colo,' owner of the land..."  

When the Bemba chief is spoken of as the "owner of the land," we must see what meaning is given to this idea. Among the Ganda, we saw that the Kabaka was considered the owner of the land in a very literal sense. No one could cultivate land without it first being allocated to him by the Kabaka's representative. This is not the case among the Bemba.  

"The statement that 'all the land is mine' does not then mean that the (Bemba) ruler has the right to take any piece of ground he chooses for his own use. His own gardens are made in the neighborhood of the capital, and in any one year it is expected that commoners will wait to cut trees... until the chief has chosen the site he wants. But after that the people are free to clear the bush where they please. The same is true of the choice of land to be used for village beds... I never heard of a case where a chief took land that had already been occupied by a commoner... The chief looks upon a man as a subject and not as a tenant."

---

74 Ibid., p. 111.  
75 Ibid., p. 97.  
The Bemba Paramount is considered the owner of the land in a spiritual sense. He is responsible for it. It's fate is related to his fate.

"The Paramount chief who is remiss in his duty, whether ritual or otherwise risks the displeasure of the tutelary spirits of the whole land and may plunge the entire tribe into a state of imminent ill luck. . . . For this reason, a chief when he prays to the spirits, asks for every type of blessing on the land and not for the success of cultivated crops alone. . . . The word used to describe the misfortune which one expected to follow the death of a big chief is 'cala cowa', 'the land has fallen down.'

This supernatural dependence of the people on the chief was the basis for his authority. And the allegiance of all the Bemba to this one Paramount was the principle factor unifying the whole. Because of this "supernatural sanction", the Paramount possessed an arbitrary power over the lives of his people. He would savagely mutilate those who offended him in any way.

We have already seen that the almost divine character of the Citimukulu, i.e., the paramount chief, not only gives him the basis of his authority and power but also acts as a check on the use of this power. He must rule in the traditional manner which will be acceptable and pleasing to the ancestral spirits whom he represents.

Another important institution regulating the power of the chief is that of the "bakabilo". The bakabilo are hereditary officials of the chief's courts. They are immune from the chief's anger as they hold an hereditary office sometimes of

77 Ibid., pp. 235-236.
equal descent as that of the chief himself. There are about 35 to 40 bakabilo within the court of the Citimukulo.

"The main duties of the bakabilo in native eyes are ritual... They are in charge of the ceremonies at the sacred relic shrines and take possession of the 'babenge' (sacred relics) when the chief dies. They alone can purify a chief from defilement of sex intercourse so that he is able to enter his relic shrine and perform the necessary rites there. They are in complete charge of the accession ceremonies of the paramount." 78

The conferring of the chiefly power and its actual exercise depend upon these ritual officials. If they refuse to perform the rituals, the chief is unable to exercise his influence with the ancestral spirits upon which his authority is based. The author mentions this anecdote exemplifying the power of the bakabilo.

"During 1934, I found the paramount living in grass huts. He was unable to build his new village because the bakabilo, indignant at his behavior, refused to perform the foundation ceremony for the new community." 79

But the Bemba depended too much upon the Citimukulu to keep him in such a position for long. It was the Citimukulu who was their supreme judicial authority, the initiator of agricultural activities, their military leader, and mediator with their ancestors.

4. Comparative Analysis

We must now comparatively analyze these three descriptions of the institutionalized patterns defining the traditional position and role of the chief.

79 Ibid., p. 110.
We shall analyze the institutional factors in terms of the ideal type of traditional authority as presented by Max Weber.

According to Weber, in the traditional system of authority,

"Obedience is not owed to enacted rules, but to the person who occupied a position of authority by tradition or who has been chosen for such a position on a traditional basis. His commands are legitimized in one of two ways:

(a) partly in terms of traditions which themselves directly determine the content of the command and the objects and extent of authority. In so far as this is true, to overstep the traditional limitations would endanger his traditional status by undermining acceptance of his legitimacy.

(b) In part, it is a matter of the chief's free personal decision, in that tradition leaves a certain sphere open for this. This sphere of traditional prerogative rests primarily on the fact that the obligation of obedience on the basis of personal loyalty are essentially unlimited."

The institution of the Kabakaship among the Buganda seems to be based on just such a traditional system of authority. The Kabakaship was an hereditary position passed on from father to son according to traditional rules.

As is evident from an examination of the ceremonies of accession, the Kabaka was conceived as the one to whom all in Buganda belonged.

"You come from among the bataka to take possession of Buganda; all your men, the chiefs of the nation treat them with honor." (Accession ceremonial)

The land was thought to belong to the Kabaka who himself allotted it to his subjects. No distinction was made between the land and the people living on the land. As the Buganda said, "He has rights not over the land but over the people." The ceremonial killing of men and women at the occasion of his accession has been interpreted to indicate the absolute power of life and death that the Kabaka possessed over his subjects.

The Kabaka was also conceived as the one upon whom the Buganda depended for their welfare. He was entitled Ssemond, "the charcoal fire of the smith who can forge the kingdom as the smith forges iron." According to the Buganda "to be without a king" was synonymous with a situation of crisis.

It was these institutionalized accession ceremonials, titles and sayings that in part defined the relationship between the Kabaka and his subjects. The people belonged to and depended upon the Kabaka. He was considered supreme and omnipotent. People obeyed the Kabaka because he was their chief and not because it was the law. The Kabaka made decisions and ruled his people in keeping with the traditions of the tribe regarding family, religious, and economic customs. But these same tribal traditions defined the Kabaka as having unlimited powers over the lives of his subjects. The Kabaka was not considered a politician or even a political authority. The Kabaka was a unifying symbol of the whole tribe. Loyalty to the tribe and loyalty to the Kabaka were one and the same thing.

Because of the near despotic power of the Kabaka, an important check on his power was the traditional conception of the Kabaka as paternally responsible for the whole tribe. According to the accession ceremonial he was entreated to "look with kindness upon all your people, be mindful of your land, deal justice among your people." While his obligations
to his subjects were not spelled out in detail, loyalty on the part of the Kabaka with regard to the welfare of his subjects was certainly part of the institutionalized definition of his position and role.

Another trait of the traditional system of authority according to Weber concerns the administrative staff of a chief.

"His administrative staff does not consist primarily of officials but of personal retainers. ... What determines the relations of the administrative staff to the chief is not the impersonal obligation of office, but personal loyalty to the chief."81

The administrative staff of the Kabaka consisted mainly of his own appointees. They were chosen from among the commoners, chosen because they pleased the Kabaka in some way. These lesser chiefs were entirely dependent on the good pleasure of a particular Kabaka. Their primary obligation was a faithful carrying out of the Kabaka's orders.

Coupled with this dependence on the good graces of the Kabaka were the interests and rewards at stake for these lesser chiefs. According to the loyalty that they showed the Kabaka, these lesser chiefs would be appointed or promoted to even larger districts. These chiefs, answerable only to the Kabaka, could then share in the taxes and work services that they could demand from their subjects.

