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PREFACE

Each major scientific undertaking has its own little "biography". The history of the present study is a particularly long one, having had both its very rewarding and also quite dramatic moments. It has extended over a period of more than 12 years now and has always centered around the same basic question, namely the conditions and chances for democratic government in Africa, and the same "case", Kenya. In the course of time I have attempted to attack this problem from a variety of angles, testing a multitude of approaches for their applicability and fruitfulness. The present solution certainly is not the "last word" on this topic, if there ever will be one, but it reflects both the development of my own thinking and the many changes our discipline as a whole has been going through during this period.

It all began with a 3-month stay in East Africa in the summer of 1966, organized by the "Studienkreis Kontinente und Kontakte" in Hamburg. During this time I also collected material for my "Diplomarbeit" which was already on "Das politische System Kenias und seine wirtschaftlichen und gesellschaftlichen Voraussetzungen", and which was presented, under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Hans Maier, to the "Staatswirtschaftliche Fakultät" at the University of Munich in April 1967. After my examination as "Diplom-Volkswirt" in summer 1968, I did two years of graduate work at the University of California at Berkeley.

Among the tangible products of my invaluable experiences there are a monograph on "The Distribution of Income and Education in Kenya - Causes and Potential Political Consequences", which deals with the "structural" side of my topic, and the basic work for my dissertation on "Politische Kultur - Versuch der kritischen Rezeption, Ausweitung und Vertiefung eines neueren politikwissenschaftlichen Ansatzes", an attempt to deal with the theoretical bases of the "cultural" side of my analysis. This was again presented, under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Theo Stammen this time, to the "Staatswirtschaftliche Fakultät" at Munich in May 1971. In the summer of 1970 I had also formulated the theoretical approach of the present study for the first time at the occasion of my "advancement to candidacy" for the Ph. D. at Berkeley. In the summer of that same year I also took part in a first intensive course of Kiswaheli at Indiana University in Bloomington/Indiana.

In the summer of 1971, as a member of the "IFO-Institute for Economic Research" at Munich, I had the opportunity to take part in the preparation of a report on "Programmierung der mittelfristigen deutschen Entwicklungshilfe an Kenia" for the "Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit" in Bonn, which included another stay of almost 2 months in this country. In 1973 I obtained a "Habilitationstipendium" from the "Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft" at Bonn-Bad Godesberg, which provided the funds for my field research in Kenya from April 1973 to October 1973 and my subsequent stay until August 1975 at the Survey Research Center of the University of California at Berkeley, where I processed the survey data I had collected and began with their analysis. This was then continued at the University of Augsburg, where extensive use has been made of the "Rechenzentrum", until the present day.

My intellectual debts, but also the many forms of practical assistance I received are so enormous that it is impossible to list them here in any greater detail. All in all almost a hundred persons were directly involved at different stages in the execution of this project. They and their respective institutions can be assured of my continuing gratitude. But Professors Carl G. Rosberg and Elizabeth Colson of Berkeley and Prof. Theo Stammen, now at the University of Augsburg, who really went out of their way to assist me in any possible way during all phases of this undertaking, must be explicitly mentioned. My thanks to them can never be "paid" for in full. My wife Irmela again was a constant companion and tireless helper in all conceivable situations. To her and to Alka and Sita, our "cross-cultural" daughters, this work is dedicated.

Steinebach/Wörthsee, May 1978

Dirk Berg-Schlosser

For a long time the study of government was confined to the "western" part of the northern hemisphere, and the "models" which have been developed largely reflect this limitation.¹⁾ Until the second half of this century such models were mostly concerned with "constitutional" government and "parliamentary systems", and some of the possible institutional shortcomings in their proper functioning. In the late 1950s and early 1960s an attempt was made to "transplant" such models, whether of the "Westminster", the French, or the American type, to some of the newly independent states in the "Non-Western" areas of the world, mostly in the southern hemisphere. It quickly became apparent however

1) So extensive a review of the development of "comparative government" can be undertaken at this place. One of the best short accounts is Harry Eckstein's "A Perspective of Comparative Politics, Past and Present", in Eckstein, Harry and Apter, David (eds.) Comparative Politics, 2nd Edition, New York: The Free Press, 1967, pp. 1-14.

PART I: INTRODUCTION:

"There are two reasons why there are several types of democracy. One ... is the difference of character between the peoples of different states. The second ... is the different possible combinations of the features which characterize democracy and are supposed to be its attributes. One variety of democracy will have fewer of these attributes; a second will have more; a third will have them all. Now there is a double advantage studying all the separate attributes of democracy. Such study not only helps in constructing some new variety which one may happen to want: it also helps the reform of existing varieties".

Aristotle

For a long time the study of comparative politics has been confined to the "Western" part of the northern hemisphere, and the "models" which have been developed largely reflect this limitation.¹⁾ Until the second half of this century such models were mostly concerned with "constitutional" government and "parliamentary systems", and some of the possible institutional shortcomings in their proper functioning. In the late 1950s and early 1960s an attempt was made to "transplant" such models, whether of the "Westminster", the French, or the American type, to some of the newly independent states in the "Non-Western" areas of the world, mostly in the southern hemisphere. It quickly became apparent however

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that the institutional arrangements of western governments were not really applicable, nor could the normative concept of "democratic man", as conceived by western philosophers, be taken for granted in these areas.

In fact, of the more than 30 "Black" African states, for example, which had achieved their independence from colonial rule during this period, only about one fourth was able to maintain a semblance of the kind of political system originally established. By far the majority of them experienced drastic changes in their governmental institutions, most often by means of a military coup d' etat; even prolonged periods of civil war (as for example in Zaire, Nigeria, Angola, or Ethiopia) have not been uncommon. A number of countries by now also has gone through multiple major changes in their system of government (e.g. Dahomey six times, Nigeria and Ghana each four times).²⁾

On the other hand, all too often we have heard the assertion, made in particular by those with vested interests in the preservation of existing conditions, that Africa is not "ripe" for democracy, that its peoples can only be ruled by "benevolent" authoritarian regimes who know what is best for them and that, in the long run, the chances of any evolution towards political systems providing more representation and self-determination remain highly doubtful. Although the context of direct colonial rule, where this kind of concept had been most bluntly applied, has changed for most of Africa, a similar rationale can still be found in the arguments of many African rulers, and, even more, in those of their foreign supporters.

2) For a comprehensive review of developments during the first decade of independence cf., e.g., Morrison, Donald G. et al., Black Africa - A Comparative Handbook, New York: The Free Press, 1972. Up-to-date reports for each country can be found, for example, in Legum, Colin (ed.), Africa Contemporary Record, London: Rex Collings, which appears annually.

Hardly any one of these assertions, however, has ever been subjected to a more systematic investigation and this "theory" and its empirical basis have never been properly specified. Statements of this kind, therefore, are more an expression of the ignorance and prejudices of their proponents and should not be expected to contain any valid social scientific insight. The actual cultural and social structural conditions which are conducive for democracy have hardly ever been explored under present-day conditions in the developing world. And even among more serious (and hopefully less prejudiced) modern social scientists there is little agreement on the most important elements of a "theory of democracy". Neither a generally applicable normative content of the concept of democracy nor the actual social conditions which may help to bring it about have so far been specified in any satisfactory way. All too often the failure of some particular institution in Africa (e.g. "parliaments" or "supreme courts") and the collapse of some supposedly "representative" regimes have been taken as sufficient evidence that democracy cannot work there. If, therefore, some more insights could be gained into this particular problem by studying it at the lower end of the scale of development, some valuable clues might also be found for the chances of success of democracy in other more "developed" parts of the world and perhaps even some more universally applicable elements of a theory of democracy would then emerge.

During the last two decades a multitude of approaches has been developed in the field of comparative politics to cope with this challenge, and the original scope of investigation has been considerably widened. It is now more explicitly concerned with the different social and economic bases of politics, the large variety of possible "party-systems" and other "input"-structures, the multitude of institutional arrangements at the level of the central government, the

bureaucracy the military, and similar more specialized aspects, but also with the important and often overriding impact of the international political and economic system on the individual country.³⁾ No comprehensive, generally accepted framework of analysis or "paradigm" (to use Thomas Kuhn's term)⁴⁾ has, however, emerged from all these efforts. Given the existing diversity of approaches, varying meta-theoretical positions, and the different "interests in the pursuit of knowledge" ("Erkenntnisinteressen")⁵⁾, such a synthesis does not seem to be very likely in the near future, even though at least some common ground for the majority of these approaches could probably be demarcated without obfuscating the still remaining distinctions.

-
- 3) No attempt to review these efforts can be made here. Some of the better discussions of earlier approaches can be found in Riggs, Fred W., "The Theory of Political Development", in: Charlesworth, James (ed.), Contemporary Political Analysis, New York: The Free Press, 1967, pp. 317 - 349; and Huntington, Samuel P., "The Change to Change - Modernization, Development and Politics", in: Comparative Politics, 3, no. 3, 1971, pp. 283 - 322. Collections of studies emphasizing the aspect of foreign dependence are, for example, Rhodes, Robert I. (ed.), Underdevelopment and Revolution, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970; or Bernstein, Henry (ed.), Underdevelopment and Development, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973.
- 4) Kuhn, Thomas S., The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962.
- 5) For the use of this term cf., e.g., Habermas, Jürgen, "Erkenntnis und Interesse", in: idem, Technik und Wissenschaft als 'Ideologie', Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1968, pp. 146 ff.. For a more general discussion of epistemological problems and different meta-theoretical positions in the social sciences cf., e.g., also Seiffert, Helmut, Einführung in die Wissenschaftstheorie, 2 volumes, Munich: Beck, 1969 and 1970; or Berg-Schlosser, Dirk; Maier, Herbert; and Stammen, Theo, Einführung in die Politikwissenschaft, Munich: Beck, 1974, in particular Part B.

In view of this diversity we propose to focus our own analysis on some important aspects of the still relatively unexplored "social bases" of politics. It is our opinion that this aspect in conjunction with the continuing external forces at work in most "Third World" countries today, provides one of the more promising lined of attack for the explanation of political developments there. This is not to deny, of course, the validity and potential fruitfulness of other approaches as well, but for the sake of a more meaningful division of labor among social scientists this restriction seems to be necessary at the present time.

Part I shall first give an outline of the theoretical framework of this study and present the "case" of Kenya in more detail. The second main part will then be devoted to a somewhat extend discussion of the traditional background of the ethnic groups considered here, including their customary economic, social, and political life and some of their more important cultural traditions. This information, which may be taken for granted in more familiar western contexts, and which has lost some of its relevance there, under modern industrial conditions, is still essential for a better understanding of affairs in present-day Africa. As no concise, comparative and up-to-date description of Kenya's peoples exists so far, we had to compile most of this information ourselves, drawing from a great variety of sources.

Part III will consist of an elaborate comparative analysis of the "political culture" proper of these groups, based on the findings of an extended general population survey conducted by us in 1974. The range of variables discussed here is also somewhat larger than may be deemed necessary in a more familiar context and includes the analysis of some economic, religious, and more general social attitudes as well. Again, this seemed to be indispensable for a fuller understanding of the life and thinking of these peoples, particularly in

view of the fact that a more rigorous and generally accepted theoretical framework for the study of political culture is still lacking and that its possible applications in a more comprehensive "theory of democracy" are still far from being certain.⁶⁾ For this reason we are also not in a position to present or test any single "grand theory" at this place. Rather, we shall attempt to "fill in" some important theoretical bits and pieces as we go along and to test a number of more specific hypotheses where these prove to be relevant for our purposes.

Only in a final section will we then attempt to draw a conclusion as to the types of political systems which seem to be compatible with our findings and, in particular, as to the chances of "democracy" in Kenya. These, by necessity, will still be of a very tentative nature because of the complexity of the problem and the rapidly changing conditions in this part of the world. Some of them, hopefully, may serve as constructive elements in more comprehensive efforts of theory-building at a later stage.

6) For a brief discussion of some links between "democratic theory" and the study of political culture cf. also Scharpf, Fritz W., Demokratietheorie zwischen Utopie und Anpassung, Kronberg: Scriptor, 1975, pp. 16 f..

CHAPTER 1: THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

a) The "social bases" of politics:

Even though the comparative analysis of the social bases of politics has an impressive intellectual history,⁷⁾ many of its implications have been neglected in more modern times. As yet, there exists very little comprehensive up-to-date comparative empirical material on this important aspect, in particular as far as "Third World" countries are concerned.

One of the few more systematic attempts of this kind in recent decades was the so-called "aggregate data approach". The first major works of this school was Seymour M. Lipset's "Political Man"⁸⁾, which was explicitly subtitled "The Social Bases of Politics". In one of the major chapters of this study Lipset attempts to make "a comparison of European, English-speaking and Latin-American countries, divided into two groups. 'more democratic' and 'less democratic' by indices of wealth, industrialization, education, and urbanization".⁹⁾ James S. Coleman then extended the scope of this approach by comparing African and Asian countries in the

7) One of the earliest and still most noteworthy attempts is, of course, Aristotle's Politics, where at one point he explicitly poses the question "What sort of constitution is desirable for what sort of civic body?", cf. Book IV, D, chapters XII and XIII, in the edition used by us: London: Oxford University Press, 1962, pp. 184 ff. (translation by Ernest Barker).

8) Lipset, Seymour M., Political Man, New York: Doubleday, 1960.

9) This is the somewhat lengthy title of his most important table, cf. ibid., pp. 35 ff..

same terms.¹⁰⁾ Karl Deutsch later refined it by giving not only the absolute level of an indicator, but also its relative rate of change during a certain period of time.¹¹⁾ This was followed by massive attempts at data collecting along these lines by several independent groups of researchers, most notably those of the "Yale University World Data Analysis Program".¹²⁾

Valuable as these collections are for rough comparisons at the national level, they cannot possibly serve as a substitute for a more sophisticated analysis of the "social bases" proper of individual political systems. Apart from the technical difficulties involved in the collection of such data in view of the often "underdeveloped" statistical apparatus in many countries of the world and the limited comparability of certain indicators, the very "aggregate" nature of these data in most cases does not allow us to make meaningful intra-societal comparisons which would more clearly show the actual social forces which are at work. For this reason, at least more information on the social distribution of the more important of these indices is necessary. Such information is, however, hard to obtain in many instances and even where it is available, a purely statistical approach of this kind can only serve as raw material for the construction of more meaningful social

10) Cf. Almond, Gabriel A. and Coleman, James S. (eds.) The Politics of the Developing Areas, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960, pp. 532 ff.

11) Deutsch, Karl W., "Social Mobilization and Political Development", American Political Science Review, Sept. 1961, pp. 993 ff.

12) The most important findings of this program were published by Russett, B.M., et al., World Handbook of Social and Political Indicators, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964; and Taylor, C.L. and Hudson, M.L. World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators, revised edition, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972. Similar effects are Banks, A.S. and Textor, R.B., A Cross Polity Survey, Cambridge/Mass.: The M.I.T. Press, 1963, and Adelman, Irma and Morris, Cynthia Taft, Sociology, Politics and Economic Development, Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1967. Nohlen, Dieter und Nurcheler Franz (eds.), Handbuch der Dritten Welt, volumes, Hamburg: 1974 ff. also draw heavily on selected cross-national social indicators.

theories. A truly "structural" analysis of these societies, therefore, remains essential.¹³⁾

Furthermore, these data collections are almost always based on secondary sources (as the United Nations Yearbooks or statistical publications of individual countries) and thus lack other important information which is not so readily available. This includes data on a large variety of social and political attitudes and other cultural phenomena. Without this knowledge we do not think that a meaningful analysis or appropriate comparisons are possible in many instances. Because of this still existing gap and the potential theoretical promises which the analysis of these factors holds for further efforts towards more integrated theory-building, combining both "structural" and "cultural" factors (i.e. the "objective" and "subjective" dimensions of politics),¹⁴⁾ we shall concentrate our present effort on this latter aspect.

b) The "subjective" dimension:

The analysis of the subjective dimension of the social bases of politics has a long intellectual history to it. In fact it can be traced back to writers as early as Herodotus and Thucydides.¹⁵⁾ Generalizations about forms of behavior seem as characteristic for certain peoples or

13) One particularly remarkable earlier effort is, for example, Geiger, Theodor, Die soziale Schichtung des deutschen Volkes, first edition, Stuttgart: Enke, 1932. A recent study in an African context is Shivji, Issa G., Class Struggles in Tanzania, London: Heinemann, 1976.

14) For this distinction cf., e.g., also Berg-Schlosser et al., op. cit., pp. 37 ff..

15) The latter discusses, for example, some "typical" characters of certain ethnic groups, cf., Thucydides, The Peloponnesian War, book I, chapter 6, edition used here: Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1954 (translation by Rex Warner).

ethnic groups can also be found in many literary accounts all over the world. Until very recently there was no way of establishing the validity or reliability of such generalizations by empirical research, and these assessments remained largely speculative. They often contributed to the acceptance of shared stereotypes which form the basis of the common kind of prejudice members of one society have towards another. Such common perceptions of one's ethnic neighbors, for example, reflect to a certain extent the historical experience members or groups of one society have had with individuals or groups from another. The attitudes formed by this experience are transmitted by the usual socializing agents of a society. They are often reinforced by the twin processes of selective perceptions and self-fulfilling expectations when an individual has the chance to come into personal contact with members of other societies himself. The grain of truth which may have been concealed in these perceptions, thus often becomes grossly distorted. As a result, very often not only "wrong" (in the sense of a false perception) but also dangerous (from a humanistic point of view) attitudes prevailed which not infrequently were the underlying cause of a great deal of hostility and warfare. Not surprisingly, therefore, the analysis of how such attitudes are formed, transmitted and acted out in manifest behavior has become one of the concerns of the behavioral sciences.¹⁶⁾

Social research has also been concerned with discovering the "true" character of certain social groups and their prevalent pattern of attitudes and behavior, both because of the intrinsic values of such knowledge and as a means to expose the biased character of many of the common stereotypes. Early studies of this kind, more often than not reflected the prejudices of their authors; scientific and

16) Cf., e.g. Allport, Gordon W., The Nature of Prejudice, first edition: Cambridge/Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1954; or Buchanan, William and Cantril, Hadley, How Nations See Each Other, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1953.

critical self-conscious assessments of this difficult and complex subject have remained very rare.¹⁷⁾ In particular, many of the "race theories" which attempted to derive conclusions on the social and political behavior of individuals and peoples on the basis of very simple genetic assumptions, have been of the extremely prejudiced type.¹⁸⁾

Another "wave" of studies then occurred during and shortly after World War II, this time mostly by psychologically oriented British and American social anthropologists.¹⁹⁾ But in many of these cases as well, the underlying assumptions and causal explanations were too narrow and the generalizations at a level which could not be justified by this approach. The main focus of these studies, in the wake of Freudian analysis, was on the character-shaping influences of the early phases of infancy and childhood. Family structures and child rearing habits such as the time and kind of weaning, toilet training etc., thus became the main explanatory factors. Important socializing factors later in life were largely neglected and no convincing link was established between the conclusions drawn on the individual psychological and the over-all social level. The representativeness of the empirical data of these studies, which were mostly based either on "participant observation" or some other even more "impressionistic" evidence, was difficult, if not impossible, to assess.

17) Reviews of this literature can be found, e.g., in Holzner, Burkart, Völkerpsychologie, Würzburg: Holzner-Verlag, 1960; or Miroglio, Jean, La Psychologie des Peuples, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1958.

18) Some studies in Germany before and during the "Third Reich" dealing with topics such as "Volkscharakter" and "Rassenseele" are particularly infamous in this respect. But writings of this kind were not exactly unknown on other countries either.

19) Cf., e.g., Benedict, Ruth, Patterns of Culture, Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1934, Gorer, Geoffrey and Rickman, H., The People of Great Russia, London: Crescent Press, 1955; Mead, Margaret, Soviet Attitudes Toward Authority, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1951.

Recognizing these shortcomings, some authors attempted to broaden their approach and to make use of the generalizing power of random samples in modern survey research. Inkeles and Levinson, for example, suggested attempting to isolate a greater number of characteristic personality types in a society and assessing their respective frequency of distribution ("modes" in a statistical sense) rather than looking for a single "national character".²⁰⁾ To our knowledge, however, no empirical studies have so far been undertaken along these lines and in recent years the study of "national character" has become a relatively quiet field.

c.) The concept of political culture:

Compared with the analysis of "national character" or "modal personality", the concept of political culture is both narrower and larger. It is narrower, or perhaps one should say not so "deep" in the sense that it is concerned only with explicit value orientations while neglecting analysis of drives, needs, and other personality characteristics which may be the bases of these orientations. It is larger, however, in the sense that the study of political culture does not so much focus on the search for a single or even several dominant "modal" types of personality, but rather takes into account a wide range of existing value patterns in the total range of their distribution in a society, regardless of whether they show a certain typical frequency or whether they "cluster" in certain types of personalities.

The concept of political culture is also more open in its assessments about the possible "sources" of culture in a

20) Cf., e.g., Inkeles, Alex and Levinson, Daniel J., "National Character: The Study of Modal Personality and Socio-Cultural Systems", in: Gardner, Lindzey, Handbook of Social Psychology, Cambridge/Mass. Addison-Wesley, 1969, vol 4, pp. 418 - 506.

society. It carefully avoids the often made and tacitly implied genetic causal explanations of a good deal of the "national character" literature and clearly depicts "culture" as a "learned" phenomenon. It also takes the emphasis away from very early socializing factors in the life of individuals, which were very prominent in the more psychologically oriented studies of "national character". Instead, it attempts to identify important political socializing influences during more or less the whole life-span of a member of a society. These include family structures, but also peer-group influences, the educational system, relations at the working place, etc.²¹⁾

In addition to these individual socializing factors, the concept of political culture also includes the "collective memories" of a society. These reflect the historical experiences of a nation (and of course of all its members at this time), in particular economic or political crises or events such as economic depressions, revolutions, wars or political assassinations which leave their "scars" on its consciousness. Experiences of this kind are transmitted by the usual socializing agencies in both their cognitive and their evaluative, and possibly also affective, aspects and contribute to distinct kinds of political behavior even after several generations have passed since the original events.²²⁾

21) Cf., e.g., Hyman, Herbert H., Political Socialization, New York: The Free Press, 1959; Easton, David and Dennis, Jack, Children in the Political System: Origins of Political Legitimacy, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969; or Prewitt, Kenneth and Dawson, Richard E., Political Socialization, Boston: Little, Brown, 1968.

22) For more comprehensive discussions of this subject cf. also Berg-Schlusser, Dirk, Politische Kultur - Eine neue Dimension politikwissenschaftlicher Analyse, Munich: Verlag Ernst Vögel, 1972; Kavanagh, Dennis, Political Culture, London: Mcmillan, 1972, or Rosenbaum, Walter A., Political Culture, New York, Praeger, 1975.

The term "political culture" as we use it today was first coined by Gabriel Almond.²³⁾ He defined it as the "particular pattern of orientations toward political actions in which every political system is embedded".²⁴⁾ The use of the word "culture" in this context carries the hidden danger that the many connotations associated with this word²⁵⁾ make it a "catch-all" notion with very little analytical significance.²⁶⁾ Indeed, to a certain extent this is what seems to have happened in recent years, and some of the major proponents of this concept seem to be somewhat less pleased with it today.²⁷⁾ Nevertheless, since this term "covers" largely what was described above as the "subjective" dimension of political reality, it may as well be used as long as one is aware of its pitfalls and always attempts to define it in a carefully analytical manner.

23) Almond, Gabriel A., "Comparative Political Systems", in: The Journal of Politics, vol. 18, no. 3, Aug. 1956, pp. 391 - 409.

24) Ibid., p. 396.

25) Kroeber and Kluckhohn, for example, found 164 different definitions; cf. Kroeber, Alfred and Kluckhohn, Clyde, Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions, New York: Random House, 1952.

26) Cf., e.g. Nettl, P., Political Mobilization - A Sociological Analysis of Methods and Concepts, New York: Basic Books, 1967, pp. 42 ff.