Besides these districts that they ruled in the name of the Kabaka, the lesser chiefs were rewarded for their loyalty by gifts of lands over which they ruled as supreme masters.

The ways of making political appointments along with the ways of supporting these political appointees oriented the administrative staff to regard themselves as dependent

81Ibid., p. 341.
on the good grace of the Kabaka. They had everything to gain by remaining royal to the Kabaka and by carrying out his every wish. They had everything to lose if they did not.

It might be noted in passing that as the land was the principle source of wealth to the Buganda, whoever controlled the possession of the land, controlled the wealth and its distribution among the Buganda. The Kabaka was considered as the one to whom all the land belonged. It belonged to him in the sense that as the property of the tribe, itself, it should be under the control of him who symbolized the tribe.

This economic dependance of the Buganda on the Kabaka was not the impersonal dependance of the worker upon his employer. The worker has no claim on his job. The employer could fire him and that would be it. The Kabaka could never fire a Muganda. A Muganda by the fact of being a member of the tribe and living on a certain plot of ground, had a personal claim on the economic support of the Kabaka.

The Buganda seemingly made no distinction between political, tribal or economic authority. The Kabaka was conceived as their provider, their defender, the symbol of their tribal unity, and their ruler. They owed the Kabaka personal allegiance and he owed them the same.

The political and economic institutions of the Buganda, analytically discernable but not distinguished as such by the Buganda, defined the position of the Kabaka as the omnipotent master. His was not the position of the totalitarian dictator. He too lived according to the customs and traditions of the tribe. But allegiance to the Kabaka meant allegiance to the tribe. It was from the tribe and therefore from the Kabaka that the people received their support, sustenance, and meaning in life. Without the Kabaka, there would be no Ganda tribe.
The position of the chief of the Sukuma seemed to be more tenuous than that of the Kabaka but his authority over his subjects was also based on traditional and personal factors.

The institutionalized criteria for the selection of a chief were somewhat different from those of the Buganda. The Sukuma chief was chosen from the matrilineal descendants of a royal family. While the members of this family did not seem to form a class apart, political authority was still controlled by this family. The only criterion required for eligibility to the chieftainship was membership in this royal line.

The basis of the authority of the chief was not his economic power. The Sukuma chief was obeyed because of his religious powers. The welfare of the tribe as a whole was thought to depend upon the spirits of the chiefly ancestors. And it was only the reigning chief who had any influence with them.

Here again we see the chief as defined as more or less representing in his person the tribe as a whole. If the tribe prospered, his subjects were indebted to him. He had gained the favor of the spirits. The tribe felt a real dependence on its chief.

It is in this sense of the prosperity of the tribe depending on the chief that it was said of the chief that he was "the absolute owner of all the land." The land was the property of the tribe but the land depended for its prosperity on the religious powers of the chief.

For this reason the chief claimed a share in the crops and services of his subjects. It was only in so far as he was successful as a religious intercessor that he could become economically powerful.
If the tribe suffered crop failure or an epidemic, the chief's religious powers were doubted by the people. At this time he had to depend more upon his administrative staff to support his authority.

The two principal institutionalized arms of the chief's administration were the royal guard and the headmen. Both depended on the chief for their positions. The royal guard, being selected from slaves and captives, owed their lives only to their allegiance to the chief. The headmen were for the most part chosen from among the sons of the chief who were themselves ineligible to be chiefs. In both cases, if the chief lost his position they too were in danger of losing theirs.

In both of these cases, we see a clear example of an administrative staff based primarily on a personal allegiance and loyalty to the chief.

But the chief was not thought of as the omnipotent master as in the case of the Buganda. Two institutions in particular acted as an effective check on the power of the chief. The first was the Council of State, the members of the royal family, themselves eligible for the chieftainship. These men were the members of his family, his advisors with regard to his personal and public life and his liaison with the tribe. Here it is clear there is no distinction made between personal relationship and official duty. It is all one to these men.

The other important institutionalized check on the power of the chief was that of the "elika", or young men's society. This was a traditional association to which all the young men of a certain age belonged. These leaders, among other things, organized work groups for the chief. But it was these same leaders who organized demonstrations demanding the abdication of chiefs if all was not going well.
It would seem that the authority and the power of the Sukuma chief was rather arbitrary, depending upon many factors—e.g., the prosperity of the crops and herds, their own economic strength, the strength of his royal guard, the organizational strength of the Council of State and of the "elika." Obedience was given out of personal loyalty and in so far as the chief proved himself a powerful religious intercessor with the ancestral spirits.

The Sukuma chief was not regarded merely as a political authority. He was their religious, political, military and economic leader. He had to be successful as such or else the people would be dissatisfied.

Note again the Sukuma do not distinguish between these different functions. We can analytically distinguish them. But for the Sukuma the chief is a person to whom one gives either his personal allegiance and loyalty or his opposition. If the chief has the people's loyalty, he is their master, ruling them in keeping with the tribal customs and according to his own good pleasure.

Among the Bemba we find institutionalized patterns resembling those of both the Ganda and the Sukuma. Here again the authority and power of the chief has a traditional basis demanding a personal allegiance on the part of his subjects.

The position of the Citimukulu, or paramount chief, was much stronger and more secure than that of the Sukuma chief, but not as autocratic as that of the Kabaka of the Buganda.

Traditional rules concerning succession to the Citimukulu were strictly followed. The paramount chieftainship was a matrilineal, hereditary position. The members of the royal clan constituted a class demanding certain differential treatment.
The basis of authority of the Citimukulu was religious. Obedience was owed not to the office of the ruler but to the person of the Citimukulu because he was socially identified with the tribal ancestors upon whom the prosperity of the tribe depended. In distinction to the Sukuma chief, the Citimukulu was considered not only as having a special religious influence with the tribal ancestors, but he was spoken of as being socially identified with and representing the most powerful tribal ancestor. His sacred position then did not depend upon the prosperity of the tribe. Even in time of crisis, the Citimukulu was looked upon as the one who could bring the tribe back into favor with the tribal ancestors.

Here too among the Bemba the chief was spoken of as "the owner of the land." It is interesting that in the three tribes studied, the chief is considered "the owner of the land." The tribal traditions differ in their beliefs justifying this situation. The Buganda believed that it was the Kabaka's ancestors who first settled on the land and then allotted it to their subjects. This gave the Kabaka the first rights over the land. The Sukuma and the Bemba believed that the prosperity of the land depended upon the religious power of their chiefs. In all three cases the chiefs never treated the natives living on the land as their tenants but rather as their subjects. In each case, in fact, the land was considered communal and it was the chief who for various reasons was believed to be in charge of the tribal community.

In all three cases it was the chief who was the focal point of tribal allegiance. Much of the tribe's activities were focused on the cultivation of the land. Thus in all three tribes we find a close relation between the chief and the land. Without the chief to give organization to the communal efforts, anarchy would prevail and the cultivation
would fail. Without the chief to win ancestral blessing on the crops, the tribe's cultivation would be doomed. As mentioned above, among the Bemba the word used to describe the misfortunes which are expected to follow the death of a big chief is "calo cawa," i.e., "the land has fallen down."

The chief, the tribe, the land, prosperity, and the subjects were all closely related in the minds and institutions of these people.

Obedience was owed to the chief because of the subject's loyalty to him and the tribe. The people belonged to and depended upon the tribe and its chief. Disobedience and rebellion would occur if the chief did not act according to the traditions of the tribe or if the people thought the chief was not acting in the interests of the tribe.

The institutionalized qualifications for an administrative post were of a personal nature. These qualifications were of two types. The first depended on a family relationship, the second on the favor of the chief.

Among the Bemba, district chieftainships depended on membership in the royal clan. The chief's court officials, the bakabito, were dependent on membership in a certain family. Among the Sukuma, the chief's Council of State consisted of his maternal male relatives. His royal guard consisted of his own personal selections based on their predicted loyalty to his person. The headmen, again personally chosen by the chief, were for the most part his own sons and other favorites.

The Kabaka of the Buganda was the least encumbered by family relationships in his rule. The major portion of his administrative staff consisted of his personal retainers selected from among the commoners whose position depended on their loyalty to the reigning Kabaka. It has been speculated that the Kabaka
during the 1800s gradually eliminated the princes of the royal line from all positions of authority. In his selection he would no longer be encumbered by hereditary claims.

In all three tribes, it was this family relationship or personal loyalty that determined the relationship of the administrative staff to the chief.
CHAPTER IV
THE COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION AND
THE TRIBAL CHIEF

1. The Administration and the Kabaka

"On one occasion, I was present when an old woman came into the county chief's office. She wanted to bring a case against her neighbor for possession of a plantain garden. Since she was a 'classificatory mother' to the chief, she felt she could bring the case directly to his court without first taking it to the headman and the parish chief for arbitration. The chief explained to her that this was impossible; she would have to go through proper channels. When she left, angry with her 'son' for refusing to grant what she saw as a legitimate request, the chief turned to me and shook his head. 'These people,' he said, 'just don't understand.' He added that he knew that if she failed to receive satisfaction from the headman and the parish chief, she would be back and would expect her case to receive special consideration."\(^{82}\)

What is it that "these people just don't understand." What changes have taken place in how the chief perceives his position and role and how his subjects perceive them. Again let us remember that we are examining institutional factors related to the definition of the status and role of the chief. What institutional changes did the British Administration introduce that would have a bearing on the redefinition of the chief's position and role.

\(^{82}\)L. Fallers, Bantu Bureaucracy (Cambridge, Eng.: Heffer and Sons, Ltd., 1956), pp. 199-200.
The particular institutional factors we will concern ourselves with are the laws and ordinances passed by the British Administration, affecting the traditional African political system. In particular, we will see how they affected the authority and power of the chief.

Among the Buganda, one of the first important administrative actions taken by the British government was the Uganda Agreement signed by the British Administration and the leading Buganda chiefs in 1900. This agreement recognized the authority of the Kabaka to appoint chiefs but they now had to be approved by the British Administration.

"The object of this agreement, which in many ways has been the salvation of Uganda, was to provide a perpetual safeguard for existing native rights." \(^83\)

In their efforts to insure the rights of the Africans, the British introduced new rights indirectly affecting the basis of the authority of the chief and of the Kabaka.

"The agreement provided for the allotment of 'large estates in freehold tenure to the king and his relatives'... and assigned 'the estates of which they are already in possession and which are computed at an average of eight square miles per individual to one thousand chiefs and private landowners.' The allotment was made by the native council of chiefs, Lukiko, which the agreement set up.... The fundamental change brought about by the Uganda Agreement... consists in the introduction into Buganda of an entirely new conception with regard to land tenure—the conception of land as a private possession at the complete disposal of an individual owner." \(^84\)

---


\(^84\) Ibid., p. 165-66.
As we saw above, the basis of the authority and power of the Kabaka and his chiefs was the conception of land as belonging to the Kabaka—a conception that made no distinction between the land and the people living on the land. Both belonged to their chief and through him to the Kabaka. On this conception was based the peasants' duties towards their chief and the chief's duties towards his subjects.

Now this "link between ownership of land and the performance of political duties" was broken. Ownership of land now no longer implies political authority.

"Many chiefs had never any recognized place in the scheme of the government, while continuing to hold the position which in native eyes qualified them to exercise authority. Freed from any responsibility towards the peasants living on their land—whose legal status was now that of tenants at will—they were simply presented with a lucrative source of revenue... For the peasants, another result of this divorce, is that they are now liable to two sets of obligations—the payment of rent and other dues to their landlord and of taxation or services to political authority. ... Meanwhile, the chiefs of the native administration had lost, except as regards the population of their official estates... what was formerly the central bond between them and their subjects."

Another administrative measure disassociating further the office from the person who held the office was the Native Courts Proclamation of 1909 whereby the traditional political structure was "rationalized".

"The British Administration substituted for the patchwork of royal estates, clan lands and benefices, an orderly demarcation into sub-counties..."

---

called gombolala from the word 'to disentangle' or 'to unravel'..."86

The Kabaka still had the right to appoint the chiefs of counties and sub-counties but according to the Agreement of 1900 these appointments were subject to the approval of the Administration.

"The struggle over the right of the Buganda Government to appoint its chiefs reached a kind of climax in 1926. Chiefs began to receive a fixed salary and the Protectorate Government successfully claimed the right to supervise the accounts of the Buganda Government."87

The chiefs were no longer dependent on the good pleasure of the Kabaka.

From the time of the Agreement of 1900, the central council of Lukiko was reorganized. A secretary was appointed and the minutes began to be kept.

"Under the Agreement it (the Lukiko) was to consist of 89 members... 66 members being selected by the Kabaka... In 1945 the Kabaka assented to the enactment of a law which provided for the introduction of an electorate system... By the amending law of December, 1947 the elected unofficial membership was increased from the former 31 to 36..."88

As the missionary educational system was rather highly developed in Uganda, the British Administration strongly supported for important administrative posts those Africans with a European education. As of 1953, 65% of the county chiefs had a

---

87 Ibid., p. 59.
secondary education and 15% had a University education; 45% of the elected members to the Lukiko or Buganda Parliament had a secondary education, 40% a primary education and 10% a university education.\(^8^9\) The present Kabaka has received a University education.

We can see how the administrative staff of the Kabaka was slowly transformed by the Colonial Administration from a group of personal retainers to a group of economically independent, educated and sometimes elected officials.

The Administration found it all the more necessary to exert pressure influencing the selection of chiefs because of the religious disputes among the Buganda. Both the Anglican and Catholic missions were quite strong in this territory. An unfortunate animosity had arisen between these two groups. The administration, therefore, had to assure a fair proportion of both Anglican and Catholics among the chiefs who were appointed.