27) Cf., e.g., Pye, Lucian W., "Culture and Political Science: Problems in the Evaluation of the Concept of Political Culture", in: Social Science Quarterly, vol. 53, no. 2, Sept. 1972, pp. 285 - 296.

For this reason, more specific conceptual definitions (as distinct from operational definitions) are in order at this point to indicate how the concept shall be applied in our own analysis. "Culture" shall refer to the universe of beliefs, attitudes and values existing in a given society at a given point in time.²⁸⁾ Such beliefs, attitudes and values are conceived, following Rokeach, as being grouped on a central-peripheral dimension,²⁹⁾ beliefs being the most peripheral and values the most central "pre-dispositions to action". Attitudes in this concept are thought of as being in the middle position on this axis and constitute "a relatively enduring organization of beliefs around an object or situation predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner"³⁰⁾ Conceptualized in this way, the term "attitude" constitutes, for most practical purposes, the most convenient short-hand expression. It avoids the vastness of all kinds of particular "beliefs" on the one hand, which may number in the thousands and change relatively quickly, and the more sweeping generalizations on the other, which so easily occur if one only looks at a few central "values" in a society. Attitudes thus seem to contain a sufficient amount of specificity to make meaningful and differentiated results possible. Between the various elements of a social or individual belief system (which may, after all, be a better term than the vague "culture" with its variety of common meanings and connotations) we do not

28) This definition thus excludes symbols, artifacts and other man-made or man-used objects of a more concrete nature which usually are included in the way the term "culture" has come to be used in anthropology, cf., e.g., Kluckhohn, Clyde, "The Study of Culture" in: Lerner, Daniel, and Lasswell, Harold D. (eds.), The Policy Sciences, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1951, pp. 86 - 101.

29) Rokeach, Milton, Beliefs, Attitudes and Values, San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1969.

30) Ibid., p. 112.

assume any a priori consistency,³¹⁾ i.e. a pattern free from serious internal contradictions. This could only be established by research and is not a part of the definition of the concept.

An attitude conceived in this way contains three elements which are often difficult if not impossible to isolate experimentally: The "cognitive", the "affective" and the "evaluative".³²⁾ This distinction has become commonplace in the attitude research literature since it was, to our knowledge, first introduced by Talcott Parsons and Edward Shils.³³⁾ The cognitive component refers to a person's orientation towards knowable objective facts regarding certain objectives, actions, etc. and answers to the question "who do you think is right (i.e., has the better information)?" The "affective" component (or "cathexis") refers to a person's emotional predisposition towards objects or actions and answers to the question "what do you like or dislike?" The "evaluative" component, finally, refers to a person's normative standards and answers to the question "what do you think is good or bad"?

Between all these "organized beliefs" (i.e. attitudes) and their components and actual behavior no simple one-to-one relationship can be assumed.³⁴⁾ Many other environmental

31) Cf., e.g., Converse, Philip E., "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics", in: Apter, David E. (ed.), Ideology and Discontent, New York: The Free Press, 1964, pp. 206 - 261.

32) Cf., e.g., Rosenberg, M.J., "An Analysis of Affective-Cognitive Consistency", in: Rosenberg, M.J. et al., (eds.) Attitude Organization and Change, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960.

33) Cf. Parsons, Talcott and Shils, Edward (eds.), Toward a General Theory of Action, Cambridge/Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1951, pp. 58 ff..

34) For a discussion of this point cf., e.g., Fischbein, Martin, "The Relationships Between Beliefs, Attitudes and Behaviour", in: Feldman, Shel (ed.), Cognitive Consistency, New York: Academic Press, 1966, pp. 200 - 226.

factors can intervene in a given situation and change behavior which otherwise would have been expected from a preceding analysis of attitudes. This inherent limitation of attitude analysis in political culture has been compounded by the gap which often exists between the "micro" (i.e. in this case the individual) and the "macro" (i.e. the social) levels of analysis and has led to some dissatisfaction with the usefulness of the concept of "political culture" as it is currently employed.³⁵⁾

In order to further clarify our own position some major tenets of this concept as we understand and employ it thus shall be made explicit at this point:

1. We do not make any a priori assumptions as to which variables (e.g. the "structural", as Marx tends to do, or the "cultural" as is implied in more "Weberian" approaches)³⁶⁾ shall be treated as the independent ones. We shall rather consider both kinds of variables as constituting potentially independent factors in any given situation, and we shall specify the more precise nature of their relationship only after this has been established by empirical research.
2. We do not imply any explicit or implicit normative model in our analysis of political culture as was the case in some earlier mainly American or "Anglo-Saxon" studies.³⁷⁾

35) Some very cogent points of criticism concerning both the more general concept of political culture and some specific studies dealing with the German case can be found, for example, in Schissler, Jakob, Politische Kultur und Politische Struktur, unpublished ms. A critique of some aspects of Almond, Gabriel A. and Verba, Sidney, The Civic Culture, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963; paperback edition, Boston, Little, Brown, 1965, can be found in Rokkan, Stein, "Cross-national survey research: historical, analytical and substantive contexts", in: idem et al., Comparative Survey Analysis, The Hague: Mouton, 1969, in particular pp. 37 ff..

36) For this distinction cf. also Berg-Schlosser, Politische Kultur..., loc. cit., chapter 1.

37) This is also one of the main points of criticism raised against some implicit assumptions the study low in Almond and Verba who tended to equate the somewhat idealized concept of the "civic culture" with the concrete American situation.

Instead we think it to be indispensable to first understand each "culture" in its own terms before, if at all, any more normative evaluations, e.g. referring to some particular theory of democracy, can be made.

3. We do not want to reduce the analysis of political culture to the elaboration of a few central values, ³⁸⁾ and consider it to be imperative not to preclude the analysis of other elements a priori. In our view, a meaningful understanding of political culture can only be gained, if the range of variables analyzed is sufficiently wide to allow the accomodation of a large number of factors and if the analysis of a particular case is carefully linked to its concrete historical and social setting.
4. We do not imply any definite, and possibly premature, typologies of political culture at this point. Again these can only be the result of respective research where these seem to "fit" best as some convenient short-hand expression in the actually observed situation.
5. Our use of the concept of political culture does not imply any "total" explanation of the situation under consideration, but other approaches which meaningfully supplement a purely "cultural" one and which must be made explicit in any given case remain essential, too.

Particularly in view of this last point the limited explanatory power of the analysis of political culture within the more general social bases of politics must also be emphasized. In a later reflection on this problem Lucian Pye for example, put it this way: "The situation is analogous to our ability to say 'something' about what a building will be like from the knowledge of what its building elements are like, but to truly

38) This is largely done, for example, in Lipset, Seymour M., The First New Nation, New York: Doubleday, 1963 with regard to the values of "achievement" and "equality" in the political development of the United States, or with regard to a "Lockean" concept of "liberty" in Devine, Donald J., The Political Culture of the United States, Boston: Little, Brown, 1972.

'picture' the building, we need also to know the blueprints and the total design".³⁹⁾ It is also in this respect that we think that "cultural" and "structural" approaches in the analysis of the social bases of politics supplement each other, the "structure" being the frame around which the "cultural" elements can be placed in erecting the "building of any given society." In this sense also many of the "sub-cultures" (Almond), "fragmentations" (Eckstein) or "cleavages" (Lipset)⁴⁰⁾ of political culture which often are observed can be taken care of.

d.) The "structural" frame:

By "structures" we understand all analytically distinct social groups which are part of the total pattern of social differentiation either in a "horizontal" or "vertical" sense.⁴¹⁾ Horizontal or "communal" groups share the following three distinguishing characteristics:⁴²⁾

39) Pye, "Culture and Political Science", loc. cit., p. 296

40) Cf. Lipset, Seymour M., The First New Nation, loc. cit., and Eckstein, Harry, Division and Cohesion in Democracy - A Study of Norway, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966.

41) The use of the terms "horizontal" and "vertical" varies somewhat in the sociological literature depending on whether one looks at the position of the structural groups themselves in relation to each other or at the direction of the dividing "lines" between them. We prefer to speak of "vertical" stratification when we refer to socially "higher" or "lower" groups, and of "horizontal" stratification when we speak of groups which are juxtaposed to each other.

42) Cf. Melson, Robert and Wolpe, Howard, "Modernization in the Politics of Communalism: A Theoretical Perspective", in: APSR, Dec. 1970, p. 1112.

- 1) They comprise persons who, at least in a certain respect, are characterized by a common culture and identity;
- 2) They encompass the full range of age and sex differentiations in a society;
- 3) They are differentiated as the wider society to which they belong by wealth, status, and power.

Horizontal structures in this sense are, for example, racial, ethnic, tribal or religious groupings in a larger society. In the case of Kenya, the most important and politically relevant horizontal distinction is the grouping of people according to their ethnic or "tribal" background. Although, as we shall see,⁴³⁾ the cohesiveness and the degree of "identity" of these groups ^{are} ~~is~~ by no means always the same, they are relatively easy to identify in terms of a common language and "culture" and constitute widely accepted "reference groups" in Kenya's society, which in most areas are also geographically distinct.

It is more difficult to identify distinct structures in the over-all vertical pattern of a society which are meaningful for our purposes. There are, of course, many approaches to the study of stratification in social theory, and even more methods and different techniques to assess it empirically,⁴⁴⁾ but only very few seem to be useful in our present context. All approaches attempt to identify certain variables which are considered meaningful for the purpose of a given investigation, the distribution of which can be empirically determined in a certain society in order to identify groups ("strata") which share or do not share these characteristics. These variables are either determined by deducting them from a certain theoretical concept or are inductively arrived at by empirical

43) See Part II below.

44) Cf., e.g., some of the more common textbooks: Berber B., Social Stratification, New York: The Free Press, 1957; Tumin, Melvin M., Social Structure, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1967; or Bolte, Karl Martin, Kappe, Dieter, and Neidhardt, Friedhelm, Soziale Schichtung, Opladen: Leske-Verlag, 1968.

research.⁴⁵⁾ They are either "objective" in nature, i.e. they are derived from certain "tangible" attributes which exist outside the sphere of human judgment and interpretation or they are "subjective", i.e. they reflect a person's perceptions of a certain matter. An example of the first kind is a person's occupation or income, an example of the second the "prestige" or "status" an individual may attach to such an occupation or to a certain level of income.

Once certain variables have been identified, their actual distribution in a given society can be assessed. Since most of these variables are not discontinuous in nature and do not provide "natural" cutting points for their pattern of distribution (as is the case, especially, with the distribution of income), it is necessary to devise a model or system of stratification which provides the criteria for the identification of distinct groups within that pattern which seems to fit best the existing social reality.⁴⁶⁾ Again, this can be done in a more deductive or inductive manner. Inductive ways of analysis, however, only rarely arrive at meaningful categories which are useful beyond the immediate purpose (e.g. for a single comparative study) and therefore remain mainly descriptive. Deductive models of stratification, on the other hand, used by empirically oriented social scientists today, in most cases superimpose, very simple categories on the social reality they look at, without establishing the theoretical significance of these categories or of the selected cutting points between them. Warner's six-fold classification of social strata ("upper-upper", "lower-upper" etc.)⁴⁷⁾ and the common groupings by income ("less than

45) Very strictly speaking, even the most "inductive" method contains some "deductive" elements, cf., e.g., Seiffert, Helmut, Einführung in die Wissenschaftstheorie, München: C.H. Beck, 1969, pp. 133 ff..

46) Cf., e.g., Ossowski, Stanislaw, "Different Concepts of Social Class", in: Bendix, Reinhard and Lipset, Seymour M. (eds.), Class, Status and Power, New York; The Free Press, second edition, 1966, pp. 86 ff..

47) Cf., e.g. Warner, W.I., Mecker, M., Eells, K., Social Class in America, Chicago, 1949.

₡ 2000 a year", "₡ 2000 - 2999" ... etc.) which then again are usually reduced to categories of "low", "middle" or "high" income groups, are cases in point. These categories, therefore, remain largely arbitrary and of very limited analytical significance. They may be useful for some purposes of "market research" and similar undertakings, but as criteria for meaningful political groupings in a society, which is our concern here, they are much too vague and artificial. Persons with the same level of income, as for example an independent small-scale farmer, a factory worker, or a civil servant, may have very distinct political outlooks. In the same way, "self-evaluations" of the social status of individuals are not very helpful when a very large percentage of respondents (sometimes 80% and more) end up grouping themselves in the "middle" category of social rank.⁴⁸⁾

Faced with this predicament, we have attempted to devise a model of vertical stratification which is meaningful in its theoretical content and, at the same time, fits the Kenyan reality. Our main aim will be to identify potential conflict groups on an over-all "national" basis which cut across the existing ethnic pattern of stratification. With Marx we assume that the relationship of an individual or group towards the means of production and the "objective" difference of interests caused by these different relationships constitute the most important factor in this respect.⁴⁹⁾

48) Cf., e.g., Moore, H. and Kleining, G., "Das soziale Selbstbild der Gesellschaftsschichten in Deutschland", in: Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie, vol. XII, 1960.

49) We do not, however, subscribe to Marx' "philosophy of history" at the same time, and no eschatological "final state" or a definite process leading to it is assumed here; for a discussion of Marx' philosophy of history cf., e.g., Wetter, Gustav A., Sowjetideologie heute, vol. I, Frankfurt: S. Fischer, 1962.

Accordingly, we take the variable of the ownership of the means of production as our most important criterion. Unlike Marx or some of his more orthodox followers, however, we do not think that, at its most abstract level, a purely dichotomous pattern derived from this basis, of "haves" and "have-nots", "oppressors" and "oppressed", "capitalists" and "proletarians", is useful for the analysis of complex, present-day societies. Instead, we prefer an intermediate level of abstraction which helps us to keep closer to reality, and a medium-range perspective of time which avoids both the superficiality of short-term analyses of the behavior of "leading" individual actors in the central political system, and the extremely long-term eschatological trap of a deterministic philosophy of history.⁵⁰⁾

Even if we add the "old middle class" of self-employed craftsmen and businessmen (which Marx regarded to be of an only temporary nature), the result still is not very satisfactory. Some further distinctions seem to be necessary to describe the Kenyan situation. The first concerns the different sectors of the economy. For our purposes these can be grouped into the private agricultural, the private non-agricultural, and the public sector. Particularly in a largely agricultural country like Kenyan the distinctive patterns of ownership and production in the rural areas cannot be overlooked or assumed to be essentially the same or to coincide with those in the non-agricultural sphere. A very important additional distinction here is one between "progressive" cash-crop farmers who are market-oriented and have individual ownership of land (of a size sufficient for the longer-term survival of this unit of production) and still largely traditional "subsistence"-farmers with more customary patterns of landholding and production. The "pastoralist" groups in Kenya, as long as they pursue their traditional way of life to some degree also belong to the latter category. Whereas we can assign the

50) For different levels of abstraction in Marx' theory of social classes cf., e.g., dos Santos, Theotonio, "The Concept of Social Classes", in: Science and Sociology, vol. 34, no. 2 summer 1970, pp. 166-197

first group of "progressive" small-scale farmers to the "classic" middle class or "bourgeoisie" which in Kenya, of course, is a quite recent phenomenon, the latter must be seen largely as objectively at the same level as the "proletariat". Since they are the owners of their means of production, however, we prefer to call them "proletaroids" according to Geiger.⁵¹⁾ To this last group also belong in the non-agricultural mostly informal sector those small craftsmen and petty traders who, although they are the owners of their (very limited) means of production, essentially are dependent on selling their labor on a day-to-day basis. On the whole they are no better off than the "proletariat" proper⁵²⁾.

A further distinction, at the other end of the vertical scale, refers to the division which has occurred in large-scale joint-stock companies between those who are the nominal and often "anonymous" owners of the means of production and those who are responsible for the actual day-to-day decisions. It is a division between the "capitalists" proper whose dominant source of income is the "capital rent" and the "managerial class"⁵³⁾ with a contractually fixed salary.

At the intermediate level of our pattern of stratification there is still an important gap between those who own their means of production and practically live of the fruits of their own labor alone (i.e. the "proletaroids" in our terminology) and the "pure" capitalists who need not work at all for their living. This is the traditional position of the bourgeoisie, e.g. of better-off craftsmen and traders. It also describes the position of Schumpeter's classical entrepreneur who still

51) Geiger, Theodor, Die soziale Schichtung des deutschen Volkes, loc. cit..

52) This group is also often referred to as "petty bourgeoisie", the use of this term, however, is by no means consistent in literature.

53) For a discussion of this term and the functions of this group cf. also Galbraith, John Kenneth, The New Industrial State, New York: Mentor, 1967.

combines the functions of management and ownership, where, we might add, his "profits" as owner do not completely overshadow the part of his income which can be considered as an adequate managerial "salary". The members of this group thus are characterized as having derived a major part of their income from their own labor while supplementing it substantially by employing additional paid employees and/or possessing a sizeable capital stock such as agricultural land, a larger workshop with its equipment, or industrial machinery.

A similar objectively determinable intermediate position can also be found as far as the decision-making power of employed persons is concerned. Here the gap between the "managerial class" at the upper end and the proletariat the other is filled by those who supervise and direct other more lower level employees to a great extent, even though they do not possess the "final" decision-making authority. This group thus includes persons such as industrial foremen, heads of departments or important sections, and other middle-level, usually "white collar" employees. This "salariat" proper, as distinguished from both the proletariat and the managerial Class, has sometimes been called "new middle class",⁵⁴⁾ even though it is a somewhat heterogeneous and complex group. It typically exhibits attitudes and political interests different from those of the other two groups of employees, but also from those of the "old middle class". Other white collar workers without any decision-making functions of their own, such as messengers, doorkeepers, typists and other low-level administrative personnel, on the other hand, must clearly be considered to be a part of the proletariat, even though some members of this group do not want to be identified with the more "dirty" work of their blue collar colleagues.

54) The term "neuer Mittelstand" is employed by Geiger.

In our opinion, still two more groups are sufficiently distinct from the others and should be isolated for analysis. The first is the well-known category of the "sub"- or "Lumpenproletariat", the bottom layer of the proletarians which consists of the most pauperized group of people who do not take part in regular economic activities and often do not conform to society's generally accepted norms.⁵⁵⁾

The last group in this pattern of stratification is that of the top-level bureaucrats, the "administrative elite" or "state class",⁵⁶⁾ including high-ranking military personnel. While its position is analytically comparable to that of the managerial class in the private sector, its base of power and its over-all social and political importance is different. In this respect it is the only group in our pattern whose position is not directly derived from its economic status, except in the sense that the public sector constitutes an increasingly important part in most present-day economies as well. Our definition of this group is somewhat more limited than what has occasionally been called the "service class" ("Dienstklasse", Dahrendorf)⁵⁷⁾ which comprises a larger segment of the middle-level bureaucracy, but which we would prefer to include in the more general "salariat".

55) This term was already used by Marx in his Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei, first edition, London, 1848.

56) For the use of this term cf., e.g., also Elsenhans, Hartmut, "Zur Rolle der Staatsklasse bei der Überwindung von Unterentwicklung", in Schmidt, Alfred (Hrsg.), Strategien gegen Unterentwicklung, Frankfurt: Campus, 1976.

57) Dahrendorf, Ralf, Konflikt und Freiheit - Auf dem Weg zur Dienstklassengesellschaft, Munich: Piper, 1972.

In many cases, depending on a country's economic system and its respective proportions of public and private ownership, there is a considerable overlap between members of the state, the managerial, and the capitalist classes. In Kenya, for example, many top-level civil servants have taken up important functions in private businesses and companies and have often become capitalists themselves.⁵⁸⁾ It is, nevertheless, important, in our opinion, to preserve the analytical distinction between these categories since their respective weight may differ. In Tanzania where the explicit "TANU leadership code"⁵⁹⁾ was designed to prevent such "conflicts of interest", the borders between these groups have been maintained more consistently.

Two final groups should perhaps be mentioned which, although not of our "class system", proper, often play important and sometimes decisive roles in situations of political conflict. The first group is that of the "students", as a potential conflict group, mainly consists of students from colleges and universities and other similar institutions of higher learning, and also some senior members of the "free-floating intelligentsia". Secondary school students, on the other hand, have to be largely excluded from this category, because of age, the smaller size and dispersed location of their schools and similar reasons. The total number of "students" is, therefore, very small in relation to the total labor force of a country. For this reason, and because of the transitory nature of this group, we have not included it in our class system.

58) Cf., e.g. Leys, Colin, Underdevelopment in Kenya - The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.

59) Cf., e.g. Cliffe, Lionel and Saul, John S. (eds.) Socialism in Tanzania, vol. I, Dar-es-Salaam: East African Publishing House, 1972.

As an "interest group" of their own the over-all significance of university students is very small and usually very inconsequential outside their own limited sphere of action (e.g. when students demand better educational facilities, changes in the administration, better food at student restaurants and the like). On the other hand, there are occasions, when students can become an important "crystallizing" point for more widespread discontent and thus become the "spearhead" of more deeply rooted political conflict. The reasons for this, although they apparently differ somewhat from case to case,⁶⁰⁾ also seem to lie in the special situation of this group. Their transitory nature (which makes them both less "materially bound" and more insecure in their life-expectations) together with their higher level of education and information (which makes them more aware of general social problems) helps to develop an often more normative "disinterested" political position than that of the other groups. If (and only if!) they thus express the deepseated discontent of other important social groups, they can become an extremely important triggering factor in an acute political crisis.⁶¹⁾ Alliances of this group with others however, are usually very temporary, and after some concrete salient issue has been solved in one way or another, the political importance of students is reduced to its original level.

The last group which we want to mention is that of the "politicians" (members of parliament, the cabinet, full-term party officials, etc.). Since the composition of this group entirely depends on the kind of political system existing in a country, we do not consider them to be a part of the "social bases" of politics or a "class" of their own in any way.

60) Cf., e.g., Lipset, Seymour M., and Altbach, Philip G. (eds.), Students in Revolt, Boston: Beacon Press, 1970.

61) Cf., e.g., Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968.

Rather, they should be regarded as representatives of the classes they originally belonged to or with the interests of which they now identify themselves. For this reason, we also did not include this group separately in our class system.

Our over-all model of vertical social stratification can thus be summarized as follows:

Table I, 1: A structural model of Kenya's society:

<u>Sector:</u>	<u>Private sector</u>			<u>Public Sector</u>
	<u>Agricultural</u>	<u>Non-Agricultural</u>		
<u>Dominant source of income:</u>		Ownership of means of production	Decision-making authority only	
<u>Upper classes:</u> Capital	Large-scale farmers	Non-agric capitalists	Final: Managerial class	State class
<u>Middle classes:</u> Capital + labor	Agricultural bourgeoisie	Non-agric bourgeoisie	Intermediate: Salariat	
<u>Lower classes:</u> Labor	Agricultural proletaroids	Non-agric proletaroids	None: Proletariat	
<u>Margin-als:</u> No permanent source	Sub - proletariat			

The labels we have chosen to characterize the different positions still are of a tentative, but, hopefully, illustrative nature. They can easily be replaced by similar ones, if the precise conceptual definition of these categories is kept in mind.

The operationalization of these concepts poses additional difficulties and will depend to a large extent on the kind of sources and the quality of the statistical material which are at hand in any particular case. In the class analysis of our own survey we made use of the exact occupation of our respondents, as far as this was ascertainable from the job descriptions obtained by our interviewers. Only in cases where no clear-cut differentiation on this basis was possible was the income of our respondents used as an additional indicator of their class position. Here we divided the self-employed into capitalists who earn Kshs. 3000,-- or more per month, members of the non-agricultural bourgeoisie who earn between Kshs. 800,-- and 3000,-- and the non-agricultural proletarioids who earn less than Kshs 800,--. The respective figures for employees are Kshs. 3000,-- or more for the managerial class (Kshs. 1600,-- and above for the special group of the "state class") between Kshs 400,-- and 3000,-- (1600,-- for the public sector) for the salariat, and less than Kshs 400,-- for the proletariat. In the agricultural sector we divided the progressive cash-crop farmers into those cultivating less than 5 acres (approximately 2 hectars), grouping them with the agricultural proletarioids, and those cultivating more than that as members of the agricultural bourgeoisie (the truly large-scale farmers are a very distinct and clearly separable category in Kenya anyhow). Housewives and other economically dependent family members were grouped along with the head of the household, usually the husband or father. All these operationalizations are, of course, arbitrary to some extent, but they seemed to be most appropriate for the present situation in Kenya and can easily be revised or adapted for other cases if necessary.