Audrey Richards sums up the Colonial Administration's relationship to the status and role of the Kabaka as follows:

"... the history of the last 50 years certainly gives evidence of continued conflict between the Ganda concept of chieftainship as authority bestowed by the Kabaka and dependent on loyalty to him and the British concept of chieftainship as an office in a bureaucratic service, salaried and pensionable, to which trained men are appointed on merit. The conflict, when it came into the open, was a conflict over the right of choice of chiefs, and it was on this right, more than on any other, that the power of the Kabaka had traditionally depended."\(^9^0\)

\(^8^9\) A. I. Richards, *East African Chiefs*, p. 681

2. The Administration and the Sukuma Chief

Let us now review what changes have been introduced into the Sukuma tribal political system by the European Powers who controlled Tanganyika.

From 1881 to 1916, the territory that now encompasses Tanganyika was controlled by Germany. The Germans did not try to rule the Africans through the already existing tribal political system. The German Commissioner administered native affairs through his representatives, called Akidas, "who were mainly men of Arab or Swahili extraction." 91

After World War I, Tanganyika Territory was administered by Britain under a mandate of the League of Nations. This mandate prevailed from 1920 to 1946 when it was replaced by a trusteeship inaugurated by the United Nations Charter of 1945.

Under the mandate and trusteeship, the British carried out an administration by indirect rule, the ideals of which are contained in the following quote from a White Paper published by the British Government in 1927.

"Being convinced that it is neither just nor possible to deny permanently to the natives any part in the government of the country, the Government of this Territory has adopted the policy of native administration which aims... at making it possible for this to evolve in accordance with their traditions and their most deeply rooted instincts as an organized and disciplined community..." 92

On paper this sounds fine. But the meaning that the British gave to "an organized and disciplined community" differed somewhat from that given by the Africans.

91 Lord Hailey, op. cit., p. 212.
92 Ibid., p. 212.
In an attempt to organize and discipline the tribal community "in accordance with their traditions and deeply rooted instincts," the British Administration passed the Native Authority Ordinance #25 of 1923 and the Native Authority Ordinance #18 of 1926. By these Ordinances, Native Authorities were created and their responsibilities and jurisdiction defined. Native Authorities were defined as "Chiefs or other natives or any Native Council or groups of natives declared as such by the Government."

Through these Ordinances, whether the Administration recognized it or not, they had taken a large step in changing the entire basis of the exercise of political authority. "The key sanction for political authority consists in the approval of the British Administration. . . ."93

These Ordinances establishing a new basis of political authority had very important repercussions even on the very structure of the traditional political authority. As was mentioned above, almost all Sukuma chiefdoms were autonomous units before contact with the Europeans. This autonomy was to steadily decrease. For one thing, so many autonomous units contained within a limited area were very difficult to administer.

"This proliferation of political authority. . . presented difficulties for the Administration because locust control, soil erosion, diseases of plants and animals and other problems could not be properly dealt with on a strictly local basis. Moreover, there simply was not the staff available to deal directly with the 60 or more chiefdoms into which the Sukuma were divided."94

93 A. I. Richards, East African Chiefs, p. 244.
94 Ibid., p. 239.
Because of these administrative difficulties, the Administration consolidated some of the smaller chiefdoms. They also formed district federations through which the chiefs would make decisions affecting the whole district. And in 1947 the Sukumaland Federation was formed.

"It was initiated with high hopes of fostering a genuine tribal spirit among the Sukuma and was entrusted with the power of passing rules and orders for the whole of Sukumaland. . . . Within the past three or four years, however, most of its functions have reverted to the district councils. . . . The Federal Council remains as little more than a 'talking shop,' but it is highly probable that its existence during the period since 1947 has done much to foster feelings of tribal unity among the Sukuma."95

The Administration in attempting to control the succession of chiefs found the matrilineal system of succession too complicated. So they changed it to patrilineal succession. This seemed to be accomplished with little opposition. In 1949 the following rules were unanimously accepted by the Sukumaland Federation:

"There are no special rules in force with regard to succession.
A. It is nowadays usually patrilineal.
B. If the successor of a chief is not his son, and sons of the successor, and not the sons of the former chiefs are in the direct first line of succession to their father, but neither branch of the family can claim a legal right to succession."96

This change in the rules of succession weakened the position of the Council of State. As mentioned above, the

95 Ibid., p. 239.
Council of State consisted mainly of the matrilineal members of the royal family who had a proprietary interest in protecting the royal dynasty.

Their position was further weakened by a change in the mechanics of selection. Formerly it was the function of the Council of State to choose the new chief. Gradually this function was greatly democratized. Whomever the traditional Council chooses under the present system is considered more or less as only one candidate among many. The final selection is ostensibly left up to the people.

"If the chiefdom is small, the people will converge on the chiefdom headquarters on an appointed day. There, in the presence of the district commissioner, the adults will divide and range themselves behind the candidates of their choice who have been stationed at various points in an open field." 97

It was the Council of State that was the most powerful check on the power of the chief. Through its Ordinances the Administration now substituted itself as this check. As it is the Governor whose recognition makes the chief, so it is only his censure that breaks the chief.

"The removal process has been monopolized by the Administration. Were the 'basumbale batale' (the leaders of the young men's societies) or any other group of citizens to demonstrate in front of a chief's hut and threaten him with bodily harm if he did not abdicate, such action would involve these individuals in criminal prosecution, regardless of the fact that they might have been acting in a traditional manner. Only the withdrawal of the Governor's recognition, or death, can remove an ntemi from office." 98

The Administration in its efforts to organize and discipline the tribal community in accordance with the traditional way of

97 A. I. Richards, East African Chiefs, p. 245.
98 Ibid., p. 246
life suppressed the customary tribute and services through which the chief was able to become the wealthiest man of the chiefdom. In their place, Native Authority Treasuries were established.

"At the inception of the organization of Native Authorities in 1926, the objectives most prominently in view were the maintenance of law and order, and the relief of the people from payments of the customary tribute and services to chiefs."99

The chief can no longer do whatever he wishes with the taxes collected. He must keep books and present his budget to the Administration for inspection. It is from this treasury that the chief now receives a fixed salary. The chief is now more dependent on the good will of the Administration than on the good will of his subjects for his wealth.

"The abolition of tribute has depersonalized the economic ties between the chief and his people. The better educated Sukuma seem to be keenly aware of the fact that the financial transactions of the native treasuries are under the control of district commissioners and they, therefore, bypass the chiefs in making suggestions or criticisms of local government programmes. . . . The chiefs, for their part . . . can improve their personal economic position without regard for their responsibilities to their subjects."100

Having examined the changes that the Administrative Native Authority Ordinances have effected with regard to the sources of chiefly authority and power, now let us briefly examine how these same Ordinances redefine the functions and jurisdiction of this authority.

99 Lord Hailey, op. cit., p. 236.
100 A. I. Richards, East African Chiefs, p. 244.
The Chief's function as a supreme judge has been suppressed. Under the Native Courts Ordinance No. 5 of 1929,

"the Courts are instituted and jurisdiction and powers are defined by a warrant of the Provincial Commissioner. But the Ordinance itself excludes from their jurisdiction all offenses punishable with death, or imprisonment for life, marriage cases other than those contracted under Mohammedan Law and custom, and cognizable offenses committed in a township."\textsuperscript{101}

As a part of the machinery of the Administration a new function has been given to the chiefs, that of legislator. For the most part, the chiefs are instructed to create laws to support new standards of conduct of technical performance in agriculture and animal husbandry. Some examples of such legislation is as follows:

\begin{quote}
"... the Cultivation and Preparation of Coffee Rules 1930, the Cattle Rules of 1943, the Ferry Rules and Market Rules of 1930 and 1938, the Pedal Bicycle Rule of 1932, the Native Beer Rules of 1945, ... the Rule for Voluntary Registration of Marriages and Divorce 1930, the Rule restricting immigration into Busweg 1936 and the Stock Theft Prevention Rule 1946."\textsuperscript{102}
\end{quote}

In the execution and administration of these laws and other regulations, the chief has the authority and support of the Administration to back him up. He can choose his administrative officers with a freer hand unencumbered by traditional customs.

3. The Administration and the Citimukulu

The experience of the Bemba tribe's contact with Western Civilization in the form of the British Administration, private

\textsuperscript{101}Ibid., p. 219.

\textsuperscript{102}Hailey, op. cit., p. 238.
enterprises and Christian missions must first be seen in the larger context of Northern Rhodesia. The British for the most part administered Northern Rhodesia as a whole, not dealing with each tribe separately.

Northern Rhodesia's first contact with Europeans differs markedly from that of Uganda and of Sukumaland. The British marked off Northern Rhodesia at the beginning as a site for colonization and for economic exploitation.

The territory now comprising Northern Rhodesia was first placed under the control of the British South African Company. This Company's interest was mainly farming and gold mining. At this time this Company's Charter included the power to alienate any land it wished for its purposes. This power was modified in 1899 and 1900 by the North Western and North Eastern Rhodesia Ordinance in Council which "made it an explicit condition that sufficient land should be from time to time assigned for native occupation."\(^{103}\)

Throughout the subsequent years, Native Reserves were established and some tribes were forced to live on these reserves. By 1939,

"the distribution of the 185,776,912 acres in the territory was then shown as follows:

a) 11,225,498 were classed as reserved for demarcated Forests, Game Reserve, etc.

b) 8,800,395 acres had been alienated, namely 4,173,000 held by the North Charterland Co., 1,566,525 by the British South Africa Company and 3,060,870 held in farms, etc. . . .

\(^{103}\) Lord Dailey, Native Administration in the British African Territories, Part II (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1950) p. 76.
d) The Native Reserves... some 38 in number, occupied 34,532,000 acres.

e) there remained 94,219,019 acres of unallotted crown land.104

The growing and sustained European interest in Northern Rhodesia was due in large part to the discovery and development of the copper mines, particularly in the Region of the Copperbelt and Broken Hill.105

This economic "take-over" of Northern Rhodesia by the Europeans affected the very social structure of the tribal community.

"It has been estimated that in 1946 the adult ablebodied males fit for employment in the Protectorate numbered 270,300 of whom 90,100 were assumed to be engaged in the production of native crops in the Protectorate and 180,000 employed in a wage earning capacity..."106

Here we may note several structural changes in the traditional life. First of all, there was the introduction of a capitalistic economic system into the lives of these people. The majority now earn wages paid in European money. The majority of wage earners, it should be noted, work outside of their tribal society, traveling long distances to the mines.

These facts have implications for the relationships between the chief and his subjects. An important implication it would seem, is that the chief no longer has as large a supply of free labour as he had before.

104Ibid., p. 76.

105(It might be noted that in 1960 the Rhodesian Nyassaland Federation ranked second in the world in the mining of copper. See Croissance des jeunes nations, Nov., 1962, p. 15.)

106Hailey, op. cit., p. 78.
"The power of the Bemba chief is inevitably reduced by his economic position. . . . The Bemba rulers were never rich compared to a number of African potentates. Theirs is a poor country. . . . Added to this, the service on which the Bemba chiefs depended is cut down by half or more by the absence of men at the mines, and what remains is often given unwillingly."

But of even more influence than this economic take-over in undermining the power of the chiefs, was the political take-over. This was most evident at the time the Chartered Company controlled Northern Rhodesia.

"Under the Chartered Company, the policy was one of direct rule, the chiefs being used as agencies of the Government and their authority and privileges upheld so far as these were not incompatible with the rule of the Company."

This period of Company control lasted until 1929. It was the company who decided who was going to be chief.

"To the Bemba, the superior force of the new administration must have been immediately apparent. . . . They at once intervened in a case of disputed succession over the Mwanbship which had then fallen vacant, and appointed their own nominee. . . . One by one the functions of the old chiefs were taken over by the new authorities. New courts of law were introduced. . . . customs considered 'repugnant to natural justice and morality' were prohibited, e.g. accusations of witchcraft, murder for ritual purposes, the use of the ordeal in determining guilt, etc. Certain totally new offenses were created. . . . the penalties for legal offences were changed. . . ."

108 Hailey, op. cit., p. 83.
In 1924, the administration of Northern Rhodesia was taken away from the Chartered Company and was taken over by the British Government. In 1929, there were passed the Native Authority and Native Court Ordinances which provided for the recognition of chiefs and the establishment of native courts. Although these Ordinances went far to reestablish the authority of the traditional political system of the Bemba, they changed the basis of this authority. The basis for this authority is now to be found in the ordinances which "defines a Paramount Chief, or sub-chief as a native who has been recognized by the Government as occupying that position, and defines a Native Authority as any Paramount Chief, Chief, subchief or other native declared to be a Native Authority under the Ordinance."\(^{110}\)

The Supreme Native Authority as defined for the Bemba is the Cimitukulu with his hereditary Council. It is the Paramount in council who appoints new chiefs and it is the hereditary council who selects a new Paramount Chief. But all these appointments are carefully watched over by and controlled by the British Administration. This is clearly brought out in a book written for new District Officers concerning the succession of Bemba Chiefs. In the second edition of his book, the author gives an example of the administration's relation to the process of chiefly succession.

"The most important change is the fact that Nkula has inherited the Paramountcy. There was a year of tribal intrigue and Government investigation before this appointment was made. It was a departure from the strict horizontal succession and in the old days there would possibly have been war over this appointment. But Mwamba, Musenga, the next man in line to the two recently deceased Paramounts was passed over by the councillors because a large

\(^{110}\) Hailey, op. cit., p. 84.
body of people feared him on account of his 'foreign' descent and because this descent had given him strange powers of witchcraft. . . . Most of the District Officers with Bemba experience were in favour of Mwamba but it was the fact that the Councillors eventually chose Nkula that won the day."