In contrast to more orthodox analysts of economic and political classes, we do not consider this model of stratification to be of universal or eternal applicability in all its feature. We contend, however, that it sufficiently reflects the emerging pattern of vertical political conflict groups, based on their "objective" economic interest, in Kenya today and possibly in quite a number of other countries in comparable stages of economic development and social differentiation as well. In this way, we think, it constitutes a fair compromise between the exigencies of completeness and specificity on the one hand and meaningfulness and theoretical usefulness on the other.

e) The selection of variables:

Within the realm of the "culture" of a society as defined above and making use of its "cultural" framework we now must identify and define the kind of variables which seem to be relevant for the analysis of political culture, as we understand it, i.e., the "subjective" dimension of the social bases of political systems. This is no easy task, even if a wider agreement of the notion of what is "political" could be reached in the sense in which we employ it in this study. Variables of this kind would have to fulfill the following conditions:

- 1) They must be sufficiently universal in order to be useful for the analysis of, at least potentially, all human societies, and to make possible meaningful comparisons among them.
- 2) They must be sufficiently defined both conceptually and operationally to render useful results in empirical analyses.
- 3) They must be sufficiently limited in number to be manageable in empirical investigations without neglecting important aspects or leaving too much ground uncovered.

So far no satisfactory political, sociological or social-psychological model exists from which a limited but meaningful number of variables could be deducted. Almond attempted to define the range of political culture attitudes by linking them to "political objects" by which he understood the political system in general, its respective input and output structures, and the self as a political factor.⁶²⁾ A definition of this kind, however, seems to be too limited to take into account other important attitudes in a society, which are directly or indirectly related to political matters, i.e. the degree of trust members of a society have towards each other, important authority relationships in other social structures, the degree of tolerance of the rights and beliefs of others, etc. In fact, in their own empirical work Almond and Verba considered a much larger range of variables of this kind without, however, providing us with a clear theoretical justification for their particular selection.⁶³⁾

Another theoretical model, the "pattern variables" which have been developed by Talcott Parsons and his associates and which are supposed to characterize some basic value orientations in a society, does not seem to be very useful either.⁶⁴⁾

62) Almond and Verba, op. cit., pp. 14 ff.. A similar distinction is taken up by Rosenbaum when he speaks of some "core components" of the concept of political culture, cf. item, op. cit., pp. 6 ff..

63) Cf. their questionnaires which are appended to the hard-bound edition, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963.

64) Cf., Parsons, The Social System, loc. cit. pp. 58-67, or his "Pattern Variables Revisited", in: American Sociological Review, 25, 1960, pp. 467 - 483.

These variables are too abstract in form to be easily operationalized and too narrow in content for meaningful and differentiated cross-cultural comparisons. They also lack a specifically "political" aspect. The opposite extreme can be said of the "batteries" of psychological tests such as the "Minnesota Multi-Phasic Personality Inventory" (MMPI), the "California Personality Inventory" (CPI) or the "Edward Personal Preference Schedule".⁶⁵⁾ These tests are accumulations of huge amounts of variables with no statement on their internal coherence and theoretical significance which might make it possible to reduce them to a format manageable in large-scale empirical research. Again, most of these variables do not have any immediate "political" aspect either. We are, therefore, left with a problem which Inkeles and Levinson describe in a similar context:

"It is evident that the choice of ... variables for inclusion in recent studies is ordinarily not made on the basis of a systematic framework of ... theory. Each investigator selects a few variables in which he is particularly interested, or for which quantitative measures are available. The need remains for a more inclusive, standardized and theoretically comprehensive analytic⁶⁶⁾ scheme in terms of which 'political culture' can be described and compared cross-nationally.

65) Tests of this kind are also discussed, for example, in: Miller, Delbert, Handbook of Research Design and Social Measurement, New York: McKay, 1964.

66) Our substitution.

...The quest for a standardized analytic scheme brings with it new problems. A workable scheme can hardly contain more than 30 or 40 categories. We do not yet have an adequate basis in ... theory, and certainly in empirical knowledge, for producing a set of variables sure to have universal applicability and significance. And in any case, a scheme which is limited to a relatively few, universally relevant variables would necessarily omit much that is important in any one society. ... A standardized analytic scheme can, at its best, add to the technical rigor and theoretical value of our investigations. Premature standardization, on the other hand, may seriously impair the flexibility and inclusiveness of analysis, and at its worst leads to rigorous measurements without concern for the theoretical meaning or functional significance of the variables measured".⁶⁷⁾

For these reasons we decided to proceed in a tentative inductive-deductive manner at this relatively early stage of approximations between theoretical constructs and empirical reality. In a pragmatic way, we attempted, on the one hand, to "scan" some of the more important empirical investigations of political culture for the kind of variables they analyzed and to put them together in a more consistent way. On the other hand, we tried to limit the possible range of variables by defining more clearly what precisely we consider to be the realm of political inquiry proper. In the course of the

67) Inkeles and Levinson, op. cit., p.447.

development of political science many definitions of its specific subject matter have been proposed, and since some of them serve different purposes of inquiry and are linked to certain metatheoretical points of view, there is no simple answer as to the right or wrong one.⁶⁸⁾ For our purposes we prefer to define as "political" all elements of social life which are related to the authoritative decision-making potentially relevant for all members of a society. Conflicts about such decisions are, given the diversity of all kinds of groups and interests in all societies we know, an integral part of this process. The central institutions of decision-making possess the monopoly of legitimate physical coercion. The basis of their legitimacy may, however, be doubtful in particular cases and can change in the course of time.⁶⁹⁾ What kind properly belongs to this realm of public decision-making is, however, a matter of contention. Whereas, by their very nature, some parts of social life, must be regulated by this process, such as questions of foreign relations or defense, the compliance with certain standards of internal "law and order", and, we would add, the basic economic distributive mechanisms of a society, there are other areas which are not as much subject to regulations of this kind, (even ladies' hemlines are considered to be a political question in some countries). What is regarded to be "political" is, therefore, also part of a society's political culture or a regime's ideology, which may change in time and space.

68) We have discussed this more extensively in Berg-Schlosser et al., Einführung..., loc. cit., pp. 21 ff.

69) This definition combines elements from Max Weber, cf., e.g., his Politics as a Vocation, (in the edition we used Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1958, p. 8), David Easton, cf., e.g., his "An Approach to the Analysis of Political Systems", in: World Politics, vol. IX, April 1957, p. 383 ff. and some conflict theorists such as Georg Simmel, Lewis Coser and Ralf Dahrendorf; for Dahrendorf cf.. e.g., his "Zur Theorie und Analyse von Konflikten", in: idem. Konflikt und Freiheit, loc. cit., pp. 11 ff..

The elements relating to the process of public decision-making include all "interests" involved and the beliefs, attitudes and values (i.e. "political culture") of individuals and groups, and the forces which shape them. The latter comprise the main socializing agents of a society, e.g. the family, schools, the place of work, the social class, and other groups of which one is a member, but only in so far as they relate to or shape "political" attitudes in the sense indicated above.

It may also be useful to distinguish between elements which are directly or indirectly political. The former include all factors which are at work in the political system proper, and which are directly concerned with the transformation of political inputs into political outputs. All other factors, such as the main political socializing agents in a society, can be considered to be only indirectly political, although their influence can by no means be neglected. On the contrary, it is one of the main arguments of our proposed approach, that these more indirect social and economic factors have been overlooked in many analyses of historical and contemporary political systems and that they are among the most important forces which shape a society's medium and long-term political development.

This is a fairly wide definition, but it has the advantage that it can be sufficiently operationalized to serve our purposes. We do not, however, find it very helpful to consider everything to be political in one way or another, as orthodox Marxists do, with regard to all economic factors in a society, or as do some behaviorists with regard to all socialization processes. We think it is important to make clear analytic distinctions between the political, the economic, and other social spheres of life, although the latter undoubtedly have

a considerable, but "indirect" impact on the former. We think it is more useful to make this kind of influence the object of inquiry rather than include everything a priori in the definition of what is political. Our final list can, of course, only be of a preliminary nature and further empirical research and subsequent theoretical refinement will probably one day bring us closer to our goal. Four "spheres" of variables in particular seem to be relevant for our present concern.⁷⁰⁾ The first lies at the level of the individual personality. It includes assessments of the identity⁷¹⁾ of a person, his or her self-esteem⁷²⁾, his or her perceptions of and relations to all kinds of "authority"⁷³⁾, his or her basic trust in other people⁷⁴⁾, the degree of individualism he or she displays, his or her predisposition to act violently, and similar attitudes. The second sphere, although it cannot be separated in all respects from the first one, refers to the realm and degree of identification of the individual with larger social groups and, possibly, a "nation". It thus includes a measure for the range and intensity for an individual's "primary" identification with his ("nuclear" or larger) family, his attachment to sub-national "communalistic" social groups, his "class-consciousness" and his sense of

70) Cf. also Berg-Schlosser, Politische Kultur..., loc. cit., chapt. IV.

71) Cf., e.g., Erikson, Erik H., Ideology, Youth and Crisis, New York: Norton, 1968.

72) Cf. Rosenberg, M., Sociology and the Adolescent Self-Image, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965.

73) Cf. Adorno, Theodor W., Frenkel-Brunswick, Else, Levinson, Daniel J. Sanford R. Nevitt, The Authoritarian Personality, first edition, New York: Harper and Row, 1950.

74) Cf. Almond and Verba, op. cit.; and Banfield, Edward C., The Moral Basis of a Backward Society, New York: The Free press, 1958.

"national identity" ⁷⁵⁾, but also, conversely, the degree of "alienation" or "anomie" an individual may experience in his society ⁷⁶⁾, or the kind or degree of social distance ⁷⁷⁾ which may be felt to exist between one's own and other important social groups.

The third sphere covers a number of more general economic, social and religious attitudes which seem to be related, even if only indirectly, to the political life of a country. These comprise a sense of (or a "need" for) economic "achievement" ⁷⁸⁾, the degree of satisfaction with one's economic situation, the future expectations in this respect, a person's basic orientation towards life (e.g. more secular, or more transcendental and other worldly), his predominant mode of explanation (e.g. in more "rational" or more "mythical" or "magical" ways), his belief in human freedom and social equality ⁷⁹⁾, the perception of the role of women in society, and similar aspects.

The fourth kind of variables, finally, is directly related to political matters, i.e. to the input and output structures and the central institutions of the political system and its foreign relations. They include the level of a person's interest in politics, his degree of political information ⁸⁰⁾,

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- 75) Cf., e.g., Geertz, Clifford, "The Integrative Revolution - Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in New States", in: idem (ed.), Old Societies and New States, New York: The Free Press, 1963, pp. 105-157.
- 76) Cf., e.g., McClosky, Herbert, and Schaar, John H., "Psychological Dimensions of Anomy", in: American Sociological Review, 30, no. 1, 1965, pp. 14-40.
- 77) Cf. Bogardus, E., Immigration and Race Attitudes, Boston: Heath, 1928.
- 78) Cf. Mc Clelland, David C., The Achieving Society, Princeton: van Nostrand, 1961.
- 79) Cf. e.g., McClocks, Herbert, "Consensus and Ideology in American Politics", in: APSR, vol. 58, June 1964, pp. 361-381
- 80) Cf., e.g., Matthews, D.R. and Prothro, J.W., Negroes and the New Southern Politics, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1966.

his degree of exposure to public news media ⁸¹⁾ (the two last-mentioned are strictly speaking not attitudes but are related to a person's political interest), the kind and degree of participation in politics ⁸²⁾, the degree of identification with a political party ⁸³⁾, his sense of "civic competence" ⁸⁴⁾, the degree of political tolerance, the respect of the rights of political opposition, the degree of "personalization" of politics in a country, the kind and degree of legitimacy of its political system, the trust in political leadership and the efficiency of public administration or, conversely, political cynicism and the like ⁸⁵⁾. Also the level of "salience" of politics as a whole in a society, the degree of its "politicization", constitutes an important aspect of the concept of political culture ⁸⁶⁾.

81) Cf. Lerner, Daniel, The Passing of Traditional Society, New York: The Free Press, 1958.

82) Cf., e.g., Almond and Verba, *op. cit.*; or Mathews and Prothro, *op. cit.*

83) This is a major variable discussed prominently in most of the election studies; cf., e.g., Campbell, Angus, Converse, Philip, Miller, Warren E., Stokes, Donald E., The American Voter, New York: John Wiley, 1960.

84) Cf., Almond and Verba, *op. cit.*

85) In addition to the sources mentioned here, some more "operational" measures of different kinds of variables can be found in the collections of attitude scales published by the Institute of Social Research of the University of Michigan; cf. Robinson, John P., Rusk, Jerrold G., Head, Kendra S., Measures of Political Attitudes, 1968; Robinson, John P., Athanasiou, Robert and Head, Kendra S., Measures of Occupational Attitudes and Occupational Characters, 1969; and Robinson, John P., Shaver, Philip R., Measures of Social Psychological Attitudes, 1969.

86) Cf. Czudnowski, Moshe M., "A Salience Dimension of Politics for the Study of Political Culture", in: APSR, Sept. 1968, pp. 878-888.

This huge range of variables is difficult, if not impossible to investigate in any single study. Nevertheless we think that at this early stage of our inquiries we should cast our net as wide as is theoretically meaningful and technically feasible in order not to miss some aspects which may later turn out to be very important. At a later stage it will probably be possible by means of multiple regression, factor analysis and similar techniques to considerably reduce the amount of variables which are investigated in any single study. By this time, too, firmer hypotheses may exist about some particular and very central aspects of political culture which then can be tested in a more specific and rigorous way. In the meantime this more inductive analysis seems more or less inevitable.

In addition to these "attitudinal" questions, a number of others are also asked in most empirical studies which seek to obtain some information of a more cognitive nature about an individual and his society. To this category belong the "life-history", questions about important events which affected the respondent's life, his most important personal problems, the most serious difficulties the country is facing and similar ones, which usually serve to establish or to confirm certain hypotheses about some of the individual and collective "sources" of political culture. This group of data often includes questions related to some specific but more fundamental political issues, for example about some basic aspects of the economic system (such as the role of private property, the influence of foreign capital, the role of unions, the level of wages, etc.) and other more fundamental concerns in the social sphere (for example aspects of social justice), and some important features of the judicial system (including, e.g., the role of capital punishment).

Finally, a range of other questions, which seek to collect information about a respondent's personal status, are an integral part of every empirical investigation. These are designed to fit an individual into a framework of more "objective" demographic information in order to establish

correlational or, if possible, casual relationships between these two, the "subjective" and the "objective" levels of analysis. Questions of this kind usually inquire as to age, sex, marital status, family size, ethnic group (where relevant), religious affiliation, membership in professional and voluntary organizations, level of formal education, occupation, income, place and time of residence (the latter for some assessments of geographical mobility), possibly father's and mother's occupation and level of education (for comparisons of inter-generational social mobility) and similar aspects of an individual's position in society.

Taking into account all these different kinds of variables, one can attempt to designate certain "types" of political culture, according to which certain parts of a population or countries as a whole in a cross-national comparison can be grouped in a more aggregate form. Most typologies of this kind are of the "constructed" or "pure" variety⁸⁷⁾, i.e. the classification is based on some theoretical construct, most often "extreme" values of (rarely more than two) "key-variables", which are then grouped into two-by-two or similar matrices. Almond and Verba's typology of "parochial", "subject" and "participant" political cultures, depending on whether individuals and groups do not perceive of any relationship with the central political system, whether they are only in contact with the output structure, or whether they are in active communication with both the input and output sides, is a variant of this kind.⁸⁸⁾ Simeon and Elkins' classification of four types of citizens, the "supporters", the "disaffected", the "differentials" and

87) Cf., e.g., Hempel, Carl G., "Typologische Methoden in den Sozialwissenschaften", in: Topitsch, Ernst (ed.), Logik der Sozialwissenschaften, Köln: Kiepenheuer und Witsch, 7. Auflage, 1971, pp. 87 ff.

88) Almond and Verba, op. cit., pp. 15 ff.

the "critics" according to their cross-tabulated rank on scales of "political trust" and political efficiency" is also of this nature⁸⁹⁾. The value of such typologies is, although they offer some ready, short-hand formulae, quite limited. By reducing the concept of "political culture" to very few variables, a wide range of other relevant information is necessarily lost or "suppressed", and by forcing individuals or groups of countries into one or the other extreme on these scales, one rarely does justice to a large number of intermediate or "mixed" cases. Too limited or premature typologies, which easily become "clichés", therefore, more often impede than enhance our understanding of other cultures and their social processes.

Some methodological problems and procedures:

A selection of variables, which are thought to be relevant for the study of political culture in a way similar to our listing above, is only the first step in an actual empirical investigation. The problems of measurement with which we are confronted in this respect are enormous; probably only rough approximations will be possible in this respect for a long time to come. Most important, from a methodological point of view, are the problems of the homogeneity, reliability and validity of the measures employed and, for cross-national comparisons, their equivalence in different

89) Simeon, Richard and Elkins, David J., "Regional Political Cultures in Canada", in: Canadian Journal of Political Science, vol. VII, no. 3, Sept. 1974, pp. 397-437.

cultures ⁹⁰⁾. In addition, each particular inquiry is faced with a host of practical difficulties. These often start with the organization and coordination of a research program, the obtaining of a "clearance" from government authorities where necessary, the selection and training of helpers, and include many technical problems when a survey is conducted and one attempts to select a "random" sample under often extremely adverse conditions in some countries.

Our study is a testimony to many of these theoretical, methodological and practical problems in the analysis of the "subjective" dimension of the social bases of Kenya's political system. The variables we have finally selected for analysis are intended to reflect as much as possible our systematic considerations above. On the other hand, the limited availability of relevant measures for some of them ⁹¹⁾, and the necessity of obtaining a "research clearance" from the Kenyan authorities constituted important limitations in this respect.

90) Cf., e.g., Scheuch, Erwin K., "The Cross-Cultural Use of Sample Surveys: Problems of Comparability", in: Rokkan, Stein (ed.), Comparative Research across Cultures and Nations, The Hague: Mouton, 1968, pp. 176-209; or Frey, Frederick W., "Cross-Cultural Survey Research in Political Science", in: Holt, Robert T., and Turner, John E., (eds.), The Methodology of Comparative Research, New York: The Free Press, 1970, pp. 173-294.

91) The sources of measures derived from other studies which have been employed in our survey are listed in the appendix below.

A first draft of the questionnaire (in its English version, but which was handled by interviewers who could also employ it in their own vernacular, Kikuyu) was then submitted to a pre-test both in Nairobi and among rural respondents in the adjacent Central Province, the Kikuyu homeland. More extensive pre-tests in other rural areas were not possible because of the prohibitive expenditure (for us!) such as travel costs, separate selection and training of interviewers at this early stage, etc. The questionnaire then could be considerably shortened (some less important or less comprehensible, but also some "sensitive" questions had to be eliminated) and was rearranged in some parts. The final version is far from ideal ⁹²⁾ and, in particular, is still rather long (the average interviewing time was between 1 1/2 and 2 hours). On the whole, however, it turned out to be a reasonably well-functioning research instrument.

The English version of the questionnaire was then translated into Swahili by an accredited interpreter and re-translated into English by one of our interviewers. In this way, some minor inconsistencies could be eliminated, and we are fairly confident, as far as our own knowledge of Swahili goes, and also judging from the final results which did not indicate any serious language problems for a particular group, that the two standard versions of our questionnaire were sufficiently equivalent. We could not afford, again for reasons of the expenditure involved, to obtain similarly standardized versions for the other vernacular languages which had to be employed (Kikikuyu, Kikamba, Luluyia, Dholuo, Nandi, Ol Maa, Kigiriama, etc.). Instead the interviewers for each ethnic group, who all spoke the respective vernacular fluently, were trained to conduct the interview by employing one of the standard versions of the questionnaire and using their own language,

92) Some minor flaws which were only detected after our final analysis are also indicated in the appendix.

where necessary, at the same time. The team of interviewers for each area also made a common verbal translation of the questionnaire and conducted some mock interviews among themselves employing the vernacular, so that at least agreement about the appropriate terms, where in doubt, was reached within this group. Of all our interviews, 44% were conducted in the vernacular language, 27% in Swahili, 23% in English, the rest in some mixed forms.

The selection of interviewers was almost exclusively conducted on the basis of personal contacts. When a team had completed its work in a particular area, we were usually able to recruit another one from among the friends of the first group. This was facilitated by the fact that a majority of our interviewers was drawn from a large national secondary school in Nairobi with students coming from all over the country. Most of our interviewers just had completed their "A-level" examinations in the fall of 1973 and while they had to wait several months for the results of their exams, they were free (and eager!) to take up some temporary employment before continuing at the university or in some other more permanent occupation. Each team of interviewers (usually consisting of four students for a particular area) was then carefully instructed by us and trained in some mock interviews.

The basis of our operations was Nairobi for interviews among parts of the Kikuyu, Kamba, and Maasai groups, but we had to travel considerable distances to reach the more remote home areas of the Luo, Luyia, Kalenjin, and Mijikenda; we stayed for about one week in each region. We usually found accommodation in some local "hotels", at mission-stations in some instances, or with private families. We must say that we developed a very good rapport with almost all of our interviewers during these common travels, sharing most aspects of daily life with them. In some cases this has developed into very cordial and still continuing personal friendships.

This close contact also made it possible for each student to be immediately "debriefed" after having finished an interview so that any occurring problems could be straightened out at once. He could be sent back to a respondent, if necessary, when, for example, a question had been overlooked or when we wanted some further clarification on a certain point.

In other matters we were less concerned with methodological perfection. We did not attempt, for example, to "standardize the interview situation" as some researchers did in Africa, e.g. by pitching a large tent at some place. We consider the possible distortion of having to bring a respondent over some distance to the place of the interview to be much greater (and his willingness to answer much less!) in this case. In our opinion, to sit in the shadow of a tree or even to walk along with somebody herding his cattle provides a much more appropriate interview situation under the existing circumstances in Kenya than any artificial and often meaningless "standardized" one. We also did not pay our respondents in any way, e.g. by offering them beer or "gifts" as is often done by foreign researchers in Africa. Instead our students explained the purpose of the interview as well as possible and asked for the voluntary cooperation of the respondents. The number of cases where this was refused was extremely low (less than 2% altogether), and in most cases, after some initial distrust had been dispelled, our respondents proved to be very cooperative. In most instances we (i.e. my wife and I as "Europeans") were not apparent to the respondent in any concrete interview situation so that this element of distortion or distrust towards foreigners or people from outside one's own ethnic group could be largely eliminated as well.

The final sample for our survey comprised 572 completed interviews. In the rural areas we had selected a total of 392 respondents on a quota basis, taking sex, age, and occupation as sampling criteria. In this way we were able to approximate roughly the actual distribution of these factors in each group, i.e. the "progressive" and subsistence farmers, landless farm-laborers, where these exist, and a certain proportion of those in non-agricultural occupations of all age-groups. Males were slightly oversampled (in a ratio of 3 to 2). The interviews were conducted in each of the main districts of the home area of each group, except for the Kalenjin, where for technical and administrative reasons we had to confine our sample to Trans-Nzoia and Elgeyo-Marakwet Districts alone. The only alternative to quota sampling under the present conditions in rural Kenya and in the absence of any permanent and up-to-date population registers would have been random sampling on an area basis. This presupposes, however, the availability of detailed and reliable maps, the use of aerial photography for the selection of the individual homesteads and the accessibility of the finally selected sites on the ground, at least with some all-weather vehicle or on foot within practicable distances ⁹³⁾. All this was clearly precluded by the existing administrative conditions in Kenya,

93) Similar procedures are discussed, for example, in O'Barr, William M., Spain, David H. and Tessler, Mark A, (eds.), Survey Research in Africa, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973.

and, most importantly, the size of our budget ⁹⁴⁾.