This incident occurred in 1946. It is a good example of the Colonial policy of indirect rule at work. While retaining much of the structure of the traditional political system and remaining flexible enough to give before the weight of public opinion, it is the District Officer who makes the final decision and keeps control over the system.

The Administration's control does not stop at the appointment of chiefs. The Administration has carefully defined their jurisdiction. The Native Courts have been reconstituted but again their jurisdiction has been limited to less serious cases e.g. those not involving witchcraft, murder, issues involving Europeans etc. And the chiefs receive salaries paid by the Government.

Often it would seem that the British Administration uses the Native Authority as its instrument in getting things done. Thus the Native Authority has been encouraged to make rules and "issue orders on matters of hygiene, bush-burning, the movement of natives, the constitution of villages, etc."112

Lord Hailey, whose major concern is the description and evaluation of the Native Administration in British Africa, makes the following judgment on the use of rule-making powers among the Bemba.

"One gains the impression that in the Northern Province they (Native Authorities) have invariably acted on the suggestion or even pressure of District

111 Brelsford, op. cit., p. v.

112 Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., 117.
Officers in making Rules relative to matters which have been held to be of definite public interest, (such as rules regulating cultivation or soil erosion) and that in a variety of other matters a Rule or Order has only been made after consultation with the District Officer, who has generally been responsible for drafting it. 113

To all appearances it is the chief who makes the decisions, issues orders, holds court, collects taxes and does in fact have the support of the British Administration. But the power and authority of the chief is definitely defined and limited by the Colonial Administration.

4. A Comparative Analysis

We shall now analyze the meaning given to the position and role of the chief as defined by the institutional changes introduced by the British Administration. The British expected a political authority, such as a chief, to behave in a certain manner. Thus the administrative ordinances that they introduced regulating the activity of the chiefs were inspired by how they thought a chief should act.

It is interesting to note that the official British policy with regard to the three tribes studied was one of indirect rule. The Administration wished to keep and, if possible, to strengthen the traditional tribal political structure. In theory, they wished to interfere as little as possible with the internal workings of tribal life.

But the problems besetting this approach to colonial rule arose from two principle sources. First of all, when all is said and done, it would appear that the British employed this policy of indirect rule, not out of any deep seated respect

113 Hailey, op. cit., p. 144.
for the workings of a culture different than theirs. Instead, indirect rule was found to be the most effective way of administering these African tribes with the least amount of trouble.

Another major problem arose from the fact that the British gave different meanings to the position and role of the tribal chief than did the Africans. It is this facet of the problem with which we are concerned. We will analyze the meanings given to the position of the tribal chief by the Administrative Ordinances in terms of the bureaucratic type of authority as presented by Max Weber.

According to Weber, some of the characteristics of the bureaucratic type of authority are as follows:

"There is the principle of fixed and official jurisdictional areas, which are generally ordered by rules, that is, by laws or administrative regulations.

The principle of office hierarchy and of levels of graded authority mean a firmly ordered system of super- and subordination in which there is supervision of the lower offices by the higher ones.

In principle, the modern organization of civil service separates the bureau from the private domicile of the official and in general, bureaucracy segregates official activity as something distinct from the sphere of private life. In principle, the executive office is separated from the household, business from private correspondence and business assets from private fortunes.

The reduction of modern office management to rules is deeply embedded in its very nature. The theory of modern public administration... does not entitle
the bureau to regulate the matter by commands given for each case, but only to regulate the matter abstractly. This stands in extreme contrast to the regulation of all relationships through individual privileges and bestowals of favor. . . ."114

The historical experience that the three tribes studied had with the British Administration was somewhat different for each. This has been so for a number of reasons. For example, the contact has taken place at different times. The Buganda felt the impact of the Administrations Ordinances as early as 1900; the Bemba and the Sukuma not until the 1920s.

The historical context of these contacts was also quite different for the three tribes. For instance, the influence of the British Administration came quite early in the Buganda's contact with Western Civilization. Whereas the Sukuma had undergone at least twenty years of the direct rule of the German Administration. This tribe was then turned over to the British under the mandate of the League of Nations. The Bemba's first prolonged contact with Western Civilization came in the form of a private Chartered Company whose purpose was the exploitation of the land for its own profit. All of these factors demanded a somewhat different administrative approach for each of the tribes.

But of particular interest to us are the differences in the tribal political structure. Because of these differences, as we have seen, the Administrative Ordinances varied somewhat for each of the tribes studied. For example, the Uganda Agreement of 1900, among other things, introduced a system of freehold land tenure. This provision was unique to the Buganda and had an important impact on the tribal political structure based as it was on a concept of tribal land tenure.

The Sukuma political structure differed basically from that of the Buganda and Bemba in that the Sukuma were divided into many autonomous chiefdoms. Therefore the British Ordinances consolidating many of these chiefdoms into districts and then into the Sukumaland Federal Council were adapted to the unique political structure of this tribe.

Underlying these differences in Ordinances required to meet the variation in tribal structure, there is to be found an institutionalized conception of the meaning of the political structure in general and that of the position and role of authority in particular.

The Administrative Ordinances imposed upon the Bemba political structure can be taken as typical of those imposed upon the Buganda and the Sukuma. Such is the Ordinance defining a Native Authority as one who is recognized as such by the British Administration. While it is true that the Administration ordinarily recognized the traditional tribal authority as the Native Authority, there is a difference of meaning between the two. To make legitimate his position as authority, a tribal chief would appeal to the sacred traditions of his tribe. Whereas the Administration would appeal to its Ordinances. The chief would appeal to his personal hereditary relationships. The Administration would appeal to a written law.

The Administration in defining the chief as a Native Authority means by that, a political authority and nothing more. In the traditional conception of the chief, the African, be he chief or subject, did not distinguish between the chief as political, economic, military and religious leader. To be chief for the African meant all this. He was the supreme symbol of the tribe to whom all owed personal allegiance and loyalty.

The Administration distinguishes carefully. According to its Ordinances, the chief is only the political authority in the
Western meaning of the word. His authority is derived from and limited by Administrative Ordinances. In these Ordinances, he is not considered the pinnacle of tribal authority. His every decision both legislative and judicial is subject to the approval of and appeal to the District Commissioner or Territorial Governor. He is now a part of an official hierarchy whose power and jurisdiction are carefully defined by various laws and ordinances.

The chiefly basis of authority was transferred from traditional to legal standards.

In delimiting the jurisdiction of the chief and specifying his official duties, the Administration seemed to envision the chief more as a bureaucratic official than as the master of his people. An indication of this can be seen in the Ordinances suppressing the tribute paid to the chief and substituting in its place a fixed salary. This fixed salary was taken from a tax collected by and for the Government.