In addition we took a sample of 180 respondents in the city of Nairobi. Most of these were selected at random on the basis of their place of residence within the "African quarters", of town, given the still largely existing segregation there. This included both very poor and better-off housing areas in these zones. The detailed maps with a scale of 1: 10 000 provided by the City Council proved to be adequate for this purpose. Only among the shanty-dwellers of Mathare Valley we drew another small quota based on sex and age. In order to combine, where necessary, our rural and urban sample for our final analysis we weighted all respondents in agricultural occupations compared with those in non-agricultural occupations in a ratio of 3 to 1, so that in our over-all sample these occupations are represented in approximately the same order of magnitude as in Kenya's society as a whole.

94) Our total operating budget in Kenya (excluding our own living expenses, but including all costs for translations, interviewers, travels within the country, board and lodging outside Nairobi for the interviewers and us, paper, printing costs, photocopying, clipboards, office-material, etc.) amounted to DM 13,200,--, financed by a grant from the "Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft" (DFG), Bonn-Bad Godesberg. Compared with similar undertakings (an inclusion of questions amounting to 15 minutes of interview time on the average in the "ZUMA-BUS", the joint annual survey conducted by the Survey Research Center at Mannheim, costs DM 39.000,-- at the present time, for example), this really was a "shoestring"-budget. The processing of our data at the Survey Research Center of the University of California at Berkeley then was supported by a further grant of 2.000 dollars from the Dean of the Graduate Division there. This was to cover all expenses for coding, keypunching, "cleaning" of the data, etc., but it still made necessary the active and "free" full-time engagement of my wife for several months. The actual computer time was provided free of charge by the Department of Political Science at Berkeley and the University of Augsburg.

Even though these samples have some obvious limitations both in size and procedure, a "purer" and larger sample was not possible, given our limited resources, under the prevailing conditions in Kenya. After analyzing our data we feel nevertheless confident that at least the most important qualitative aspects of our study have been sufficiently covered and that even approximately correct orders of magnitude for the distribution of our main variables have been obtained ⁹⁵⁾.

Thus on the whole this survey focuses on the "mass" level of Kenya's society. In line with the over-all actual proportions it includes only very few members of the "upper" classes and does not allow for any generalizations at this level. An analysis of "elite" attitudes and behavior would have required a separate and sufficiently large sampling of this group. Since we were more interested in the mass aspect of the political culture of Kenya and its main ethnic groups and classes, and again in view of our budget situation and some additional technical difficulties of a separate "elite" sample, we did not attempt to cover this aspect. On the other hand, a separate sample of university students, as a potential future elite, which would have been easier to administer, did not appear to be an acceptable substitute in this case. Elite attitudes and behavior can also be documented more easily with the help of other sources such as the news media, literary accounts and other written reports of people in contact with the elite which is still the most accessible group for a great number of "Wazungu" (a somewhat derogatory Swahili term for "Europeans") in many African countries.

95) For further specifications of our sample see our "Methodological Appendix" below.

As to the rest of our methodological and technical procedures not much needs to be added here which would differ from usually employed methods and be of more general interest. Perhaps we should mention one precaution which proved to be necessary: all our original questionnaires were transcribed by students on separate single "result sheets" so that we always had 2 copies available which could be mailed separately in several batches (photocopying of all 11-page questionnaires would have been prohibitively expensive). Indeed, when one parcel containing 80 original questionnaires mysteriously disappeared, we still could make use of the completed result sheets. The processing of our data then went through the usual but time-consuming routines of coding, key-punching, cleaning, etc. at the Survey Research Center of the University of California at Berkeley. The program systems employed for our data analysis were the "Berkeley Transposed File Statistical System" (nicknamed PICKLE) and, later at Augsburg, the "Statistical Package for the Social Sciences" (SPSS)⁹⁶.

All in all, our research methods and procedures are far from what they could have been "ideally". In the long run only cumulative and much more detailed studies of the different variables and social groups involved will do more justice to the complex problems discussed here. If our necessarily limited "one-shot" analysis has shown at least some of the potentialities in this respect and can, perhaps, stimulate some further investigations, it will have served its purpose.

96) More detailed comments on different procedures of variable transformation and analysis, index and scale construction, etc. are also given in the "Methodological Appendix".

CHAPTER 2: THE CASE OF KENYA

"Case studies" belong to the most important methods of investigation in the field of "comparative politics"¹⁾. Among the several procedures at hand, which each in a different way attempt to cope with the most general dilemma of the "comparative method" in political science, namely the usually large number of variables and the relatively small number of cases which are to be considered, a case study is located at one of the possible extremes: it focuses on a single case, but it usually attempts to cover a very large number of variables. In this way it combines some of the idiographic aspects of, for example, hermeneutic or phenomenological methods²⁾ with, if it does not remain on a purely descriptive level, the systematic and nomothetic aspirations of the social sciences, which provide the general framework for the selection of the variables and some of the major propositions. These can then be tested and, as the case may be, rejected, modified, or confirmed in a comparative and theoretically fruitful manner. A case study of this kind then can serve as a major point of reference for further investigations both across time for the same case, and space, comparing it with other studies which have a similar theoretical framework, for example in the same geographical and cultural "area". Among the different "pure types" of case studies which can be distinguished in this respect³⁾ our investigation, as is the case with many others, combines some of the characteristics of these types and is, in some respects, "descriptive", "interpretative", "hypothesis generating", "theory confirming", "theory infirming", and "deviant" at the same time.

1) Cf., e.g., Lijphart, Arend, "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method", APSR, Sept. 1971, pp. 682-693.

2) For a discussion of these methods cf., e.g., Seiffert, Helmut, Einführung in die Wissenschaftstheorie, vol. 2, München: C.H. Beck, 1970.

3) Cf. Lijphart, loc. cit., p. 691.

a.) The reasons for selection:

The selection of any particular case always involves a variety of reasons, and not all of these are necessarily of a purely theoretical nature. Many idiosyncrasies concerning both the respective investigator and the particular research conditions of a certain country also are often of great importance and usually some kind of compromise has to be struck between what is theoretically desirable and what is practicable and actually possible. But, after all, social science is concerned with "real life" and in our view the inherent limitations of a single case study and some of the practical shortcomings involved with the selection of a particular example are more than compensated for by the richness of the actual human, social and political experiences which can be gained and which are in our field in most instances by far preferable to the "sterile" conditions of an "ideal" laboratory.

The "idiosyncratic" reasons, as far as the author is concerned, include a relatively early (for his age) and often repeated personal contact with East Africa, and particularly Kenya, as well as, an undeniable affection for this country and its people which became stronger and stronger the more he got to know them. The research conditions in Kenya are relatively favorable both in terms of geographic accessibility and bureaucratic and political requirements, although this author also had his share of traumatic experiences concerning the latter. On the whole Kenya also has a well-developed statistical apparatus and most social and economic activities in the country are fairly well documented. Similarly the history of Kenya, at least since the beginning of the colonial period, has been relatively well investigated by now and the anthropological material concerning the traditional life of

most of Kenya's different ethnic groups is in most cases sufficient for our purposes and fairly up to date. In addition, the growing "intellectual community" at the University of Nairobi and its different institutes and departments, no longer staffed exclusively by "expatriates" and other more or less temporary residents, provide a stimulating atmosphere where the "Kenyan" point of view (not necessarily that of the government, of course) is freely expressed and contribute to a fuller understanding of the facts and issues involved. Thus the "external" conditions which influenced our selection of this particular case were quite satisfactory.

But there were also sound theoretical factors determining our choice. To begin with, Kenya is one of the many countries at the "lower end" of the scale of social differentiation and economic development there by providing a sharp contrast to the highly industrialized regions of the world, where most present-day social science theories were first formulated and of which this author, nolens volens, is also a part. If any of these theories, particularly those concerned with the social prerequisites and the viability of "democracy"⁴⁾, should be of a truly general nature and potentially open to universal application, then Sub-Saharan Africa with its many newly formed states and its entirely different social and economic background should prove to be a particularly interesting "testing ground", in this respect.

In addition to this more general reason, which applies to most African countries, there are also more specific ones which make

4) For a discussion of some of the more prominent approaches cf., e.g., Kariel, Henry S. (ed), Frontiers of Democratic Theory, New York: Random House, 1970.

Kenya a particularly interesting and theoretically promising case. Kenya's social structure shows an interesting mix of different principles of social stratification which have superseded each other in the course of time. Originally almost all the indigenous ethnic groups living in present-day Kenya had an "egalitarian-segmentarian" pattern of stratification, based on the different functional role of age-groups⁵⁾. Following the colonial conquest a new pattern emerged in the newly created political entity, comparable to that of a "caste" system⁶⁾: clearly defined social and economic borderlines based on racial origins were ascribed by birth and could not be transgressed. The top "caste" in this system was that of the colonial administrators, but also of European settlers, businessmen and, at a later stage, industrialists. The second layer consisted of small-scale Asian businessmen and craftsmen who in most cases were also newly immigrated and who soon controlled almost all economic activities in these fields. At the bottom, finally, was the "mass" of the African population whose movements were restricted and whose economic chances were severely curtailed. As far as they were not left alone in their traditional subsistence economy, they were used as cheap labor on the European farms and in other enterprises and government services.

With the approach of independence, and very markedly thereafter, a different pattern of stratification once more, began to emerge. The racial and legal restrictions concerning the access of different economic and political positions were removed and from now on, at least theoretically, a person's position in society was to be based on his particular abilities and talents with equal chances of success. The increasing social differentiation which took place on this basis, coupled with the particular distributive mechanisms of Kenya's "capitalistic"

5) For a description of the social organization of Kenya's main ethnic groups see Part II below.

6) For a definition of "caste" cf., e.g., Weber, Max, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1922, p. 636 f..

economic system after independence, led to the formation of a "class" society where an individual's social position in a "vertical" sense⁷⁾ is based on his differential and in some instances changing relationship towards the means of production⁸⁾. In spite of the relative lack of important mineral and other natural resources, Kenya experienced an average annual rate of real economic growth of 6,6% during her first ten years of independence⁹⁾; except for the Ivory coast, this was achieved nowhere else in Africa. Thus the tendency towards the formation of "classes" was much more pronounced than in most other comparable countries. In this way some aspects of class formation which are still more latent in other parts of Africa already have become manifest here. Today Kenya thus provides the peculiar example of a society where all these different factors (i.e. the egalitarian-segmentarian pattern, the "caste" and the "class" aspects) still exists side by side to a certain extent and interact in many ways. The particular dynamics generated by the different "vertical" and "horizontal" conflict groups¹⁰⁾ should constitute a rewarding case, both for more generally interested conflict theorists and researchers who are more specifically concerned with the social bases of democratic political systems.

Finally, and this is the most specific reason for selecting this case, independent Kenya has so far maintained a system of "parliamentary democracy" which includes regular and relatively "free" elections, the preservation of civil liberties and the rule of law. Without overlooking many actual shortcomings in this "democracy", it cannot be denied that the effectiveness and the duration of this

7) See also our discussion of the "structural" frame of this study in chapter 1 d of this part above.

8) "Class" aspects of Kenya's society are further discussed in Berg-Schlosser, Dirk, "Entwicklungstendenzen der Klassenstruktur Kenias", paper prepared for the committee on Development Theory and Development Policies of the German Political Science Association (mimeo), February 1978.

9) Republic of Kenya, Economic Survey 1974, Nairobi, 1974, pp. 2 ff..

10) For a definition of these terms see also Part I, chapter 1 above.

system are indeed unique in Africa. It will be the task of this study to show under what kind of social, economic and political conditions this success was achieved, to point out some of the more important critical factors in this respect and to give an outline of some of the potentialities of political development in the future¹¹⁾.

b.) Some comparative background data:

Keeping these considerations in mind, it is now necessary to briefly "present" the case in greater detail and thus provide the reader with some general background information. The territory which is known today as "Kenya" is situated at about the middle of the eastern coast of the African continent where it is approximately cut in half by the equator. In the east it borders on the Indian Ocean, reaching as far as Lake Viktoria in the west. The country covers an area of 583,000 square kilometers or approximately 225,000 square miles¹²⁾, which, as these comparisons go, corresponds approximately to the size of France, but still amounts to about 100,000 square kilometers less than the area covered by the state of Texas. Only about 11% of this land, however, is of high or medium agricultural potential with regular and sufficient rainfalls¹³⁾, most of the rest is covered by arid grasslands and deserts. There are also very few known mineral resources, and except for some soda ash and fluorspar, Kenya's main exports consist of agricultural produce such as coffee, tea, pyrethrum, or sisal. For this reason, unless the continuing search for oil proves fruitful some day, Kenya belongs to the category of countries, now sometimes called the "Fourth World", who have to depend almost entirely on others for their supplies of energy and other important industrial raw materials.

11) Cf. also Parts IV and V below.

12) Republic of Kenya, Statistical Abstract 1974, Nairobi, 1975, p. 2.

13) Ibid., p. 117.

In spite of the proximity of the equator the climate is temperate in most parts of Central and Western Kenya due to the relatively high altitude of between 1,500 and 2,400 meters (i.e. 5,000 to 8,000 feet) on the average. This relatively healthy climate and the resulting favorable agricultural conditions made these areas particularly attractive to immigrants. In the course of the great population movements on the African continent¹⁴⁾ "Eastern Nilotic" people¹⁵⁾ (as the Maasai) and "Southern Nilotes" (as the Kalenjin) entered the territory of present-day Kenya from the north, and people of Bantu origin came from the south (such as the Mijikenda, Kamba and Kikuyu¹⁶⁾) and west (the Luyia and Kisii). People of "Western Nilotic" descent (the Luo) can also be found in the west and "Cushitic" groups (such as the Galla and Somali) dominate in the north and northeast¹⁷⁾. Altogether,

14) Cf., e.g., Oliver, Roland and Mathew, Gervase (eds.), History of East Africa, vol. I, London: Oxford University Press, 1963, chapter VI, in particular pp. 171 ff..

15) Strictly speaking these terms only designate common linguistic features of these groups and not necessarily any further-reaching social or political bonds. Even though the usefulness of this classification still is somewhat disputed, these terms today have largely replaced the formerly common ones of "Nilo-Hamites" for the Kalenjin and Maasai, "Nilotes" (for the Luo) and "Hamites" (for the Somali-speaking groups).

16) For the sake of convenience, we employ here and in the rest of this study only the roots of the common names for Kenya's linguistic and ethnic groups and thus omit the more correct, but for an unprepared reader somewhat complicated, prefixes of the different African languages.

17) Cf. Huntingford, C.W.B., "The Peopling of the Interior of East Africa by its Modern Inhabitants", in Oliver and Mathews (Eds.), loc. cit., chapter III, pp. 58-93.

42 different African ethnic groups ("tribes")¹⁸⁾ are listed in the Kenyan population census¹⁹⁾. This is a considerably lower number than in neighboring Tanzania (with more than 120 distinct ethnic groups), but still more than in Ethiopia, Uganda, or even Zaire²⁰⁾. The five largest groups (Kikuyu, Kamba, Luo, Luyia, and Kalenjin), however, all of which number more than one million members each, account for more than 75% of the total population. The comparable figure in Tanzania is only 25% for the five largest groups. An "ethnic arithmetic" of this kind, therefore, already helps to explain some of the social and political dynamics in countries where conflict groups still are largely based on ethnic factors.

In addition to this indigenous population there were also about 60.000 non-Kenyan Africans (mainly from Tanzania and Uganda), 28.000 people of Arab, 140.000 of Asian and 40.000 of European origin at the time of the last census.

The total population thus consisted of almost 11 million people at the time of the last census. Because of the extremely high rate of

18) The use of the term "tribe" also has been disputed in recent years both by anthropologists who want to give it a more precise analytical meaning (cf., e.g., Helm J. (ed.), Essays on the Problem of Tribe: Proceedings of the 1967 Annual Spring Meeting of the American Ethnological Society, Seattle: University Press, 1968), and by members of these groups who resent the notion of "primitiveness" which is often implied. For our purposes we, therefore, prefer the terms "ethnic groups" or "people" in most instances where we refer to "traditional ethnic-linguistic units", even though these groups may differ greatly in terms of their internal cohesion and the delineation of their outside boundaries (see also Part II below).

19) Republic of Kenya, Population Census 1969, vol. I, Nairobi, 1970, p. I f..

20) Cf., e.g., the respective "country profiles" in Morrison et al., Black Africa....., loc. cit., pp. 177 ff..

population growth (3,3% p. a. in the period between the last two censuses of 1962 and 1969) this number is increasing rapidly and at the time of writing there are probably 13 - 14 million people living in Kenya²¹⁾. This high rate of population growth is also responsible for the particular age structure of Kenya's society which can be compared to a pyramid with a very broad base and a relatively narrow and low top where about 50% of the population are below the age of fifteen. This means, if one also includes those who are old and unable to work, that only about one-third of the population is in the productive age groups and must support the other two-thirds. This is an exact reversal of the ratio which exists in most industrial societies today.

If one also takes into account the already mentioned fact that only 11% of Kenya's land surface is of sufficient agricultural potential and that the rate of urbanization still is relatively low (about 10% of the total population live in towns of more than 5,000 inhabitants), one arrives at a population density of 120 persons per square kilometer on the average in these agricultural areas. Under the present methods of production this represents a genuine case of overpopulation in some regions²²⁾ with all the ensuing results of soil depletion, erosion and ever worsening conditions of production. Kenya thus is one of the very few countries in Africa which already experiences a real shortage of agricultural land. The possibilities of enlarging this area to any significant extent or of increasing its productivity by means of irrigation, better fertilization, terracing, the elimination of the Tsetse fly etc. are also quite limited.

The following table gives a short statistical "profile" of Kenya using some of the more common available indicators for purposes of international comparisons²³⁾ :

21) See also the projections in Part IV below.

22) See also our "District Development Index" in Part II, 2 below.

23) These data have been compiled from Taylor and Hudson, World Handbook....., loc. cit..

Table 1.2: Selected comparative indicators of "modernization" in Kenya:

Indicators:	Kenya	highest ranked country (name given in parentheses)	Kenya's rank (total N in parentheses)
GNP, total (in mill. US-\$)	846	695,500 (United States)	82 (135)
GNP per capita (in US-\$)	90	3,575 (United States)	108 (135)
% of male labor force in nonagric. occupations	20	99 (Kuwait)	98 (107)
Energy consumption (in kg per capita)	124	12,077 (Kuwait)	90 (129)
Food supply (calories per capita per diem)	2,380	3,460 (New Zealand)	58 (107)
Medial care (physicians per mill. population)	103	2,393 (Israel)	87 (135)
Infant mortality (infant deaths per 1.000 births)	190	13 (Sweden)	92 (102)
Adult literacy (in %)	23	100 (Denmark)	93,5 (130)
Media participation: Newspaper circulation (per 1.000 population)	7	505 (Sweden)	97 (131)
Radio receivers (per 1.000 population)	37	1,234 (United States)	

As is readily apparent from this table, Kenya's rank on most of these indicators, which represent some aspect and degrees of "modernity", is almost always in the lowest quartile in world rankings. Although the data in this table are indicative of the state of affairs in the mid-1960s and do not show all changes which may have taken place in the meantime, these figures probably still give a fair assessment of Kenya's relative position in the world today. It also should be noted that all these indicators represent over-all national averages which also include the quite substantial share of the Asian and European parts of the population. If data concerning only the African population were included here, Kenya's rank would be even lower²⁴⁾. If we also calculate, again for purposes of comparison, an index for the "exposure to modernity" based on Deutsch's formula²⁵⁾, we arrive at a figure of 27% of the population in 1963 and 43% in 1973 who are "modern" in this sense. Corresponding levels for some other countries are (the latest available figure is for 1955!) India 34%, Turkey 40%, Egypt 47%, Mexico 64%²⁶⁾. The annual average rate of increase in this measure thus was 1,6% for Kenya's first ten years after independence, the "ten great years of Uhuru", as they were called the celebrations of independent Kenya's tenth anniversary. The comparable figures (again periods prior to 1955) for some other countries are:

24) For data on the distribution of income between these groups in Kenya see also Part IV below.

25) In this formula the means of the two highest values on four indices of modernity (radio audience, literacy, work force in non-agricultural occupations, and urbanization) are multiplied by 1,25 to obtain a single measure for "exposure to modernity". Rates of change in this index over time then give a measure for the annual average rate of "social mobilization". Although this kind of measurement is somewhat arbitrary and the quality of its statistical bases remains doubtful for many countries, it can serve, *faute de mieux*, as a useful index for purposes of international comparisons. Cf., Deutsch, Karl W., "Social Mobilisation and Political Development", *APSR*, Sept. 1961, pp. 493-514.

26) *Ibid.*, p. 508..

India 0,6%, Turkey 0,6%, Egypt 0,7%, Mexico 0,7%²⁷⁾. This shows, although the validity of this measure remains somewhat questionable, that the increase in the "exposure to modernity" and the corresponding rate of "social mobilization" has been very high during Kenya's post-independence period, and certainly constitutes one of the factors which may help to explain some aspects of Kenya's present social dynamics²⁸⁾.

c.) A brief historical account:

A society, as any other living being, goes through a series of unique experiences in the course of its existence which contribute to its individuality and which lays the basis for its future. A brief account of some of the most important events which determined the "birth" and the early life-history of "Kenya" is, therefore, necessary at this point in order to gain a perspective for our later discussion of her present and future development.

Modern Kenya, as we know it is, as most of the other Sub-Saharan African states, a creation of the colonial powers. Although there is certainly no reason to believe that the history of the African peoples prior to the advent of the Europeans was less eventful or less important (at least for those who were affected by it) than in other parts of the world, the fact nevertheless remains that still very little is known about these times, due to the lack of written records (except for the area of Arab dominance in Northern Africa and along the coast) and a scarcity of archaeological finds. The latter have mainly been concerned so far with the "prehistoric" era and have led to the interesting finding that the "cradle" of mankind probably stood in Africa²⁹⁾. Oral traditions, the only other promising source, which still

27) Ibid., pp. 509 ff..

28) See also Part IV below.

29) Cf., in particular the writings of C.S.B. Leakey and of his wife and son, e.g., his Stone Age Africa, Oxford, 1936.

have to be exploited much more fully, often do not go back very far and are sometimes unreliable. For this reason, a great deal of information about the lives and history of these peoples, who constitute an important part of the common heritage of mankind, will probably be lost forever. We, therefore, do not imply any "European-centered" view at this point when we begin our brief account of Kenya's more recent historical developments with the advent to the Europeans and the "opening" of Africa to a wider world.

Our knowledge about settlements along the East African Coast goes back to antiquity³⁰⁾, and since then this area has been a part of the established network of international trade, but also of conquest and warfare. In 1498 (i.e. six years after Christopher Columbus first set foot in "America") Vasco da Gama discovered the sea route from Europe to India. In his wake a number of forts were built along the coast and in 1593 work was begun on "Fort Jesus" in Mombasa where from then onwards a permanent garrison was established. The number of occupants of this post remained small, however, and never exceeded a few hundred men. In 1729 the Portuguese were finally expelled, and Arab sultans, at first from Oman, later on from Zanzibar, established their rule over the East African coast and islands³¹⁾. In spite of regular caravans of Arab and Swahili traders into the interior of the continent (mainly dealing in ivory and slaves and reaching as far as Buganda and what is today Eastern Zaire) relatively little information about the lives of the peoples in these areas transpired to the outside world³²⁾.