As we have seen, the tribute given to the chief was a symbol of the personal dependence of the tribe on the chief. The chief was conceived as assuring the welfare of the tribe. Therefore each member owed him personal allegiance. In suppressing this tribute, the Administration suppressed a symbol of the personal relationship between the chief and the tribal member. The African, in paying his tax to the Government, would be oriented toward substituting the Government for the chief. He would be oriented toward seeing himself as dependent on the Administration rather than on his chief.

This substitution of the tax system for the tribute system also had its effects in depersonalizing the relationship between the chief and his subjects from the viewpoint of the chief. Being assured a fixed salary from the Administration, the chief would become less dependent on his subjects in several ways. First, there would be the possible tendency to associate himself with the Administration rather than with his tribe. It is the
Administration who assured his position and his income. He would be oriented in this way to try to please the Administration rather than his subjects.

The chief's salary would be the same no matter what happened to the tribe. In this way the fate of the chief was disassociated from the fate of the tribe. In the traditional system the amount of tribute would vary in relation to the success or failure of the crops, to the chief's fulfilling of his religious, economic and military duties, etc. The chief traditionally would consider himself responsible for the welfare of the tribe.

Now the chief is paid for the fulfillment of a number of official, political duties. His salary is not based on his relations to his people but on the fulfillment of duties as indicated in the Ordinances.

What we have been analyzing here is not what has in fact taken place. That is, we are not saying that the relationship between the chief and his subjects has become depersonalized and bureaucratized. What we are saying is that new definitions or meanings of the positions and role of the chief have been introduced and imposed upon the traditional meanings of the same. The Administrative Ordinances specifying the jurisdiction of the chiefs and assuring a fixed salary, are based on the assumption of political authority as a bureaucratic official whose primary obligations are to his duty of office.

A clear case in point of the depersonalization of the relations between chief and subject is that of the freehold land tenure clause in the Uganda Agreement. Traditionally among the Buganda, no distinction was made between the owner of the land and the political authority. The chief was responsible for his subjects because he was responsible for the land on which they lived and vice-versa. He had rights over the one because he had rights over the other. The Administration introduced the
idea and the fact of private ownership of land as separate from political authority. The two were separated. The inhabitants of the land were no longer considered subjects of the owner but rather his tenants. They now owed him not personal allegiance but very impersonal rent.

According to the Administration, the position and role of the chief was made legitimate by Ordinances. His jurisdiction was defined by Ordinances. These Ordinances relegated the chief to the position of a subordinate official in the Colonial Administration. These Ordinances fixed and assured his salary which gave the chief an economic independence. The Ordinances assured the chief of the Administration's support in the face of rebellious subjects. But the chief was now expected to administer his functions in accordance with these same Ordinances. In administering justice the chief was now expected to judge a case according to the written law, not according to his personal relationship to the defendant. He was expected not to show favoritism nor to be arbitrary in his decisions.

The Ordinances and the British Administration also envisioned a more depersonalized relationship between the chief and his administrative staff. As we have seen, the traditional administrative staff as a group of personal retainers of the chief was one of the major supports of the chief's supremacy. From the beginning the Administration tried to control these appointments. According to the Ordinances, all appointments had to be approved by the District Commissioner or the Governor. Once in office any subchief could be removed by the Administration.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

1. Contrasting Definitions

"In Uganda, for example, if we were to visit a chief, we might find him attending a committee meeting, helping to work out a budget for the coming fiscal year. If we ask for an appointment, we will be received in a modern office equipped with typewriters, telephones, filing cases, and the other apparatus of modern bureaucracy. If by chance, we had called another day, our chief would have been meeting with his clanmates in the thatched hut of his paternal uncle, and the talk would have been of genealogical refinements and the wishes of ancestors. If we are invited to tea at the chief's house in the evening, we will be introduced to his several wives, and this may surprise us because we have heard that he is a pillar of the local Anglican parish and a patron of the Boy Scout troop. I have chosen a rather extreme, though not unreal example." 115

Here, set up one against the other, are the two worlds in which the chief lives. Two different standards are presented to the chief by these two cultures. Each conceives of the chief in a different way. The position that he holds in his tribal society and the behavior expected to him as chief are given different meanings by the tribal society and by the British Colonial Administration. Both of these societies, in conformity with their idea of what a chief should be, will act accordingly in relation to the chief. These institutionalized patterns of behavior related to the chief's status and role

will influence the chief to conceive of himself and of the behavior expected of him according to the traditional or Colonial meaning of chiefly authority.

In this study we have described and analyzed some of these institutionalized patterns related to the chief's status and role. Through this description and analysis, we have tried to find out what institutionalized meanings were given to the chief by his tribal society and by the British Administration. These institutionalized meanings would in part determine what behavior is expected of the chief as chief. These meanings would give a certain orientation to the behavior of the chief.

Our hypothesis is that the new, superimposed, colonial definitions of the status and role of the chief demand a universalistic—achieved, bureaucratic orientation of the behavior of the chief; whereas the traditional, tribal definition of the status and role of the chief demand of the chief a particularistic—ascribed, traditionalistic orientation.

From our description and analysis we have seen the institutional definitions given to the status and role of the chief.

2. The Tribal Definition of the Chief

On the one hand, we have the traditional definition of the Chief. In the three tribes studied, we found that the basis of the chief's authority was traditional and hereditary. It was based on the tribal legends and beliefs concerning the chief's relation to the founding ancestors of the tribe. In the case of the Buganda, this relationship gave the Kabaka a right over the land and people of the tribe. In the case of the Sukuma and Bemba, this relationship was primarily of a religious nature, giving to the chiefs special religious power on which the welfare of the tribe was believed to depend.
The chief's powers were defined in a very diffuse manner. He was much more than a political authority. He was the political, judicial, economic, military and religious leader of the tribe, no distinctions being made between these different roles. He was the focal point of tribal allegiance. In all three tribes, it was believed that without the chief there could be no prosperity, no unity, no tribe. Allegiance and loyalty to the chief meant allegiance and loyalty to the tribe. Obedience was based on this same personal allegiance and loyalty.

In the three tribes studied, the institutionalized relationship between the chief and his administrative staff were of a personal nature. The administrative staff were either members of the chief's family or his personal selections from among his favorites. Personal loyalty and allegiance to the chief or the royal family were expected from this staff.

In terms of Weber's ideal types, these institutionalized patterns define the position and role of the chief as a traditional type of authority. The chief is defined and is expected to act as "the master . . . moved by personal sympathy and favor, by grace and gratitude." 116

In terms of Parson's types of pattern variables, we can conclude that the role expectations as defined by these traditional institutions orientated the chief to act according to the values attached to the particular relationship with the others involved. This particularistic orientation is based on emotional and non-rational factors. For example, a traditional value involved the person of the chief as all important to the welfare of the tribe. This value placed the chief as the supreme authority within the tribe with rights over the very

116 Gerth and Mills, op. cit., p. 216.
lives of his people and demanding from them personal loyalty and allegiance. This orientation was based on the religious beliefs and legends of the tribe. The whole concept of obedience was based on this personal relationship between the chief and his subjects. This personal relationship with the chief considered as the supreme authority in the total lives of his subjects allowed the chief to act in an arbitrary manner according to his likes and dislikes. It allowed him also to play favorites. This showed itself most clearly in the chief's relationship to his administrative staff. He was orientated to act with regard to his administrative staff not according to their objective qualifications to do a job but according to the loyalty he expected of them.