This changed when a second wave of Europeans, this time mostly missionaries and explorers, arrived in the first half of the 19th century. In 1848 the German missionaries Krapf and Rebmann first "dis-

30) Cf., e.g., Periplus of the Erythrean Sea, dating propably from A.D. 110, edited by Frisk, H., Goteborg, 1927.

31) An account of this period can be found in Oliver and Mathew, op. cit., chapter V, "The Coast, 1498 - 1840" by G.S.P. Freeman-Genville, pp. 129-168.

32) Cf. ibid., chapter VI "Discernible Developments in the Interior c. 1500-1840" by Roland Oliver, pp. 169-211.

covered" the existence of snow-capped mountains near the equator and in 1851 brought reports about them to an incredulous Europe. In 1883 the first European, Joseph Thompson, traveled all across Maasai country and reached the Kenyan highlands. In their wake the scramble for colonies, which had started both for economic and imperial reasons among the leading European powers during this period, also reached this part of Africa and created the political entity we know today. A series of agreements between the United Kingdom and the German Reich, the powers most "interested" in this area, were concluded between 1884 and 1890 and defined the respective "spheres of influence". What was to become "Kenya" (named after the local word for its highest elevation, Mt. Kenya, the "White Mountain") was reserved by these agreements for colonization by the British, whereas the area south of Lake Viktoria and Mt. Kilimanjaro was to become "German East Africa" or "Tanganyika". On the coast, the "ten-mile-strip", which for a long time had been under the rule of the Sultan of Zanzibar, also became part of the British territory³³⁾. The northern boundary of Kenya, north of Lake Rudolf, was defined in an agreement with Ethiopia in 1907, the border with Uganda in the west, running west of Mt. Elgon down to Lake Viktoria, was finally determined in 1926. In 1925 a portion of mostly arid land in the north was transferred to "Italian Somaliland" leaving the border in the east running along the 41st degree of longitude³⁴⁾.

Thus all these boundaries are largely artificial and imposed from above, most of them having been established with a ruler and the stroke of a pen at some office desk in Europe. No account whatsoever was taken of the extent and nature of social, economic or political bonds which may have existed between the peoples in this area, and some groups such as

33) The political events of this period are described, e.g., in Oliver and Mathew, *op. cit.*, chapters IX and XI: for developments along the coast cf. also Salim, A.I., *The Swahili-speaking Peoples of Kenya's Coast 1895 - 1965*, Nairobi, East African Publishing House, 1973.

34) Maps showing the evolution of these boundaries can be found in Survey of Kenya, *National Atlas of Kenya*, third edition, Nairobi, 1970, p. 85.

the Maasai in the south, the Somali in the northeast and some smaller groups along the Ugandan border were even cut off from their next of kin by these sudden administrative measures. Although the initial impact of these arrangements remained minor, these people were subjected to quite different economic and political destinies in the long run. As in most of the other parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, these newly created social units had to be filled with a new life which was to set them permanently apart from their neighbors. It is ironic and in some cases certainly tragic that the idea of rigid "national" boundaries, borrowed from 19th century Europe, was imposed on a continent still so much in a state of flux where large-scale population movements had been going on for centuries and where all kinds and sizes of political units had arisen and disappeared in relatively short periods of time. But even the Organisation of African Unity" (OAU) today, though clearly realizing this predicament, has made the inviolability of the existing boundaries one of its most important principles. Afraid of opening a Pandora's box of even greater evils, most African leaders therefore prefer the status quo to any rearrangement of borderlines.

In this way the "East-African Protectorate", later to be called Kenya, was created in 1895 and acquired the status of a "crown colony" in 1920. In all likelihood it will remain the most relevant political unit in this area for a long time. This becomes particularly evident when one takes into account the relatively bleak prospects, at least in the more immediate future, of the only apparent alternative, a greater economic and political East African Community³⁵⁾. -Also

35) See also the end of this chapter.

in 1895 work on the railway line to Uganda was begun, and this particular development was to influence the future of the territory in very decisive ways. Not only was a link of communication created between the Ocean and Lake Viktoria which traversed most of Kenya's fertile regions and which opened up the countryside to external trade and other contacts with the outside world, but also a new population movement was set in motion which was to determine Kenya's pattern of social stratification until the time of independence and beyond. Originally the railway was designed to create a link to landlocked Uganda which was, in the eyes of the British Foreign Office, the much more promising and "developed" protectorate in this area and which brought with it the chance "to control the headwaters of the Nile". But as soon as the railway was completed (in 1901), it was realized that in order to be selfsustaining the railway also had to pick up some cargo "on the way". Since a sufficient African production for export did not seem to be feasible at this time, the "logical" answer, given the apparent "emptiness" of vast stretches of land, at least in the eyes of the administrators, was to encourage European settlement and production³⁶⁾.

Sir Charles Eliot, Commissioner of the Protectorate from 1901 to 1904, was particularly instrumental in this respect. He advocated the settlement of relatively well-to-do Europeans on farms of 1,000 acres and more (or on ranches of at least 5,000 acres) in order to provide the backbone for a large-scale export-oriented type of farming. For him there was no doubt that the East-African Protector-

36) Accounts of this period can be found in Harlow, Vincent and Chilver, E.M. (eds.), History of East Africa, vol. 2, London: Oxford University Press, 1962, chapters I, V and VI; Bennett George, Kenya-A Political History - The Colonial Period, London: Oxford University Press, 1963; or Rosberg, Carl G. Jr. and Nottingham, John, The Myth of Mau-Mau - Nationalism in Kenya, New York: F.A. Praeger, 1966, chapter I.

ate should become "a white man's country in which native questions present but little interest"³⁷⁾. For a while even the idea of massive Jewish settlement, organized by Theodor Herzl and his Zionist Congress, was considered but later abandoned when this met with strong resentment by British settlers, in particular by one of the most enterprising and influential among them, Lord Delamere³⁸⁾. Actual settlement thus was mainly confined to persons of Anglo-Saxon descent, but also a number of Boer families from South Africa was attracted by the apparently shining prospects of Kenya's highlands.

In the beginning some "roving adventurers" with little or no financial resources and hardly any knowledge of or interest in agriculture (as the notorious Captain Grogan and the "Happy Valley crowd") were among those who tried their luck. At a somewhat later stage then members of the English and Anglo-Irish nobility and gentry began to dominate, albeit also often with little knowledge of agriculture. After the wars the ranks of the Europeans were swollen by retired army personnel. The number of slightly more than 3.000 Europeans at the time of the first census in 1911 rose to about 10.000 in 1921, 30.000 in 1943 and 56.000 on the eve of Independence in 1962³⁹⁾. Those who had come later largely imitated the manners and attitudes of their predecessors, and the extravagant and rather conspicuous patterns of consumption of this group can still be seen in present-day Kenya. These include the behavior of members of the new African elite who seem to have the urge "to keep up with the Delameres".

37) For this episode cf., e.g., Bennet, op. cit., p. 13.

38) Eliot, Sir Charles, The East Africa Protectorate, London, 1905, p. 302.

39) Statistical Abstract 1974, loc. cit., p. 13.

Although the number of actual farmers among the European immigrants was never much more than 3,000 on an area of 7,5 million acres, comprising about one quarter of Kenya's high potential agricultural land⁴⁰⁾ was appropriated for them. Once the idea of settlement had been approved, this land was set aside in a series of ordinances by the Colonial Office. The areas chosen were those with a temperate climate and sufficient rainfall, most of them 5,000 feet or more above sea level. The largest part of them was situated in what today are Nakuru, Kericho, Uasin Gishu, Trans Nzoia, Nyandarua and Laikipia districts, all in the Rift Valley Province. (Nyandarua, formerly "Thompson Falls", was transferred to Central Province in the post-independence period.) The occupation of this land, most of which traditionally had been Maasai grazing grounds, was facilitated by the fact that in the decades prior to the European advent the number of people living there had been drastically reduced by a series of droughts and diseases affecting both humans and cattle. In addition, particularly severe wars during this period between some sub-tribes of the Massai practically extinguished the Uasin Gishu for example. Thus, in effect, large areas of land seemed to be relatively "empty" and were, therefore, particularly tempting in the eyes of the intruders, although it must have been clear from the beginning that all land in the territory had been traditionally controlled by one or another of the peoples living there.

40) Figures by district are given in *ibid.*, p. 117, see also our "District Development Index" in Part II, 2 below.

In addition to the occupation of these formerly pastoralist areas, some others which were already cultivated by African agriculturalists were "alienated" by the British. Most of these were situated near some other areas of European settlement as in Kiambu and Machakos districts near Nairobi, in the Nandi and Kipsigis areas adjacent to the "White Highlands", or in the Coastal strip and a few more scattered places like the Taita Hills. The total area of actually "alienated" land remained relatively small, however, e.g. only 101,5 out of a total of almost 1.800 square miles in Kiambu district, where this was to become a particularly "hot" political issue⁴¹⁾. In legal terms land tenure in all of these areas was to the largest extent based on leaseholds, most of them (6,350,000 acres) for a period of 999 (!) years, a smaller amount (591,000 acres) for 99 years. Another fraction (560,000 acres) was also granted as freehold land⁴²⁾. The rest of the country was then declared to be "tribal reserves", which meant that, at least in theory, the native population there would be free to pursue their traditional way of life. Movement between the reserves of different ethnic groups and into the European occupied zone was restricted, and in particular the boundaries for the possible expansion of cultivated areas, in contrast to the constant ebb and flow of peoples in former times, were now set once and for all.

In addition to the farmers and the colonial administrators a third group of Europeans, who had been among the first to arrive, left a lasting impact in the country: the missionaries. After first contacts in the Coastal area, dating back as far as the arrival of Vasco da Gama in Mombasa, more systematic missionary work was begun in the middle of the 19th century and soon also expanded to the hinterland. By 1900 there were about 5.000 "professing Christians" (i.e. about 0.2% of the total population at this time) in Kenya. About half of these

41) Cf., Report of the Kenya Land Commission, md. 4556 (1934), chapter VI.

42) Cf., also Berg-Schlosser, Dirk, The Distribution of Income and Education in Kenya: Causes and Potential Political Consequences, Munich: Weltforum-Verlag, 1970, pp. 12 ff..

belonged to the Catholic church and the others were members of different Protestant denominations. The most active groups on the Protestant side were the "Church Missionary Society" (CMS), an organization of the Anglican Church, the "Africa Inland Mission" (AIM), an interdenominational British-American group, and the "Church of Scotland Mission" (CSM), a Presbyterian institution. Among the Catholics, missionaries belonging to Italian and Irish orders were the most numerous. Soon, however, a multitude of all kinds of other Christian denominations began to work in the country, sometimes with just one or two missionaries competing with each other for "converts"⁴³⁾. In addition, also an increasing number of "African Independent Churches" was founded which developed their own catechism and liturgy. They gained greatly in strength following some disputes with the established churches over some traditional African customs such as the controversy over female circumcision in Kikuyuland (see below).

Today a little more than two-thirds of Kenya's population profess to be "Christian", almost half of which are Catholics and a little less than a quarter each "Protestant" and "African Independents"⁴⁴⁾. Another 6 % of the population are Muslims and the rest adhere to "traditional" beliefs. On the whole these missionary activities have been a mixed blessing in most parts of Africa, including Kenya. Whereas undoubtedly many of the missionaries were devout and selfless men and women who sincerely believed in their work and contributed greatly to the general "development" of the country, particularly in the fields of formal education, health care and more general social work, it cannot be denied that quite a few among them shared the same kind of prejudices as the other colonizers and that their understanding of and their relationship with the African population and their way of life remained quite limited. Only now that

43) The most comprehensive account of the development of Christianity in Kenya is still Roland Oliver's The Missionary Factor in East Africa, London: Longmans, 1952.

44) Cf., National Christian Council of Kenya, Kenya Churches Handbook, Kisumu: Evangel Publishing House, 1973, p. 160.

the leadership of most churches also has been "Africanized" to a certain extent, does a greater understanding of each others' aims and activities seem to prevail.

Another group of immigrants who had a lasting impact on the composition of Kenya's society also entered the country in greater numbers at about the time of the creation of the protectorate: the "Asians"⁴⁵⁾. Although people of Asian descent had been living in the coastal regions of East Africa for a long time usually as traders and craftsmen, no permanent settlements of Asians had been established further inland before the beginning of the colonial period. In the wake of the European penetration of the hinterland, however, the Asian traders followed, too. A large number of laborers was also brought over from India (mainly from the Punjab), to help with the construction of the railway since Africans were thought to be unfit for this kind of work. Most of these, however, returned to their homelands after the completion of the railway and only about 6,700 (out of a total of 32,000) remained⁴⁶⁾. At the time of the first census in 1911 the Asian population of Kenya numbered 11,800 persons. Some even conceived of East Africa as "the America for the Hindu" and, sensing new economic opportunities this part of the population increased considerably during the following decades. The immigrants now often consisted of groups of more well-to-do people from Gujerat, Goa, and some other parts of India. In 1931 the total number of people of Asian origin was 44,000, in 1948 they numbered 98,000, and at the eve of independence in 1962 there were 177,000 of them⁴⁷⁾. Since these immigrants were not allowed to settle in the "scheduled areas" or to become active in agricul-

45) Practically all of East Africa's "Asians" have immigrated from the Indian sub-continent and thus they used to be called "Indians". Only after the separation of India and Pakistan in 1947 did the more general term "Asian" come into use.

46) Cf. Ghai, Dharam P. and Ghai, Yash P. (eds.), Portrait of a Minority - Asians in East Africa, London: Oxford University Press, revised edition, 1970, p. 5.

47) Statistical Abstract 1974, loc. cit., p. 12.

ture⁴⁸⁾, most of them earned their livelihood as craftsmen and traders. Initially they met with very little competition in these fields and it was not to be long that they should almost monopolize these activities (except for some local open-air markets in the rural areas). As late as 1966, three years after independence, still almost 70% of Kenya's wholesale companies and about 50% of Kenya's retail firms were owned by non-citizens, almost entirely Asians, except for some British who owned large import-export companies. In terms of the volume of sales conducted by these establishments this percentage was even higher; even among the "Kenyan-owned" firms, a large number belonged to members of the Asian community⁴⁹⁾. Not unlike the Jews in former times in Central and Eastern Europe, the Chinese in Southeast Asia or some other distinct ethnic communities in West Africa with a high degree of involvement in the commercial sector, these Asians formed an almost "caste"-like layer in Kenya's society, enjoying some of the advantages of this almost monopolistic situation, but also feeling the great resentment of other groups along with it.

It was only at a later stage when a second generation within this immigrant community had grown up, whose parents could now afford an expensive education, that a higher degree of occupational differentiation occurred. A considerable number of Asians then became active in the "professions" and many of them today are lawyers, doctors, engineers or architects⁵⁰⁾. Others now have become owners of a variety of small-scale industrial enterprises and on the whole, the economic position of the Asian in Kenya has significantly changed today, both as a result of internal differentiation and because of the measures of "Kenyanization" introduced after independence in the commercial sector.

48) Strictly speaking, this was never a clearly defined legal restriction. At least since 1908, however, under strong pressure from the European settlers, it was an effectively carried out administrative policy. (Cf. Bennet, op. cit., p. 24).

49) Survey of Distribution 1966, in: Statistical Abstract 1974, loc. cit., p. 68.

50) See also Part III below.

The impact of these different forms of penetration from the outside on the African population of Kenya was immense and, indeed, things were never to be the same again. In the beginning, these influences were still felt only very slightly, however, and it took a period of at least twenty years after the creation of the protectorate until the full consequences of this new era became apparent to a larger part of the population. At first the new intruders did not seem to be much different from the caravan traders from the coast and the largest part of the African population ignored the new overlords. However these turned out to be different from everything these African societies had known before. Traditionally there had been a good deal of contact and movement, both peacefully and sometimes more violently, between the different ethnic groups in this area and also with traders from outside, but never before had any of these groups attempted to actually subjugate one of the others or to establish a permanent rule. The Maasai, for example, had been the most formidable force in this region for a long time. After having shown their strength successfully in a number of raids, usually cattle raids, on their neighbors, to they had always been content however, to withdraw again to their own areas without ever permanently submitting other peoples to their rule. By contrast the British now established a network of administrative stations which had soon penetrated most of the more densely populated areas and which by 1914 clearly controlled all parts of the territory⁵¹⁾.

The African reaction also was relatively slow in the beginning and the establishment of permanent British outposts met with relatively little resistance. The few violent incidents which occurred remained sporadic and on a purely local level. This was to large extent due to the fact that almost all ethnic groups in the territory were "stateless" societies⁵²⁾, i. e. without a permanent central leadership as it existed in the Ugandan kingdoms, for example, but also in many other parts of

51) The extent of British penetration up to this time is illustrated in Map I in Harlow and Chilver, op. cit., facing p. 1.

52) Cf. e. g., Middleton, John F. and Tait D. (eds.), Tribes without Rulers: Studies in African Segmentary Systems, London: Routledge, 1958; see also Part II below.

Africa. For this reason the organization of massive resistance on a large scale was extremely difficult and hardly ever attempted. The people whose social organization would have been most efficient in this respect was that of the Maasai. They had a system of warriorship organized by age-groups ("morán") and in the person of the "laibon" also some kind of more centralized authority, although mainly of a religious and ceremonial nature. But they had been so decimated at this time through a series of diseases and droughts, and also some considerable internecine warfare, that they, too, did not provide any real obstacle to the imposition of colonial rule. The only major exception in Kenya were the Nandi who also had adopted a laibon-like spiritual leader, the "orkoyiot", and whose power vis-a-vis their ethnic neighbors was on the rise at the time of the arrival of the British. They successfully resisted British advances for a period of more than ten years and it took the colonial administration five major expeditions until the Nandi, whose spears, bows and arrows were no match for the rifles, machine guns and cannons of the colonial power, were finally defeated in 1905. For the rest a series of "punitive expeditions", some of them quite ruthless and bloody, in different parts of the country proved to be sufficient for the final "pacification" of the colony.

Most of the colonizers had few, if any, qualms about their undertakings. Eliot himself put it most bluntly: "...white mates black in a very few moves... There can be no doubt that the Maasai and many other tribes must go under. It is a prospect which I view with equanimity and a clear conscience... (Maasaidom) is a beastly, bloody system founded on raiding and immorality"⁵³⁾. At another place he wrote: "Their customs may be interesting to anthropologists, but morally and economically they seem to be all bad"⁵⁴⁾. Thus the intruders proceeded with very little remorse and the more sadistically minded among them even seemed to have thoroughly enjoyed the "punitive expeditions" which they conducted.

53) Quoted in Bennett, op. cit., p. 14.

54) Quoted in Harlow and Chilver, op. cit., p. 35.

Their descriptions of these events read almost like reports of adventurous big-game hunts, only that the "game" were human beings this time. Francis Hall, for example, after whom later "Fort Hall" (the present-day "Murang'a") was named, once gave the following account:

"As usual the natives had deserted their village and bolted with all their livestock. However we scoured the forest and collected a good deal and then proceeded to march quietly through the country, sending columns out to burn the villages and collect goats etc.. We rarely saw any of the people; when we did, they were at very long ranges, so we did not have much fun, but we destroyed a tremendous number of villages."⁵⁵⁾

Colonel Meinertzhagen who conducted one of the bloodiest campaigns in the Nyeri area, killing almost 800 people, many of them women and children, seems to have enjoyed his enterprise in a similar way⁵⁶⁾.

The complete subjugation of Kenya's peoples was thus affected in a ruthless, but efficient manner with very few losses on the British side. But there still was a long way to actually "govern" the territory or, at least, to carry out the most immediate administrative functions. At first it was attempted to institute some kind of "indirect rule", following the pattern of British administration in West Africa and Lord Lugard's experiences there⁵⁷⁾, but this proved to be impossible in societies which had been "tribes without rulers" prior to the advent of the colonialists. Any "chiefs" who were appointed, were, therefore, purely the creations of the British and did not exercise any kind of traditional authority among their own people. A considerable number of them formerly had been headmen in the trading caravans and had picked up some Swahili or English and thus could serve as interpreters, or who had proved to be useful in some other way. In other places the British were successful in securing the support of

55) Quoted in Rosberg and Nottingham, op. cit., p. 15.

56) Cf. Meinertzhagen, Colonel R., Kenya Diary: 1902-1906, London: Oliver and Boyd, 1957.

57) Cf. Lugard, F. D., The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa, first edition, London: 1922.

some more highly respected individuals, for example members of relatively wealthy families, who were appointed as local headmen and administrators. None of them, however, previously had been a "chief" in the original sense of the word and the power of these appointees thus remained quite limited. Not rarely, therefore, as had been demonstrated by their superiors, did the use of force prove to be the main instrument for carrying out their duties. This of course, caused a great deal of disaffection in the population at large and gave rise to a great deal of internal divisions and tensions among the local people. In this way even some kind of precursors of the "loyalists" of the "Mau Mau" era⁵⁸⁾ and the subsequent division between them and the "freedom fighters" were created, which was to become particularly severe among the Kikuyu.

This kind of administration was not, however, very effective in the beginning and the local population still could, more or less, pursue their traditional way of life. One district officer, for example, had to admit: "The mass, however inferior it may be, must be reckoned with. It is thought that the awe in which natives stand of the government is often over-rated. By passive resistance they obtain their own way while they pretend to be only anxious to do as they are told"⁵⁹⁾. It took a while until the colonial government began to realize that the concept of "indirect rule" and administration through local "chiefs" really was not applicable in Kenya and the idea was gradually abandoned. In the meantime the colonialists had gained more knowledge of the actual life of the indigenous peoples and their social institutions and some changes in the pattern of administration were introduced. One of the most noteworthy attempts of

58) See below.

59) Quoted in Harlow and Chilver, op. cit., p. 39.

this kind, apparently at the initiative of one the Provincial Commissioners, C.W. Hobley, who had been one of the first to actually study local institutions and customs⁶⁰⁾, was laid down in the "Native Tribunal Rules" of 1911⁶¹⁾ which gave judicial authority in local matters to councils of elders who had traditionally exercised this kind of power. This measure, however, met with only partial success, because these collective bodies were not used to carry out, beyond their ad hoc judicial functions, any truly executive powers and attempts of this kind proved to be very impractical. For this reason, the main executive tasks at the local level, such as the collection of taxes, the recruitment of laborers, the maintenance of roads etc., were still carried out by the centrally appointed "chiefs" and "subchiefs", as they still exist up to the present-day. It must be kept in mind, therefore, that these "chiefs" are purely administrative agents of the central government and neither represent any kind of traditional kind of authority nor are they in any way elected by the local populace as, for example, mayors in many European countries.

The most immediate kind of function of this kind of administration was political, i.e. it was to secure the continuation of British rule in this part of the world. But once there, it could be put to other uses as well. As Eliot stated in very straightforward terms: "The introduction of an efficient administration is likely to produce a very large increase of revenue"⁶²⁾. For this purpose, therefore, a "hut tax" for each homestead or a "poll tax" for each adult male

60) Cf., e. g., Hobley, C. W., Bantu Beliefs and Magic: With Particular Reference to the Kikuyu and Kamba Tribes of Kenya Colony, London: Frank Cass, 1967 (first published 1922).

61) Cf. Harlow and Chilver, op. cit., p. 48.

62) Quoted in ibid., p. 23.

who did not have a house of his own of initially two rupees⁶³⁾ was introduced in 1901. But there was another equally important reason: since the early colonial administrators conceived of large parts of Kenya as "white man's country" which was open to large-scale settlement by European farmers, it was necessary to provide a native labor force for their estates. Short of outright forced labor (which was officially outlawed in 1908⁶⁴⁾, but which was still practiced in a more indirect fashion for a much longer time, as for example through the "Northey circulars" of 1919⁶⁵⁾, the best way to make Africans work on European farms seemed to be to impose taxes which had to be paid in cash. This was necessary because unlike the proletariat in European countries, the prospective workers in Kenya still owned, as subsistence farmers, their own means of their labor. Attractive wages, on the other hand, which might have induced some voluntary contributions of work, were out of the question because they were "costs" which employers were not willing to bear. The imposition of taxes, therefore proved to be the most satisfactory "solution", accompanied by some restrictions concerning the cultivation of cash crops by the African population which might have provided an alternative source of cash. The "tribal reserves" in this way became the reservoir from which the required amount of labor for the European settlers could be drawn. As one of them put it: "From the farmer's point of view the ideal reserve is a recruiting ground for labor, a place from which the able-bodied go out to work, returning occasionally to rest and to beget the next generation of laborers"⁶⁶⁾.

63) The rupee was replaced by the East African shilling in 1919, cf., e. g., "A Note on East African Currency Equivalents", in: Harlow and Chilver, op. cit., Appendix III, p. 696.

64) Cf. Harlow and Chilver, op. cit., p. 231.

65) Cf. ibid. pp. 355 ff..

66) Quoted in ibid., p. 246.

Another measure which was introduced at a later stage also aimed at the regular supply of labor from the reserves: the introduction of registration certificates for Africans, the much hated "kipande". These contained the basic personal data and the fingerprints of every African male over the age of 16 and were to be carried at all times. They were to enable the administration to properly assess those liable to the "hut" or "poll" tax and to identify possible "deserters" from European farms or others who tried to evade the network of the administration⁶⁷⁾. It was calculated that by 1920 more than 50% of the ablebodied men from the agricultural tribes were employed on European farms⁶⁸⁾. The total was to reach almost 250,000 active farm workers at the peak of the colonial era in the 1950's. The wages paid amounted to three rupees (four shs.) per month in 1904, about 12 shs. in 1924⁶⁹⁾ and about 20 shs. in 1950⁷⁰⁾. In addition, a number of "squatter" families, in return for their labor, were allowed to clear and cultivate two to three acres on the European farms as their own subsistence plots, and sometimes also to keep some cattle.

67) Cf., e. g., Bennett, op. cit. pp. 45 ff..

68) Cf. Leys, Norman, Kenya, London: 1924, p. 195.

69) Cf. Harlow and Chilver, op. cit., pp. 226 and 238.

70) See also Part III below.

In addition to the effects of white settlement, the wars between the European powers, fought in part on African soil, also had a great impact on the lives of Kenya's African population. During the First World War, for example, more than 163,000 African Kenyans were employed as carriers in the British Armed Forces and no less than 47,000 died during this time. Most of these casualties were not the result of actual combat, but occurred due to extremely poor conditions of nutrition and health prevailing in the African Carrier Corps. Without proper food, hygiene and medical care the African members of the armed forces were an easy prey to all kinds of diseases if they did not die first of outright hunger. Also the civilian population was greatly affected and it was estimated that the Kikuyu alone lost 120,000 from war casualties, famine, and influenza during this period⁷¹⁾. When the Second World War broke out, another 75,000 men from Kenya were recruited, this time most of them as active soldiers. They fought in the Middle East and the Far East as well as closer to home in Ethiopia and Madagascar.

All these developments left a lasting mark on the African population and were, to a great extent, responsible for a rise in political consciousness. One of the earliest manifestations of political activity as a reaction towards the increased exploitation by the colonial system occurred in the early 1920's when, in addition to the introduction of the "kipande", the hut and poll tax was doubled from five to ten rupees in order to bring forward even more African laborers from the reserves. At this time the first two African organizations of a more distinctly political nature also had been

71) Cf. Harlow and Chilver, op. cit., p. 353.

formed, namely the "Kikuyu Association", a rural based group which protested against the further alienation of land on the fringes of the "reserves", and the "Young Kikuyu Association", a more urban-oriented group with its headquarters in Nairobi, which articulated the grievances of African workers. The secretary of the latter organization was Harry Thuku, a young Kikuyu clerk and telephone operator in the treasury, who belonged to the first group of mission-educated and literate Africans, and who was to become the first African politician of national prominence in Kenya⁷²⁾. Thuku traveled widely in the Kikuyu homeland, but also as far as Kisumu and other parts of Western Kenya in order to raise support for his cause. In March 1922 he was arrested and the next day a protest demonstration was organized in Nairobi which in effect amounted to a general strike among the African workers there. The meeting in front of the Nairobi police station attracted almost 8,000 persons. When, at the end of a largely peaceful demonstration, the crowd turned towards the station to set Thuku free, the police opened fire and killed at least 21 Africans (the official figure). Harry Thuku was then kept in detention for more than eight years.

In the meantime another organization, the "Kikuyu Central Association" (KCA), was formed in 1925 which was to become one of the most important predecessors of Kenya's independence movement and one of the post-independence political parties. Initially the main issues of this organization were the release of Harry Thuku and the removal of restrictions for the growing of coffee by Africans. In 1928 Jomo Kenyatta, then a meter-reader in the Water Department of the City Council of Nairobi, became general secretary of the association and also editor of its monthly journal "Muigwithania" ("The Reconciler"). This publication had only recently been started and was the first paper of its kind in Kenya written in an African language (Kikuyu). In 1929 a major rift, which had been latent

72) Cf., e. g., Thuku, Harry, An Autobiography of Harry Thuku, London: Oxford University Press, 1970.

for a long time, occurred between the missions and local African politicians over the issue of female "circumcision", traditionally practiced by many African peoples in Kenya⁷³⁾. Whereas the missionaries considered this custom to be a particularly abhorrent example of the barbarous way of life of the African past, the Africans regarded it as an integral part of the transition rites between the different generations and thus an important element in the social structure of their "egalitarian-segmentarian" societies⁷⁴⁾. Rather than following the advice of more moderate missionaries who advocated gradually reducing the impact of this custom through the process of education (which proved to be the wiser course, in view of the present-day situation), the colonial government decided to proscribe it altogether. The result was that more than 90% of all students at missionary institutions left school. The desire for education was widespread and genuine however, and, many "African Independent Schools" were founded to replace the missionary ones. Due to the lack of trained teachers and proper teaching materials the standards of these schools were, of course, quite poor, but the enthusiasm shown by their supporters and the material sacrifices made for them were nevertheless remarkable. And in 1939 an independent teachers' training college was founded to remedy the situation somewhat.

The circumcision controversy and the ensuing political struggles concerned mainly the Kikuyu; this custom was not known, for example, among the Luo and was practiced only to a lesser extent among the Luyia in Western Kenya. The pastoralist peoples, who still practice it today were largely left alone anyway (both by missionaries and the administration), so that the most important struggles were fought between the Europeans and the Kikuyu, greatly enhancing the political consciousness and unity of the latter. In the other areas also

73) See also Part II below.

74) Cf., e. g., the description of this custom and the discussion of its social function in Kenyatta, Jomo, Facing Mt. Kenya, London: Mercury Books, 1961, (first published 1938) chapter VII, pp. 103 ff..

some local organizations began to emerge, most prominent among them the "Kavirondo Taxpayers Welfare Association" in Western Kenya and the "Mijikenda Union" of the nine tribes in the coastal area. These organizations were concerned largely with the improvement of local conditions, and were considered less controversial in the eyes of the colonial government, thus producing less outright conflict. The only major exception was a strike in Mombasa in 1939, started among laborers in the public services, but which soon spread to include the dockworkers as well. The major issues were the low wages (16 shs. a month for road laborers of the municipality) and the incredible "housing" conditions (in some cases only mats in the open air)⁷⁵. The strikers comprised members of many ethnic groups (there was already a considerable number of people from inland tribes in Mombasa at this time) and made this incident the first of its kind on the coast where not ethnic but increasingly "class" factors were the major cause of conflict.

The Kikuyu Central Association which had greatly enlarged its membership was banned in 1940. In 1944 the "Kenya African Study Union", renamed "Kenya African Union" (KAU) in 1946 became the first African organization with truly nationwide aspirations, even though its members and leaders were still largely Kikuyu. Jomo Kenyatta returned from England in 1946 where he had stayed as a "representative" of the KCA from 1929 and where he also had come into contact with nationalist leaders from other African countries and the Pan-African Movement. He was given a "hero's welcome" all over Kenya and was elected president of KAU in 1947.

The post-war prosperity of Kenya's large-scale agriculture and other sectors of the "modern" economy brought only very few

75) Cf., e. g., Rosberg and Nottingham, op. cit., pp. 181 ff..

benefits for the African population: wages still were very low and small-scale farming of African peasants still contributed very little to the monetary gross national product⁷⁶⁾. It even can be said that in effect the peasant sector substantially subsidized the wage economy because, had there not been regular supplies of food from relatives living up-country, the wages of most workers would not have been sufficient to satisfy their most basic and essential needs. In contrast to neighboring Uganda, where hardly any restrictions on the production of cash-crops by Africans existed and where a much smaller part of the population depended on wages (only about 15% of total African earnings was derived from this source compared with more than two-thirds in Kenya), the per capita income of the African population remained very low. It was even lower than for Kenya's other neighbor, the much less "developed" Tanganyika⁷⁷⁾. The "reserves" increasingly became overcrowded because of a relatively high rate of population growth averaging 2,5% per annum between the censuses of 1948 and 1962⁷⁸⁾, the restrictions put on settlement outside the assigned areas, and the absence of significant increases in agricultural production. On the contrary, due to the increasing over-use of the land, the soil became poor, erosion began, and production declined even further.

This deteriorating situation of material conditions, coupled with a higher level of political awareness among those who had returned from service in the army and others who had received some formal education, led to an increasing unrest among the African population and particularly among the Kikuyu who were most directly and most intensely affected. In addition to the attempts of Kenyatta and others to establish formal political organizations such as the KAU, political activities also took more and more violent forms. Among others, the "Forty Group" was organized by

76) See also Part III below.

77) Cf. Rosberg and Nottingham, op. cit., pp. 203 ff..

78) Cf., Statistical Abstract 1974, loc. cit., p. 13.

some young Kikuyu who had been circumcised together in 1940, some of whom had also done military service. The name "Mau Mau" was first used in March 1948 to describe an organization engaged in such "underground" activities. No such word exists in any of the East African languages, a fact which Kenyatta referred to when he publicly declared that he did not know of Mau Mau, what it meant or even what language it was.⁷⁹⁾ However although its origin and meaning are not clear, African acts of resistance and violence were increasingly ascribed by the colonial authorities to the activities of this "Mau Mau" organization, and in August 1950 the organization was officially prohibited.

The use of the term "Mau Mau" by the government for describing these actions also reflected the assessment of this movement by Europeans as being basically primitive and atavistic, leading Africans back into darkness and not forward on the road of "civilization". This belief was further reinforced by ceremonies, particularly repulsive to Europeans, in which newcomers to the resistance movement swore oaths as a traditionally meaningful expression of membership. Also the very acts of violence which occurred and which included the maiming of cattle on European farms, seemed to confirm this picture of irrationality, cruelty, and primitiveness. This perception of the situation only increased tension and led to their intensification rather than to any attempt of seriously alleviating their underlying causes.

Tension continued to grow during this period, although there were relatively few outright acts of violence until October 1952 when Senior Chief Waruhiu, a leading Kikuyu "loyalist", was assassinated. This event led to the official declaration of a "State of Emergency" on October 20th 1952. Kenyatta and a number of

79) Cf. Bennett, op. cit., p. 127.

other known activists and political leaders were arrested. Kenyatta was later tried and sentenced to the maximum penalty of seven years of hard labor. He spent these years in the hot and dry area of Northern Kenya, together with Achieng Oneko, Paul Ngei, Fred Kubai, Bildad Kaggia, and Kungu Karumba, all of whom were to become important political leaders after independence with somewhat varying fortunes. The trial was generally considered by independent observers to have been a sham, because it violated a number of important procedural rights of the defendants and did not prove its main charge of conspiracy against the government or the participation in an unlawful society, "Mau Mau"⁸⁰⁾.

Government forces were put on alert and additional British troops were flown in to keep control of the situation. But instead of calming things down, the declaration of a "State of Emergency" only precipitated further acts of violence on a much larger scale than before. In March 1953 the "Lari Massacre" occurred in which almost 100 "loyalists" were killed in the largest single Mau Mau attack during the emergency⁸¹⁾. Kikuyu country now was virtually in a state of siege. It is estimated that up to 15,000 "freedom fighters" took refuge in the large forest areas around Mt. Kenya and the Aberdares Range, from where they sporadically attacked government posts, European farms and loyalists among the Kikuyu. Members of the "Home Guard" which the colonial government had established as a peacekeeping force in the reserves were particularly hated targets. Most prominent among the forest fighters were Dedan Kimathi and "General China", Waruhiu Itote, both of whom had had some training in the British Army during World War II. On the whole, however, military experience and training were relatively poor among those who had retreated to the forests, and "mili-

80) Cf., e. g., Murray-Brown, Jeremy, Kenyatta, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1972, Chapter 20, pp. 255 ff.; or Slater, Montagu, The Trial of Jomo Kenyatta, London: 1955.

81) Cf., e. g., Rosberg and Nottingham, op. cit., pp. 286 ff..

tary operations" on the African side remained largely decentralized and relatively ineffective. Within the reserves proper the forest fighters could count on the support of the "passive wing" of Mau Mau, often women, juveniles or older men who were unfit for active combat and who provided the fighters in the forest with food, clothing and other essential equipment, and also with vital information about impending actions of the Home Guard or government troops⁸²⁾.

The government mobilized forces of up to 70,000 men and even tanks and heavy bombers were used in some of the operations. By 1955 the backbone of resistance had been broken and the last remaining major leader, Kimathi, was finally tracked down and killed in October 1956. These military measures were coupled with a large-scale resettlement of Kikuyu peasants, from their scattered homesteads to centralized villages (a program which reminds one of similar tactics used to curb guerrilla warfare later in Viet Nam), and with many arrests among the civilian population. Altogether almost 80,000 people were put into detention camps where they had to perform forced labor and where programs of "rehabilitation" were initiated. The final casualties were 63 Europeans and 534 African soldiers killed on the government side, while 10,527 freedom fighters lost their lives in combat and another 1,071 were executed by the colonial authorities. Among the civilian population 32 Europeans and 1,926 Africans were killed⁸³⁾. As one observer put it: "The unevenness of the battle and the violence of the campaign is well-attested by these figures"⁸⁴⁾.

82) First-hand accounts of "Mau Mau" activities are, e.g., Kariuki, Josiah Mwangi, Mau Mau Detainee, London: Oxford University Press, 1963; and Itote, Waruhiu, 'Mau Mau' General, Nairobi, East African Publishing House, 1967. The official report prepared for the government of the United Kingdom was Corfield, F., D., Historical Survey of the Origins and Growth of Mau Mau, Cmd. 1030 (1960).

83) Cf. Corfield, op. cit., p. 316.

84) Rosberg and Nottingham, op. cit., p. 303.

In addition to these efforts of restoring "law and order", the administration gradually realized that not only the symptoms but also some of the causes of the unrest had to be dealt with, if any lasting success was to be achieved. Since most of the more immediate grievances centered around the deteriorating conditions in the overcrowded reserves, the main emphasis was put on changes in the sphere of small-scale agricultural production. According to the "Swynnerton-Plan"⁸⁵⁾, steps were taken to attack the problem of soil erosion (mainly through terracing, the construction of dams, etc.), to encourage the planting of cash-crops by Africans (e.g. coffee planting increased from about 4,000 to 26,000 acres between 1954 and 1959), and, most important for Kenya's long-term pattern of rural social stratification, to consolidate and register each holding and to issue "title-deeds" of individual private ownership⁸⁶⁾.

While these changes occurred in the rural areas, the center of African political activities had shifted from the countryside to the towns. For the first time the number of industrial and other urban workers now exceeded those employed in European agriculture⁸⁷⁾, and conflicts concerning urban working conditions, wages, etc. became more prevalent. Trade union activists such as Tom Mboya, who became general secretary of the Kenya Federa-

85) Cf., e. g., Swynnerton, R.J.M., A Plan to Intensify the Development of African Agriculture in Kenya, Nairobi: Government Printer, 1955.

86) Cf., e. g., Sorrenson, M.P.K., Land Reform in the Kikuyu Country, London: Oxford University Press, 1967.

87) See also Part II below.

tion of Registered Trade Unions in October 1953, now clearly emerged as major political leaders. As far as national politics was concerned these leaders pressed for significant reforms within the constitutional framework of the colony, namely the achievement of greater African representation in the Legislative Council and, finally, majority rule.

Only in 1944 had the first African representative (Eliud Mathu) been nominated for one of the two "African" seats among the "unofficial" members of the Council; before that time Africans were "represented" by European missionaries. This number had been increased to four in 1947, from a total of 22 "unofficial" and 15 "official" nominated members⁸⁸⁾. In 1957 the number was raised again (to eight) and for the first time the African representatives had been elected directly by universal suffrage⁸⁹⁾. Tom Mboya, who won the seat for Nairobi, became the leader of the African Parliamentary Group. Still, African aspirations were not attained and the representatives in the Legislative Council refused to cooperate in the government and demanded 15 more seats for Africans. The "Lyttelton" constitution was, therefore, replaced by the "Lennox-Boyd" constitution in 1958 which gave six more seats (now 14 altogether) to the Africans. However, it still maintained the "multi-racial balance" of the previous arrangements, giving each racial group its own separately elected representatives and actually leaving ultimate control in the hands of the colonial power.

88) Cf., e. g., Bennett, op. cit., pp. 106 ff..

89) Cf. Engholm, G., "African Elections in Kenya", in: Five Elections in Africa, Oxford: 1960.

In the meantime, however, the international situation also had changed and with the attainment of independence by Ghana in 1957 it became clear that direct colonial rule could not be maintained much longer in Black Africa. In January 1960 a constitutional conference for Kenya met at Lancaster House in London at which African majority rule was finally accepted in principle. The first general elections in Kenya were then held in February 1961⁹⁰⁾. On the African side two major parties had emerged as the main contenders, the "Kenya African National Union" (KANU) which had its base among some of Kenya's major tribes (the Kikuyu, Luo, and Kamba being the largest among them) and the "Kenya African Democratic Union" (KADU) which consisted of an alliance of ethnic groups mainly from the Rift Valley (Kalenjin and Maasai), the Coast Province, and some groups from Western Kenya (mainly Luyia). One main issue was the release of Jomo Kenyatta from detention for which KANU campaigned very strongly. Another important question was the federate character of Kenya's new constitution, for which KADU in particular pressed, fearing the potential domination of the smaller groups by Kenya's major tribes in a more centralized system of government. KANU was the

90) A comprehensive account of these elections is: Bennett, George, and Rosberg, Carl G. Jr., The Kenyatta Election: Kenya 1960 - 1961, London: Oxford University Press, 1961.

clear winner of the elections, but the demand for Kenyatta's immediate release and his acceptance as Kenya's future leader was still anathema to the British. Thus KADU, although in the minority, formed Kenya's first African dominated government. Kenyatta was finally released in August 1961 and two months later became President of KANU. But even he did not manage to unite all African forces behind him. On the contrary, in 1962 a further split occurred and the "African People's Party" (APP), a largely Kamba-based organization under the leadership of Paul Ngei was founded.

Constitutional squabbles between the different African factions and their European counterparts continued until a new federal constitution, "the most complicated ever devised for a colonial territory"⁹¹⁾ was decided upon in April 1963. The ensuing elections again saw KANU victorious, spurred finally by the increasing competition and considerably strengthened in its organization. Jomo Kenyatta became Kenya's first Prime Minister on June 1, 1963. After a period of internal self-government ("madaraka") under African majority rule Kenya officially achieved Independence ("Uhuru") on December 12, 1963.

What, then, is the sum of the colonial experience in Kenya? Although to draw such a conclusion in a few words necessarily entails a great deal of oversimplification, a brief attempt shall be made here: First of all, there can be no doubt that colonial rule created the state of Kenya as it exists today and no other "accident" or evolution of history could have had a similar affect in this area at this particular time. Colonial rule also provided the country with a system of communications both in the "tangible" (i.e. railways, roads etc.) and the "intangible" (i.e. markets, administrative networks, the ex-

91) Bennett, op. cit., p. 157.

change of information and ideas within certain geographical boundaries etc.) sense of the word. In this way the colonial era undoubtedly created the shape and administrative backbone of the present state of Kenya, a fact which, given the international situation in Africa today, hardly anyone could or even would change.

But at the same time, the colonialisation of Kenya also established a system of subjugation and exploitation that left equally permanent marks on the country. One main aspect of this one-sided relationship is manifested in Kenya's internal social structure⁹²⁾ another in the pattern of her external relations created by the colonial power and which has been perpetuated by the "neo-colonial" situation which still exists in many ways⁹³⁾. A third and equally important effect of the colonial period lies in the kind of attitudes and behavior which prevailed between the colonizers and the colonized. By regarding Africans as being "naturally inferior" to their European overlords and by often treating them hardly any better than other "useful domestic animals" instead of accepting them as fellow human beings, colonialism also had a psychological impact, difficult to assess, the results of which only now can be seen somewhat more clearly. The attitudes and the behavior of the colonizers were thus often more inhumane, and in this sense more "barbarous", than the lives of those they had set out to "civilize". This is not to say, that there were not individuals or groups who showed some genuine concern for those they were working with and who, even if they sometimes failed, sincerely tried to help. But on the whole the colonial experience was undoubtedly a negative one and no rationalization, however "noble" in its proclamations, can possibly obfuscate this fact.

92) See Parts III and IV below.

93) The best-documented and most stringend account for this aspect of Kenya's situation is Leys, Colin, Underdevelopment in Kenya - The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.

Nevertheless, any society, as any human being, must live with its past and make the best of it for the building of a better future. Thus Kenya, although preconditioned to a certain extent by her colonial experience, had important choices before her and a new start at the time of Independence.

d.) The pattern of present-day politics:

In order to "fill in" the last part of background information relevant to our study, we shall briefly describe here some of the most important choices made by the new government after Independence which significantly influenced later developments and some of the more important political events during the first "twelve" years of Uhuru".

One important question which had to be decided at the time of Independence was that of citizenship for the non-African minority, i.e. in particular the approximately 180,000 Asians and 55,000 Europeans who were residents of Kenya at this time. The new constitution declared that everyone born in Kenya and everyone with at least one parent who had also been born there, became an "automatic" citizen of the new state. In addition any other resident could opt for Kenyan citizenship within the first two years after independence⁹⁴⁾. After that time a naturalization of aliens was still possible under certain conditions, but this clause was applied rather restrictively by the Kenyan authorities in later years. Altogether 4,000 Europeans and 61,000 Asians⁹⁵⁾ acquired citizenship in one way or another. Those who did not opt for citizenship and who had not left the country (about 15,000 Europeans had departed at the approach of Independence) increasingly felt the measures of "Kenyanization" instituted by the Kenyan government in different branches of the economy in subse-

94) Republic of Kenya, The Constitution of Kenya, Nairobi: Government Printer, 1969, Chapter VI, sections 87 - 98.

95) Cf. Statistical Abstract 1974, loc. cit., p. 13.

quent years. Non-citizen Asians, most of whom carried British passports, were most strongly affected by these measures. Their plight was particularly severe. On the one hand, many of them were fairly easily replaceable through "Africanization" in areas where few skills and relatively little capital was required. These included traders, craftsmen, and low and middle-level employees. On the other hand, Britain established immigration quotas for what thus became in effect "second-rate British citizens", so that many of these people were caught in between and had nowhere to go, since India also would not take them back.