Besides this particularistic orientation, the role relationship involved between chief, administrative staff and subjects was based on ascribed status. The chief was expected to orientate himself to others according to their attributes, i.e. according to who they were. One of the institutional basis for this ascribed orientation was that of the royal clan or royal family. The very fact of membership in this family gave one an eligibility for chieftainship or for some important post. Many of the posts were hereditary, passing on from father to son or from brother to brother as the traditions prescribed.

With regard to the chieftainship itself, this ascribed orientation seems to have been partially modified, especially in the Ganda and Sukuma tribes. In these cases, a Council of Elders had the right to choose the new chief from a number of possible heirs to the throne. Nevertheless, in all cases there were no objective qualifications required for the chieftainship other than these hereditary qualifications.
According to the traditional institutional factors examined and analyzed, we can conclude that the definitions which these institutionalized patterns gave to the status and role of the chief demanded a particularistic-ascribed, traditional orientation of his chiefly activity.

3. The British Colonial Definition

On the other hand, we have the British Colonial definition of the chief. In the three tribes studied, we found that its basis of the authority of the chief is legalistic and rational. It is based on Administrative Ordinances defining a native authority. In each case, a native authority is an African who is so recognized by the Colonial Administration.

The chief's powers and jurisdiction are derived from and defined by these same Ordinances. The chief is allowed to rule in the traditional manner only in so far as it is permitted by these Ordinances.

The functions of the chief as presented in these Ordinances define the chief as only a political official. He is expected to execute the Administration's orders, to legislate, to judge, to collect taxes, and to keep records. His decisions are subject to the approval of a higher authority. He is paid a fixed salary and his traditional rights over the tribute and labor of his subjects are carefully defined or eliminated altogether.

The Administration's definition of the relationship between the chief and administrative staff is of an impersonal, more bureaucratic nature. The appointments made are no longer completely in the hands of the chief. They too are subject to the approval of the Administration. And the Administration tends to approve only those qualified for the job. The qualifications that the Administration emphasizes are not
hereditary or personal relationships. As the functions required of the staff now include tax collecting, bookkeeping, committee meetings and planning, the Administration stresses the more impersonal qualifications such as the degree of education received.

The Administration also gradually introduced the electoral system whereby, e.g., the district chiefs will be elected by the people of the district. These district chiefs are thus seen not as representatives of the chief to the people but as representatives of the people to the chief.

As the staff now receives a fixed salary, the position of a subchief no longer depends on his loyalty to the person of the chief. He will receive his salary and hold his position as long as he satisfactorily fulfills his obligations of office.

In terms of Weber's ideal type, these colonial institutionalized patterns define the position and role of the chief and his staff as a bureaucratic type of authority. The chief and his staff are defined and expected to act as "the personally detached and strictly 'objective expert'."117

In terms of Parson's types of pattern variables, we can conclude that the role expectations as defined by these colonial institutions orient the chief to act according to standard defined in completely generalized terms. This universalistic orientation to action is based on clearly defined and specific rules and regulations inherent in the office he holds. Laws are to be executed and cases judged according to the jurisdiction defined in the Ordinances. Appeal was to be made to the written law only and not to clan or kin relationships.

Besides this universalistic orientation, the role involved between the chief and his administrative staff is based on an achieved status. The Colonial Ordinances envisioned the native

117 Ibid., p. 216.
administrative staff, not as a group of personal retainers responsible to the chief, but as a group of officials responsible to the Administration. Ordinances assured the administrative officials a fixed salary, defined his jurisdiction and duties and set the requirements of his appointment and dismissal. Where possible, some form of representative government was introduced. The Colonial Government conceived the administrative post as an achieved position and not as an ascribed position. In accordance with these Ordinances, the chief would be oriented to behave toward his staff as towards those holding an achieved position.

We can therefore conclude that according to the Colonial institutional factors studied with regard to the Ganda, Bemba and Sukuma tribes, the superimposed Colonial definitions of the status and role of the Chief demanded of him a universalistic-achieved, bureaucratic orientation.

4. Some Further Perspectives

Daniel J. Levinson states that "there are at least three distinct senses in which the term 'role' has been used . . ."118 Role can be defined as "structurally given demands," or as "the member's . . . conception of the part he is to play in the organization," or as "the ways in which members of a position act . . . in accord with or in violation of a given set of organizational norms."119

In this study we have considered roles in the first sense, i.e., structurally given demands. In the light of our conclusions, the other two meanings of role could now be adequately studied with regard to the chief.

119Ibid.
The fact that the structurally given demands of the chief have changed gives rise to the hypothesis that there has been a corresponding change in the chief's image of himself. We might theorize that the Kabaka and the Citimukulu regard themselves less as the unifying symbols of the tribe and see themselves more as government functionaries.

Structurally conflicting role demands place the chief in a dilemma. Which demand is the chief favoring and under what circumstances? Such a dilemma calls for further study of the ways in which the chiefs are actually reacting to these conflicting demands.

As we have already noted the close relation between the political institution and the other major institutions in Africa in tribal life, the hypothesis arises that a major change in one will affect the other institutions. As hypothesis suggested by this study is as follows: as the tribal dependence upon extra-tribal governmental support increases, the kinship and family system will be correspondingly weakened.

As important as these further implications are, first it is necessary to know the actual relations between the new African political leaders and the tribal chiefs. The new political leaders represent the newly independant nations. The chief represents one tribe within the nation. Are these new African leaders treating the chiefs in the same way as the Colonial Administration before them? Are the tribal chiefs being thought of as collaborators in the work of integrating many tribes into the unity of one nation? Or are the chiefs being bypassed as the new African governments try to organize themselves at all levels along "Western" lines.

The emerging African nation is a fertile field of study where the sociologist and anthropologist must work closely together.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Sociological Theory and Methodology


Bougle, Celestin. *Qu'est-ce que la sociologie?* Paris: F. Alcan, 1907.


Levinson, Daniel J. "Role, Personality, and Social Structure In the Organizational Setting." The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology. 1959, 58, 170-80.


Lowie, Robert H. Primitive Society.


Tuner, Ralph H. "Value Conflict in Social Disorganization." Sociology and Social Research. 1954, 38, 301-308.


**Africa in General**


**Sukuma**


Bemba


Ganda


The thesis submitted by Reverend William Francis Moroney has been read and approved by three members of the Department of Sociology.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

Date: May 8, 1962

Signature of Adviser