A second and at least equally important problem was the question of what was to become of the "White Highlands". Some settlers had sold their property and had left the country immediately after the timetable for independence had been announced, fearing another "Congo" and a "return to the age of darkness". The majority of them, however, waited for further developments and were reassured by the British government which negotiated an agreement with the new Kenyan leaders ensuring "an orderly transition" for those who wanted to leave. 12,5 million pounds were offered in the first of these agreements to buy European-owned farms and to put them under African control. One-third of this amount was given as a grant (supposedly to account for farm houses and some implements which could not be used any longer by the new owners), the rest was in the form of a loan for a period of 30 years which carried an annual interest rate of 6,5%. The value of each farm was fixed for these transactions at the relatively high level of 1959. In this way by 1972 about two-thirds of the former European "mixed farms" (which comprised about 1,6 million ha.) had come into African hands. Large-scale plantations (e.g. for tea or sisal) and ran-

ches (which covered another 1.4 million ha) had been left relatively untouched by these measures. In different "settlement schemes", most notably the "million acre scheme", about 500,000 ha of the acquired land was distributed among approximately 36,000 African small-scale farmers and their families, of whom about 40% formerly had been agricultural laborers on these farms. Another 12,000 large-scale mixed farms (altogether about 400,000 ha.) were transferred in toto and taken over by Africans in different forms of individual and group ownership (e.g. cooperatives, partnerships, limited companies etc.)⁹⁵.

The way in which this transfer was carried out made apparent the commitment of the new government for a more "capitalistic" development emphasizing the continuing good relations with the former colonial power. Whereas in the beginning this agreement could have been interpreted to be merely an expedient way for the Kenyan leaders to speed up the final attainment of independence, it soon became evident that the new government was to stick to the terms of the settlement and was willing to pay back the loans. Kenya's new leaders, including most notably Kenyatta himself, made it clear that there would be "no free things" after independence and that everything had to be earned and paid for. Besides the ideological commitment to a de facto "free enterprise" system (see below), two more intrinsic reasons may have been responsible for this decision. One reason very probably lay in the fact that the territory of the "White Highlands" traditionally had belonged largely to some pastoralist groups, such as the Maasai and Kalenjin, and that the Kikuyu for whom the question of land had been most urgent and who now dominated the government could make no claim for these areas if they were returned free of charge "to their proper owners". To carry out this transaction in a purely commercial manner giving

96) Republic of Kenya, Development Plan 1974-1978, Part I, Nairobi, 1974, pp. 56 ff., cf. also Leys, Colin, op. cit., chapter 3, pp. 63 ff..

the land to those who were willing and most able to pay, therefore, cleared the way for an expansion of the Kikuyu homelands. In fact, practically all of Nyandarua District, which was one of the main settlement areas, is today in the hands of Kikuyu owners, and together with the traditional Kikuyu districts of Kiambu, Murang'a and Nyeri, it has now become a part of Central Province⁹⁷⁾. Another reason became apparent in some of the subsequent developments in the first few years after independence. During this time many of Kenya's new leaders were able to acquire formerly owned European farms and other businesses on very easy terms and thus developed a vested interest in the preservation of private and individual ownership of these enterprises⁹⁸⁾.

Together with the measures commercializing the small-scale farming sector in many parts of Kenya in the wake of "Mau Mau", the manner in which the transfer of the "White Highlands" was carried out most significantly set the stage for some important aspects of Kenya's future pattern of vertical social stratification. The dynamics of this pattern were then further accentuated and developed by the kind of economic system which evolved in Kenya and which in some important aspects had been predetermined by these earlier decisions after independence. The most important programmatic statements concerning Kenya's future economic system can be found in the "KANU Manifesto" of 1963⁹⁹⁾, and the "Sessional Pa-

97) Cf. Leys, Colin, op. cit., pp. 57 ff..

98) This process is also discussed in Wasserman, Gary, Politics of Decolonization, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.

99) Kenya African National Union, What a KANU Government Offers You, Nairobi, 1963.

per No. 10" of 1965 which was entitled "African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya"¹⁰⁰⁾. Whereas the former document still was somewhat ambiguous as to its concrete economic policies¹⁰¹⁾, the latter, reportedly drawn up with the help of some American advisors, makes these choices quite explicit. In spite of its title it opts for a basically capitalistic system where private ownership of the means of production and an allocation of resources by market mechanisms prevail.

This is somewhat tempered by elements of "planification", such as regular "Five-Year Development Plans"¹⁰²⁾ which, however, are only of an indicative target-setting nature and do not in themselves allocate resources directly or bind private investors in any way, and some forms of joint and public ownership in some sectors of the economy. The latter are usually exercised through para-statal organizations such as the "Industrial and Commercial Development Corporation" (ICDC) the "Development Finance Company of Kenya" (DFCK), the Kenya Tourist Development Corporation" (KTDC) and others. In 1973, i.e. after "ten years of Uhuru", the contribution of the public sector, including the para-statal organizations and Kenya's share in the organizations of the East African Community

100) Republic of Kenya, African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya, Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965, Nairobi, 1965.

101) In the "Manifesto", statements such as "we aim to build a country where men and women are motivated by a sense of service and not driven by a greedy desire for personal gain" (p. 1) and "we intend following a liberal policy with regard to foreign capital" (p. 21), each qualified by sentences as "the Marxist theory of class warfare has no relevance to Kenya's situation" (p. 11) and "investments must be made in accordance to Kenya's interests" (p. 21) still can be found side by side.

102) There have been three major development plans so far, covering the periods 1966-1970, 1970-1974 and 1974-1978; a first preliminary version for the period 1964-1970 was soon discarded.

to the Gross Domestic Product was 27,7% (compared with 24,1% in 1964)¹⁰³⁾, capital formation by the public sector amounted to 42,9% (1964: 25,0%) of the total¹⁰⁴⁾, and public employment constituted 39,3% (1964: 31,6%) of total wage employment¹⁰⁵⁾.

There is no antitrust legislation in Kenya or any other kind of governmental control of oligopolistic or monopolistic practices in the different branches of industry. Nor is there so far, any coherent regional or structural policy attempting to regulate, e.g. by means of tax incentives for investments in less favored areas, the allocation of industries or the flow of resources into certain projects or branches of industry, a plan which would be preferable from an over-all macro-economic point of view. Investments from abroad are encouraged and enjoy certain tax privileges. The free transfer of the originally invested amount back to their countries of origin and of all profits which may have been accrued in the meantime are guaranteed.

Kenya's unions are organized by the principle of a single union for each branch of industry (as, for example, in the Scandinavian countries or West Germany), and not on the basis of the individual skills of the union members (as e.g. in Great Britain or the U.S.A.), or in terms of differing ideological orientations with unions competing among members of the same profession or branch (as, e.g., in France or Italy). All branch unions (presently about 30 altogether) also are members of a central body, the "Central Organization of Trade Unions" (COTU). It was founded in 1966 following an intervention by the government after a series of disputes both on ideological and ethnic grounds between the previously existing

103) Statistical Abstract 1974, loc. cit., pp. 42 and 46.

104) Ibid., p. 49.

105) Ibid., pp. 242 ff..

"Kenya Federation of Labor" (KFT) and the rival "Kenya African Workers Congress" (KAWC). The unions do enjoy a certain measure of autonomy in their negotiations with their respective employers and their associations; a strike, as the final weapon, can only be called after all other possibilities in the very detailed regulations concerning these agreements have been exhausted. If this is not the case, the Ministry of Labor can declare a strike to be illegal, and in fact has done so in many instances. At certain times, e.g. before elections, strikes have been proscribed altogether. The judicial authority over disputes concerning industrial relations lies with a separate "Industrial Court", the members of which are also appointed by the government. In this way industrial relations are, in effect, quite closely supervised and actual work stoppages have become increasingly rare since these measures were introduced. On the whole the incidence of strikes in Kenya today is much less than, for example, in most Western industrialized countries (e.g. measured by the man-hours lost per year in relation to total man-hours or the total labor force)¹⁰⁶⁾.

Altogether one can thus speak of a "mixed economy" in Kenya, which however, leans strongly toward the "capitalistic" side. In particular the degree of involvement of foreign capital in Kenya's plantations and industries is still extremely high, and many of the by now well-known consequences of a "neo-colonial" situation are today manifest in Kenya¹⁰⁷⁾. Important groups which are strongly

106) Cf., e. g., Sandbrook, Richard, "The State and the Development of Trade Unionism" in: Hyden, Goran, Jackson, Robert and Okumu, John (eds.) Development Administration - The Kenyan Experience, Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1970, pp. 252 - 295; or for a more personal account of one of the main actors: Lubembe, Clement K., The Inside of Labour Movement in Kenya, Nairobi, Equatorial Publishers, 1968.

107) For an analysis of this pattern in Kenya cf. in particular Leys, Colin, op. cit., passim. A well-written study is also Langdon, Steve, "The Political Economy of Dependence: Notes toward an Analysis of Multinational Corporation in Kenya", manuscript submitted to a conference organized by the "International Labour Office" (ILO) at Limuru/Kenya, November 1973. A comparative analysis of economic policies in this area can be found in: Seidman, Ann, Comparative Development Strategies in East Africa, Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1972.

represented in the government also have developed a vested interest in the preservation of the present situation, so that no policies aimed at changing this pattern can be expected from this side. The unions, too, do not constitute an effective "countervailing power"¹⁰⁸⁾ and their weight cannot possibly be compared to that of "capital" and its mostly foreign owners. As will be shown in further detail below¹⁰⁹⁾, the present economic system has created or further accentuated strong imbalances both between regions (i.e. also ethnic groups) and "classes" with a great potential for increasing conflicts along these lines.

These basic choices, made at the time of independence and which strongly affected Kenya's future economic and social development, have been reflected to a certain extent in some of the more important political events of the post-Independence era. The first noteworthy incident occurred just a few weeks after Independence had been celebrated: the army mutiny of January 1964. Some troops stationed in camps near Nairobi and Nakuru turned against their (still mostly British) officers and demanded rapid promotions of Africans as well as better pay. Unlike the situation in neighboring Tanganyika, however, where a similar mutiny had occurred a few days earlier and had triggered to a certain extent the following events in Kenya and Uganda, things never really got out of hand and the government did not feel obliged to call in British troops as had been the case in the other two countries¹¹⁰⁾. The mutineers were swiftly dealt with and the army was thoroughly reorganized. In addition, regular police forces

108) For the use of this term cf. Galbraith, John Kenneth, The New Industrial State, revised edition, New York: Houghton, Mifflin, 1967.

109) See Parts III and IV.

110) Kenyatta's statement on the 1964 mutiny is reprinted in the useful collection of documents edited by Gertzel, Cherry; Goldschmidt, Maure; and Rothschild, Donald, Government and Politics in Kenya, Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1969, pp. 562 ff..

were strengthened and a special para-military organization, the "General Service Unit" (GSU), was created, the main task of which is the maintenance of internal security, but which is also designed to check the influence of the regular armed forces in case of another conflict¹¹¹⁾. Whereas this first major political turbulence could still be interpreted to have been the expression of dissatisfaction rooted in the colonial period, other events to come were more of the new regime's own making.

The first few years after independence saw a re-alignment of political forces and some important constitutional changes. The first important move occurred when an increasing number of KADU M.P.'s crossed the floor to the government side and KADU was finally dissolved in November 1964 (APP already had dissolved itself and joined KANU in August 1963). At about the same time the government also decided that Kenya should become a Republic and some important elements of the federal ("majimbo", literally: "provinces" or "states") constitution which had given a good deal of autonomy to Kenya's seven main regions were abolished. The existing regional assemblies were dissolved and the provincial administration became directly subjected to the Office of the President. In December 1964 Kenya was declared a Republic and Kenyatta became its first President, replacing the Queen as head of state. The new office now combined the functions of head of state with those of the head of government which previously had been exercised by a prime minister. In this sense Kenya followed more the U.S. or French example of a strong executive presidency. However, in contrast to the American and French

111) In 1972 Kenya's total armed forces numbered 6,730, of whom 6,000 were in the army, 250 in the navy, and 480 in the air force. The para-military "General Service Unit" counted 1,800 member at this time, cf. Legum, Colin (ed.), Africa Contemporary Record 1972 - 73, London: Rex Collings, 1973, p. B 156.

models, the Kenyan presidency remained directly responsible to the lower house of parliament ("House of Representatives"), as do the heads of government in most Western European countries. Executive power was further strengthened when a constitutional amendment in May 1966 gave the president very far-reaching emergency powers¹¹²⁾. These include the prohibition of organizations and public assemblies, the unlimited detention of persons, press censorship, restrictions of movements into, out of or within Kenya, the imposition of curfews and similar measures. In December 1966 the second house, the "Senate", was abolished as a further relic of the "Majimbo" constitution. Kenya thus from then on has had a one-chamber parliament which consists of 158 elected representatives and 12 members who were nominated (another remnant of colonial times) by the President. In 1968 the constitution was again changed to provide for direct elections of the President by the population at large.

This period was thus characterized by the creation of a de facto one-party state and by the continued strengthening of the executive powers in a more and more centralized political system. At the same time, however, some signs of opposition and dissent had again become apparent below the surface. As will be analyzed in further detail below¹¹³⁾, this dissent crystallized around the two main dominating factors of Kenya's political life, ethnicity and "class", which in some instances can serve as countervailing powers, but which in other situations reinforce each other.

Since the early beginnings of the resistance movements in the late 1940s there had been strands of more "moderate" and more "radical" orientation among African political leaders. During this period the latter often were members of the "Forty Group"¹¹⁴⁾

112) In particular Act Nr. 18 of 1966 including amendments to the "Preservation of Public Security Act" (Cap. 57).

113) See Parts II and III.

114) See above.

and were later strongly represented among the main activists of the "Freedom Fighters" in the forest who had their main basis of recruitment in the rural areas. The former could be found more often among those leaders who had emerged in the towns and who hoped to achieve their aims mainly through union organization and constitutional change. Kenyatta's position at this time has never become quite clear; he had been branded by the colonial government as the most "dangerous" African political leader. It remains doubtful whether he actually exercised any direct influence or control over the more radical of the freedom fighters. After his release he quickly joined those who worked for an "orderly" transfer of power and increasingly was to be counted among the more moderate and even "conservative" forces in Kenyan politics.¹¹⁵⁾

The distinction between radicals and conservatives was also to a certain extent a distinction between the "back benchers" and the "front benchers" in Parliament. One of the first issues to become apparent was the question of payment for land acquired by African settlers in the former "White Highlands". While the radical wing did not see any reason to compensate the British for something which they considered as rightfully having belonged to Africans anyway and which had been taken forcefully by the colonial power, the government of Kenya soon agreed to a scheme of loans financed by the United Kingdom which would ensure a full compensation of the white settlers. An arrangement was made for regular repayments,

115) The terms "radical" and "conservative" are also employed by Cherry Gertzel in her account of this period: The Politics of Independent Kenya, Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1970, cf. in particular pp. 54 ff..

including interest, by the new African occupants of the land. Many of the former freedom fighters were not satisfied with these arrangements, thus showing an element of "Class conflict" within Kenya's largest and most active ethnic group, the Kikuyu. The most outspoken political leader representing this group at this time was Bildad Kaggia who had been tried along with Kenyatta at Kapenguria and who had been put in detention with him. In 1964 his disagreement with Kenyatta over this issue had come into the open and he relinquished his post as Assistant Minister for Education. He then assumed the leadership of KANU's back-bench group in Parliament. After the dissolution of KADU, which had strengthened to a certain extent the "conservative" forces within KANU, the backbenchers became Kenya's main and quite active opposition. But this class aspect also cut across ethnic groups at this time. Oginga Odinga, for example, who had become Kenya's Vice-President after Independence and who was the most prominent Luo leader of this period, more and more espoused "socialist" ideas. His main opponent was Tom Mboya, also a Luo, whose political base, however, was in Nairobi and not, as Odinga's, in his homeland Nyanza. Mboya, as Secretary General of KANU and as one of the key figures in Kenyatta's cabinet (first as Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, and then as Minister of Economic Planning and Development), had become one of the main architects of Kenya's post-independence political and economic system. This ideological rivalry was intensified by their diverging personalities and the fact that both had strong ambitions for

the eventual succession of Kenyatta. Outside forces, as is almost always the case in such situations in Africa, also came into the play and Mboya was clearly the man of "the West" while Odinga was supported by the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries 116).

In February 1965 Pio de Gama Pinto, a former union activist and Member of Parliament of Goanese origin and one of Odinga's most influential associates, was assassinated in Nairobi. The circumstances surrounding his death, where some important people obviously had something to hide, remained shrouded in mystery, and were to set a precedent for similar acts of political violence. The opposition of the back-bench group became somewhat muted by this event, and when Odinga attempted to rally the support of this group behind him, it became apparent that the "conservatives" now could clearly count on a majority in parliament. This conflict came to its climax when at a party convention at Limuru in March 1966 the office of KANU National Vice-President, the post held by Odinga, was abolished. Realizing his defeat Odinga finally resigned from the government and from KANU to become the leader of a newly founded opposition party, the "Kenya People's Union" (KPU). Together with him 30 other M.P.s resigned, including two ministers. Most prominent among them were again Bildad Kaggia and Achieng Oneko, the latter an early leader of the freedom movement, who also had been in detention together with Kenyatta.

116) Some interesting insights into these relationships are provided by the account of the then United States Ambassador to Kenya, William Attwood, The Reds and the Blacks, New York: Harper & Row, 1967, the very title of which already indicates some of the preoccupations of American foreign policy at this time.

As a result, the constitution was retroactively changed to the effect that every member who had been elected to parliament as a representative of a certain party would automatically forfeit his seat, if he for some reason were no longer a member of this party. This meant that by-elections had to be held for all those seats which in this way had been vacated by the new KPU members. These by-elections took place in June 1966 and saw a clear defeat of most KPU contenders (including Kaggia in his own constituency in Murang'a District). Only nine M.P.s were re-elected (including Odinga and Oneko), most of them from Nyanza Province, the Luo homeland ¹¹⁷⁾. What had started as an ideological issue involving class conflict had thus now become crystallized almost completely along ethnic lines. What was left of KPU increasingly came under pressure from the government. Kaggia was sentenced to twelve months imprisonment for holding an unlawful meeting, Odinga's passport was withdrawn and his Nairobi office was searched by the police. When local elections were to be held in August 1968 it turned out that all KPU candidates "had filled out their registration forms incorrectly" and no KPU member was permitted to stand for the elections. As a result of this pressure a number of KPU adherents defected and returned to KANU.

KPU as a more "radical" opposition party was thus quite effectively suppressed when suddenly in 1969 the ethnic aspects of the conflict gained a new dimension. On July 5, Tom Mboya,

117) For an analysis of this "Little General Election" cf. Gertzel, op. cit., chapters 3 and 4 (the latter is written with John Okumu).

the leading Luo among those who had stayed in the government camp and whose position had been significantly strengthened by Odinga's defeat, was assassinated in broad daylight on a Nairobi street. Again the circumstances surrounding this death were never fully revealed, yet it was quite clear that Mboya had become too powerful a contender for the succession of Kenyatta. This non-Kikuyu bid for the Presidency had become too much of a threat for some leading Kikuyu politicians. Mboya's assassination immediately triggered strong reactions in Nyanza Province where the loss of the last important Luo representative in the government was a severe shock. Although Mboya, in contrast to Odinga, never really had drawn much support from his home area, his assassination made him a hero to his people. Tensions further escalated when in August and September of the same year, following tactics used during the "Mau Mau" period, masses of Kikuyu swore "to keep the flag in the house of Mumbi" (i.e. to keep the Presidency in Kikuyu hands). When President Kenyatta visited Nyanza Province in October, an angry crowd in Kisumu started to throw stones, and his guards opened fire. At Least 11 persons were killed and many more wounded. Five days later KPU was finally banned and its leaders who had been held responsible for the riot were put into detention. Short of outright civil war, which would have been a rather one-sided affair anyway, many Luo employed outside Nyanza retreated into their home area in fear of Kikuyu reprisals.

This was the general background when general elections in December 1969 were held, the first after independence. KANU

was once again the only party which could field candidates, but the electoral procedures had been changed so that officially administered primary elections, following the American pattern, had to take place first. KANU did not possess any effective organization itself, having lived mostly in the shadow of the government and its administration. As a result almost anybody who could make a deposit of 1,000 was entitled to become a candidate. In this way more than 700 persons contested the 158 seats. In only 11 constituencies were the incumbents (including Kenyatta and some members of his inner circle) returned to office "unopposed". As a result more than half of the incumbent M.P.s were defeated, including five ministers and 14 assistant ministers. Although the real significance of these elections and the role of parliament in the Kenyan system as a whole have to be qualified somewhat ¹¹⁸, there remains no doubt that the elections worked as an effective safety-valve for the increasing pressures in Kenyan politics.

In the same way the composition of the new cabinet helped to calm down the situation. It was formed after the elections and again reflected Kenyatta's attempt to govern by means of a "grand coalition" of the major political forces,

118) Cf. Hyden, Goran and Leys, Colin, "Elections and Politics in Single-Party Systems: The Case of Kenya and Tansania", British Journal of Political Science, Vol II, No. 4, 1972, pp. 261 - 292.

keeping at least some kind of ethnic balance ¹¹⁹⁾. Things remained cool for the rest of 1970 and even a fumbled coup attempt in early 1971, involving a Luo university lecturer and a Kamba Member of Parliament as the main conspirators, did not disturb the political scene very much. The Army Chief of Staff and Kenya's Chief Justice, both Kamba, were also implicated in this affair and resigned from their posts, but none of them was ever prosecuted; apparently the government never perceived this attempt as any real threat. The release of Odinga and most of the other political detainees, who all joined KANU again, was another gesture of reconciliation during this period.

Behind the scenes, however, some of the deeper-lying tensions continued unabated. Kenya's economic growth, spectacular in many ways, remained unevenly distributed and accelerated existing inequalities, particularly between the Kikuyu on the one hand and most of the other tribes on the other, and, among the Kikuyu, between people from Kiambu and those from the other districts of Central Province ¹²⁰⁾. This became

119) Among the 21 members of the cabinet there were 7 Kikuyu (including the President and, as an ex officio member, the Attorney General), 4 Luo (although of somewhat lower stature than their predecessors), 2 Kalenjin (including the Vice-President), 2 Kamba, 2 from Embu/Meru, 1 Giriama, 1 Taita, and 1 Luyia. If the assistant ministers were also included, this "coalition" would be even more widespread, comprising also representatives of the pastoralist peoples and the Arab and Asian communities, cf., e.g., Africa Contemporary Record 1970 - 71, loc. cit., p. B 116.

120) See also Part II, 2 below.

manifest also at the government level where some high-ranking politicians and top administrators had amassed considerable fortunes since independence. Most of this wealth was acquired within the legal limits of Kenya's capitalist economy, but in some cases even some quicker ways of getting rich were practiced by some people at the highest levels. The clove-smuggling affair in 1972, implicating ministers, M.P.s, and two Provincial Commissioners¹²¹⁾, and the ruby mine scandal in 1974 apparently involving Kenyatta himself¹²²⁾, were only the two most spectacular examples of this kind.

Some of the discontent which grew out of these rising tensions was articulated in student demonstrations in Nairobi, and the university was closed for several months in 1972 and 1974. Most of these demonstrations were peaceful, but riot police were called in several times and in one demonstration in February 1974 at least five students were killed¹²³⁾. Another violent incident occurred in December 1972 when Ronald Ngala, a leading politician from the coast and a former member of KADU, was killed in a mysterious "accident". As in previous cases (the assassinations of Pinto and Mboya and another fatal accident involving a Luo minister, C.M.G. Argwings-Kodhek, in 1969) the real circumstances of his death have never become entirely clear. The most outspoken critics of government

121) Cf. Africa Contemporary Record 1972 - 73, loc. cit., pp. B 153 f..

122) Cf., e. g., The Sunday Times, September 29, 1974.

123) Official reports speak only of one student who was injured when "he jumped from a window", but some reliable eye-witnesses can confirm this fact.

policies and practices, however, included some of the back-bench members of parliament and even some assistant ministers. In particular "the three J.M.s", as they were sometimes called (J.Martin Shikuku, a Luyia, John Marie Seroney, a Nandi, and Josiah Mwangi Kariuki, a Kikuyu whose constituency was in the settlement area of Nyandarua North), became a focal point of this kind of opposition.

The parliamentary elections of 1974 again brought a good deal of change in the composition of the government and among members of parliament. Four ministers and 13 assistant ministers were defeated and more than half the M.P.s did not return. For the first time one of the leading figures was among those defeated: Njoroge Mungai, a former minister of Defense and of Foreign Affairs and a close associate of Kenyatta who had been given good chances for his succession, but who had fallen somewhat out of favor lately. In this way the elections did effect at least a certain "circulation" of the elite and were "meaningful" in a democratic sense, at least for the local electorate in contested constituencies¹²⁴⁾. On the other hand, some politicians such as Odinga and some of the other former KPU members were not allowed to stand in the elections and again the President, the Vice-President and the Minister of State in the Office of the President, Mbiyu Koinange, who had become Kenyatta's closest aid in recent years, were returned "unopposed", so that, indeed, no real contest for the most important positions in Kenya's government

124) These elections are also discussed in Berg-Schlosser, Dirk, "Wahlen in Kenia - Demokratie in einem Entwicklungsland?", Afrika Spectrum, No. 1, 1975, pp. 55 - 66.

has taken place.

The new cabinet again maintained a certain tribal balance, but the more outspoken critics were, significantly, not included this time. Thus Kariuki and Shikuku, both of whom previously had been assistant ministers, together with Charles Rubia, a wealthy businessman, former mayor of Nairobi, and also a former assistant minister who had voiced some of the internal Kikuyu discontent of the people from Murang'a, were now among the back-benchers again. The ranks of this group also had been strengthened by the return of some former ministers and other important personalities as J. Odero-Jowi who had been Kenya's ambassador to the United Nations for some time or Burudi Nabwera, a former ambassador to the United States. Perhaps for this reason the new parliament showed some signs of reasserting its position and regaining some of its largely lost powers vis-à-vis the executive. This became evident when in the very first session after the elections J.M. Seroney was elected Deputy Speaker against the explicit wishes of the government. Kenyatta was so upset that he immediately prorogued parliament. When it finally reconvened in February 1975 Seroney was elected nevertheless.

Kenya's calm was then visibly shaken when in March 1975 J.M. Kariuki was assassinated. Kariuki had gone through a mixed and somewhat controversial political career, but at the time of his death he undoubtedly was the most important spokesman of the opposition. He first became known as the author of a book about his experiences as a "Mau Mau Detainee"¹²⁵⁾

125) Cf. Kariuki, op. cit..

and had been elected to Kenya's first parliament after independence. He also was quite successful in diverse businesses and was fond of a flamboyant lifestyle, running his own horses at the Ngong race track (Kenya's "Ascot", still a "landmark" of the colonial era and its "gentlemen")¹²⁶, and was frequently seen playing roulette at the "Casino". In his speeches he nevertheless increasingly espoused the cause of Kenya's poor and underprivileged and developed a nationwide populist appeal. As the representative of a settlement area in the former "White Highlands", for example, he raised the question of compensation for formerly European-owned land and more generally criticized other colonial or neo-colonial practices. Although Kariuki, in the eyes of many observers, did not possess either the intellectual capacity or the personal integrity of a more convincing "socialist" leader such as Julius Nyerere, there is no doubt that "J.M." at the time of his death was the most vocal and most popular critic of the government and the only politician, except for Mzee himself, who had a truly nationwide, non-tribal appeal.

A special parliamentary committee was set up to investigate the assassination. Some high ranking officials, such as the head of the para-military "General Service Unit" (GSU), some other leading police officers and the Minister of State, Mbiyu Koinange, were clearly implicated but again no action was taken and the mystery remained¹²⁷). This time, however,

126) Cf., e.g., the revealing interview he gave to the Sunday Nation in November 1966, reprinted in Gertzel et. al. (eds.), op. cit., pp. 78 ff..

127) Cf., e.g., The Weekly Review, (Kenya's newly founded weekly news magazine, edited by Hilary Ng'weno), March 24, 1975.

reactions were more pronounced. Riots occurred both in Nyeri, where Kariuki originated from, and in Kisumu, the capital of the Luo (!) area. Pictures of Kenyatta were torn from the walls in many places, marking the first time that this had ever happened. The legitimacy of his government had visibly suffered. For the first time conflict clearly manifested itself on a "class" basis, since Kariuki had been a Kikuyu; ethnic appeals by the Kenyan leadership were to no avail in this case.

A certain calm returned when the government made it clear that it still possessed quite effective means of coercion and was willing to use them anytime it seemed necessary. The first to feel this renewed determination were the other two "J.M.s", Seroney and Shikuku. After making some relatively harmless remarks in parliament about the lack of life in KANU, they were put into detention by order of the President, even though such remarks had been made in similar forms many times.

In contrast to Kenya's sometimes turbulent internal political developments, her foreign relations remained relatively uneventful. One of the few serious problems after independence was, however, the threat of secession by Kenya's North Eastern Province. An area of approximately 83,000 square kilometers with hardly any agricultural potential, it belongs to the least "developed" parts of Kenya and is inhabited by about 250,000 mostly Somali-speaking people, many of whom still pursue a pastoralist way of life. The neighboring Somali Republic claimed this territory after independence on the basis of the existing ethnic relationships, much in the same

way it demanded significant changes of its borders with her Western neighbor, Ethiopia. Kenya refused to cede any territory, maintaining the principle also advocated by the O.A.U., that existing borders in Africa should remain untouched. Some sporadic fighting occurred in the first years after independence between some "shifta" (local rebels supported by Somalia) and Kenya's armed forces, making it necessary to impose tight security measures. After mediating efforts by President Nyerere of Tanzania and President Kaunda of Zambia, the political leaders of both countries agreed in October 1967 to settle the dispute by peaceful means. Since then hostilities have ceased, although no real solution to the underlying problem of the two conflicting principles of the right of "national identity" on the one hand, and the maintenance of territorial integrity on the other, has been found. Things will probably remain this way unless a discovery of oil or of some other important minerals will make the area more attractive and again raise this issue.

The other important development in this area concerns Kenya's relations with her two other neighbors, Tanzania and Uganda, including efforts towards creating some kind of larger "East African Community". The three countries inherited from the colonial era a network of "common services" (the most important are the "East African Railway's Corporation", the "East African Harbors Corporation", the "East African Post and Telecommunications Corporation", the "East African Airways" and they once had a common currency and common Income Tax and Customs and Excise Departments. Although in former times

African politicians had resisted all settler-inspired attempts of a "closer union" in East Africa ¹²⁸⁾, the leaders of the three newly independent countries agreed in Juni 1963 that a new kind of political community should be created ¹²⁹⁾. It was soon realized, however, that the advantages of such of a community would be distributed very unevenly in a "laissez-faire" kind of economy, because the natural resources and the industrial potential of each territory were not sufficiently diversified to create a balanced division of labor or subsequent permanent "linkages" ¹³⁰⁾ between them. The creation of a larger "common market" without further specifications would simply lead to a concentration of industries in already favored areas, i.e. Kenya, particularly in the vicinity of Nairobi. To prevent this, an agreement was drawn up in Kampala in 1964 which specified the future allocation of important industries in East Africa. This agreement, however, was never really implemented and in 1965 Tanzania decided, in view of the increasing disadvantages for her isde and a deteriorating balance of internal East African trade, to create her own currency and central bank, an example which was soon followed by the other two countries.

128) Cf., e. g., Bennett, op. cit., chapters 6 and 7.

129) A documentation of the efforts leading to a more integrated East African Community (up to 1967) can be found in Rothchild, Donald (ed.), The Politics of Integration, Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1968.

130) For the use of this term cf., e. g., Haas, Ernst B., Beyond the Nation State, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964.

In 1967 a new attempt was made and a common "East African Council of Ministers", an "East African Legislative Assembly" and a permanent "Central Secretariat" in Arusha, together with a "Court of Appeals for East Africa" and a "Common Market Tribunal" were created in addition to the already existing "common services". It was agreed that the three countries should have common customs tariff and excise duties, and that arising imbalances in the pattern of trade between them were to be regulated by means of a "transfer tax" on certain goods. Problems in their balance of payments were to be eased by means of a "Distributable Pool Fund" which established payments by the richer to the less favored partners. Finally, an "East African Development Bank" should ensure that credits for the allocation of new industries would mainly go to areas which were lagging behind. This time the efforts to implement the agreement were more serious and for the first three years the "East African Community", by and large, worked quite well.

The military coup in Uganda in January 1971 severely strained the relations with her neighbors, in particular with Tanzania, and interrupted some of the regular proceedings of the community for almost a year. In addition, and even more importantly, it had become increasingly clear in the meantime that an economic community in East Africa would not be feasible in the long run if the partner states continued to pursue fundamentally different economic policies, i.e. in particular if Kenya with her more "capitalistic" way of development and Tanzania with her much stronger "socialist" orientation which she followed since the "Arusha Declaration"

of 1967, both continued to insist on their own individual development strategy. As a result, the common Income Tax Department was renationalized in 1974 and the administration of some of the community services became increasingly difficult¹³¹⁾. In spring 1977 the East African Community weakened by mounting among the three partner states, finally collapsed and its "common services" were discontinued.

Outside East Africa, Kenya maintained relatively stable relations with most of her partners. In particular the links with the United Kingdom, the former colonial "motherland", continued to be very strong. In addition to the many influences which still can be seen in many aspects of life in Kenya, reaching from the ownership of industries and the remnants in the legal and educational systems to the consumption patterns of the elite and more subtle kinds of influences, Britain still is by far Kenya's most important economic partner abroad. In 1973 it produced 25 % of all of Kenya's imports (1964: 38,7 %) and bought 16,5 % (1964: 21,3 %) of her exports¹³²⁾. Since 1968 Kenya has been associated with the European Economic Community (EEC) and was one of the partners involved in the new "Lomé Agreement" of February 1975 between 46 mostly African states and the EEC.

The relations with the Soviet Union and the other Eastern European countries have remained relatively cool, in particular since the mid-1960's when the government suspected some Soviet,

131) Cf., e.g. The Weekly Review, September 15, 1975.

132) Statistical Abstract 1974, loc. cit., pp. 65 and 79.

and also Chinese, intervention on behalf of its internal opposition, the KPU. Strong links do exist, however, with the United States and the rest of the "Western" world and also in this sense Kenya quite clearly maintained its "capitalistic" preferences. Except for some basic issues, as the question concerning relations with the minority regimes in Southern Africa where the government has always adhered to a strict anti-racist and anti-colonial policy, Kenya has been a "moderate" voice in international affairs. This was, for example, manifested during the Middle East crisis of 1973 where she attempted to avoid to take sides as long as possible and then decided only to "suspend" diplomatic relations with Israel rather than break them completely as did most other African countries.

PART II: THE ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

"Moins le blanc est intelligent, plus le noir
lui paraît bête."

André Gide

Anyone who attempts to understand the present pattern of Kenya's society and politics must first take a look at the history and comparative development of its most important constituent parts - the ethnic groups. Unfortunately, however, there is as yet no coherent single study which describes all of Kenya's ethnic groups, not even the most important ones, in a systematic comparative manner, taking into account both traditional and contemporary aspects. The sources which exist in this regard were originally written for a variety of purposes. They are of very unequal quality and most of them remain incomplete.

Three main kinds of sources can be distinguished. First, a series of studies was conducted by colonial administrators ¹⁾ and missionaries ²⁾ following the penetration of the interior around the turn of the century. Even though the objective difficulties of communication and research at this time must be acknowledged, it should also be said that a great number of these authors kept their own purposes in mind and in many cases gave not only incomplete or faulty but very strongly biased accounts of the groups they were

1) Among the better ones are, for example, Hobley, Charles W., Ethnology of the Akamba and Other East African Tribes, London: Cambridge University Press, 1910; or Merker, M., Die Maasai - Ethnographische Monographie eines ostafrikanischen Semitenvolkes, Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1904.

2) These include, for example, Cagnolo, C., The Akikuyu - Their Customs, Traditions and Folklore, English Translation, Nyeri/Kenya: The Mission Printing School: 1933; or Crazzolaro, J. Pasquale, The Lwoo, 3 vols., Verona: Museum Combonianum, 1950.

describing. Their own value judgements about the superiority of "Western civilization", the benefits of colonial rule, and the blessings of Christianity were all thoroughly established. Their studies reflected disdain for "savage" and "barbarous" peoples and their beliefs and customs. One of them, a member of the Consolata Fathers, proudly stated in the preface of one of the major studies on the Kikuyu: "The reader will not be surprised at discovering in these pages a genuinely Catholic atmosphere from cover to cover." ³⁾ Or, at a later point: "The reader may smile at this long catalogue of Kikuyu beliefs and superstitions, but on reflection he must entertain some feeling of pity for these poor slaves of ignorance... It is an obligation upon us civilized peoples to put these phantoms to flight and to lighten their darkness with the sun of justice and the stars of civilization." ⁴⁾

A second wave of studies was then initiated at a somewhat later stage by professionally trained foreign social anthropologists who attempted to present the life of these peoples in a less biased, more complete manner. ⁵⁾ The major method of this group of researchers was "participant observation": a trained observer lived with a group of people for a certain period of time and attempted to record the main aspects of their "culture" as he understood it. ⁶⁾

3) Cagnolo, op. cit., p. VIII.

4) Ibid., p. 189.

5) Cf. e.g., Lindblom, Gerhard, The Akamba in British East Africa, Uppsala: Appelberg, 1920; Wagner, Günther, The Bantu of North Kavirondo, 2 vols. London: Oxford University Press, 1944 and 1956 or Peristiany, J.G., The Social Institutions of the Kipsigis, London: George Routledge, 1939.

6) This method is described more fully in the common textbooks, cf. e.g., Selltitz, Claire et al., Research Methods in Social Relations, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1959, pp. 200 ff..

The advantage of this method lies in the fact that behavior is observed as it actually occurs rather than through the more indirect procedures of sociometric tests, experiments, survey research etc., which have severe limitations despite their distinct advantages.

Participant observation alone, however, cannot give us a reliable picture of a society. A single observer is bound to have a certain point of view which reflects his conscious and unconscious biases. The very fact of his "participation" may lead to a change of behavior by those who are conscious of the presence of an outsider. If, in order to minimize bias, several observers were present at the same time, the element of distortion caused by their very presence would be even greater; or, if several observers participated at different points in time, social changes may occur which again would make their assessments not strictly comparable. Another important limitation of this method, almost by necessity, is the reduced scope of an investigation of this kind both in terms of its subject matter and, even more importantly, its geographical extensions. Most observers share the life of a very limited number of people who belong to a larger ethnic group, e.g. a "village", which is, in most cases, expected to be "representative" or "typical" of the larger group as well. This assumption, however, is often not justified. Many "participant observers" also tended to treat their objects as a rather homogeneous unit and thus often overlooked important differences within the population studied. A third restriction of studies of this sort lies in the fact that they concentrated on the "traditional" and "static" aspects of the life of these groups and thus tended to neglect social change and social dynamics. A number of these studies have been summarized in the monographs of the "Ethnographic Survey of

Africa".⁷⁾ Not all of Kenya's peoples have been included, however, in this effort, (as e.g. the different groups of the Abaluyia),⁸⁾ and some are only very inadequately dealt with (as e.g. the Luo).⁹⁾ Moreover, even these more systematic attempts remain subject to a number of the above mentioned methodological limitations.

Only in more recent years have these studies been supplemented by a number of indigenous authors. These give either literary or autobiographical accounts of their own experience,¹⁰⁾ or describe their own societies in a more scientific manner as a result of anthropological or sociological training.¹¹⁾ From these accounts, for which the better of the earlier studies still serve as a valuable background, a more balanced and satisfactory picture now begins to emerge. But even this last group of writings differs widely in

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- 7) Cf. Ford, Daryll (ed.), Ethnographic Survey of Africa, London: International African Institute, various years. In the series on East Central Africa Parts III, IV, V, VIII, and XII contain material on peoples living in Kenya.
 - 8) Part XI of the Ethnographic Survey, The Eastern Lacustrine Bantu, by Margaret Chave Fallers deals mainly with the Ganda, Soga and some smaller groups in neighboring Uganda.
 - 9) The section on the Kenya Luo in part IV of the Ethnographic survey, The Nilotes of the Sudan and Uganda, by Audrey J. Butt, is rather short and incomplete, based on very little first-hand material.
 - 10) Cf., e.g., Ngugi wa Thiongo's novels Weep not, Child, London: Heinemann, 1964; and The River Between, London, Heinemann, 1965 or Henry ole Kulet's Is it Possible?, Nairobi: Longman, 1971 and To Become a Man, Nairobi: Longman, 1972.
 - 11) The first Kenyan to do so was, of course, Jomo Kenyatta, cf. his Facing Mt. Kenya, first published: London: Martin Secker and Warburg, 1938. More recent authors are, for example, Simeon H. Ominde, cf., e.g., his early booklet The Luo Girl, London: Macmillan, 1952; Bethwell A. Ogot, cf., e.g., his A History of the Southern Luo, Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1967; or Kivuto Ndeti, Elements of Akamba Life, Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1972.

its quality and particular focus. Only a few of Kenya's ethnic groups have so far been covered by authors of this last category.

An additional obstacle lies in the often complicated access to a great number of the sources. Some, in particular the earlier ones, have been out of print for a long time and are only available in a few specialized libraries today.¹²⁾ Others are scattered in a variety of journals,¹³⁾ some of which have ceased to exist for a considerable period of time. A third group has remained entirely unpublished,¹⁴⁾ making it almost impossible to obtain certain studies.

In view of all these difficulties to obtain a balanced, systematic, comprehensive and up-to-date picture of Kenya's ethnic groups, we felt obliged to produce a brief but still sufficiently comprehensive account of the traditional and contemporary aspects of the life of these peoples ourselves, drawing upon all these sources. In addition we consulted the available official documents relevant to our purpose and attempted to collect as much comparative statistical information as possible on the present situation of these groups. In order to supplement some of the information of this kind, to fill some of the still existing gaps and to

12) This is true, for example, for the studies by Merker, Cagnolo etc. mentioned above.

13) Cf., e.g., the article by Hopley, C.W., "Anthropological Studies in Kavirondo and Nandi", Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. XXXIII, 1903, pp. 324-354; Lindblom, Gerhard, "Kamba Riddles, Proverbs and Songs", Archives d'Etudes Orientales, Vol. 20, 3, Uppsala, 1934; or Evans-Pritchard, E.E., "Luo Tribes and Clans", Rhodes-Livingstone Journal, 7, 1949, pp. 24-40.

14) As, e.g., the important dissertation on the Maasai by Alan H. Jacobs, The Traditional Political Organisation of the Pastoral Maasai, Nuffield College, Oxford, 1965; and most of the conference and research papers issued on various occasions.

provide a common frame of reference for our own analysis, we also conducted a separate survey. This contained an extensive section on the economic conditions and some aspects of the traditional social organization of these peoples.

The groups we selected include Kenya's five largest ethnic groups, the Kikuyu, the Kamba, the Luyia, the Luo and the Kalenjin, all numbering more than one million people each, one major group from the Coast Province, the "Mijikenda", and, as a representative for the pastoralist peoples, the Maasai. In this way we were able to cover practically all important regions of Kenya except for the peoples of North-Eastern Province, who are mostly Somali-speaking. These practice the most important rural modes of production, i.e. cash crop farming, subsistence farming and pastoralism, together with some of the more important "mixes" in between. We are thus able to provide some information concerning approximately 75 % of Kenya's population, comprising the most important and the most active groups in Kenya's politics.¹⁵⁾ We also attempted to validate our results by cross-checking our different sources and by obtaining the judgements of some knowledgeable experts on these societies. Although it can only be a brief and sometimes necessarily incomplete sketch, the following is a first attempt at providing a description of the economic, social, political and some significant cultural aspects of seven of Kenya's main ethnic groups in a comparative and up-to-date manner.

In addition we will also present some of the stereotypes prevalent in Kenya concerning these groups. Regardless of

15) For specifications of our sample and a discussion of other methodological aspects of our survey see also Part I, Chapter 1 f above and our "Methodological Appendix" below.

the actual characteristics of an ethnic group, how it is seen by others is an important aspect of social reality as well. Images of this kind imply of course certain exaggerations of what are imaginary or real characteristics of a particular people. ¹⁶⁾ They do not take into account, for example, the actual amount of variation which may exist among the different members of a group, or changes which may occur over time. Once such stereotypes have been formed, they continue to be reinforced by what Allport calls "selective perception" and "selective forgetting". ¹⁷⁾ Eventually they may even harden into actual "prejudices", i.e. mostly negative attitudes concerning members of other groups which have become irreversible even when exposed to knowledge. ¹⁸⁾ It is, therefore, important to keep in mind that the images reported here are only perceptions of reality, not reality itself.

The characterizations given are based on the assessments of a few selected respondents from each of the seven regions where we conducted our interviews. In view of our limited resources and since we were more interested in the qualitative aspects of these stereotypes, we did not attempt to draw any quantitative conclusions (e.g. about the extent to which some of these images prevail in certain groups) either. We also did not attempt to systematize these assessments by providing our respondents with a given list of properties from which they could choose the more characte-

16) Cf., e.g., the definition of a "stereotype" in Allport, Gordon W., The Nature of Prejudice, Anchor Book edition, New York: 1958, p. 187.

17) Ibid., p. 191.

18) For this aspect of the definition of "prejudice" cf., e.g., ibid., p. 9.

ristic ones. ¹⁹⁾ The available lists of properties were too culture-bound for our purposes. We chose not to compile our own list because of the inherent danger that some important characteristics may be overlooked or that the list may become too suggestive, not to mention that this would have strained our resources considerably. Instead, we asked our respondents for their spontaneous ideas without making suggestions of our own. Although the actual level of information about other groups and contact with them varied in the different areas, and although the emphasis put on one or another of these characteristics differed to a certain extent, it can be said that on the whole a relatively homogeneous picture for each group emerged.

Before we turn to the detailed presentation of each group, however, a comparative summary of some of the most important facts and figures concerning these groups may be helpful. The selection of these data was not only determined by theoretical considerations in the light of the debate on the "aggregate data" approach ²⁰⁾ and the discussion of social and economic indicators of "development", ²¹⁾ but also by the practical availability of these statistics. In this table we have included information about the size and general ecological conditions of the home area of each ethnic group, the most important demographic data, including the present-day religious affiliation of these peoples, data on the economic situation of each group and the division of

19) For example by D. Katz and K.W. Braly in their pioneering work "Racial stereotypes of 100 college students" in: Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1933, 28, pp. 280-290, and many other subsequent studies.

20) See also Part I, chapter 1 above.

21) Cf., e.g., United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), "The concept of development and its measurement", International Social Science Review, No. 2, New York: 1970, pp. 1 ff..

labor, its educational achievements, and the infra-structural development of the area. In addition, as an indicator of local initiative, we have included figures on the recorded contributions made by each group to self-help ("Harambee") projects. Also, in order to show somewhat the other side of "development" and to give an indication of socially deviant behavior, we have included the number of crimes committed by members of each group, both for Kenya as a whole and for the city of Nairobi, where members of different communities live under similar urban conditions. It would have been desirable to include additional indicators as, the per capita income of each ethnic group despite its many limitations, or figures on income distribution, but no reliable data of this kind were available. The level of economic development of each group and its home area thus can only be inferred from the figures on the agricultural land under cash crops, farm sizes, non-agricultural occupations, and the infrastructural data. Other indicators such as "consumption of electricity" or the like which are useful for industrialized countries do not make sense for Kenya; here rural electrification hardly exists at all.

We also computed an over-all "rank order of development" by first establishing the rank of each group on the most significant "development"-related indicators in our table (i.e. area under pure cash crops, non-agricultural employment, adult literacy, roads, water supplies, hospital beds and self-help contributions). Then we added up these ranks. In this way only ordinal numbers were computed and the obvious fallacy of adding up "apples and pears" was avoided. This method, in effect, assigns an equal weight to all indicators, which is, of course, arbitrary. But so would be any other way of weighting. The rank sums for each group also indicate to a certain extent the relative distance between them. It would be misleading, however, to infer

from the rank sum of 7 for the Kikuyu, for example, that this group is four times more "developed" than the Luyia (rank sum 28). Such conclusions can only be drawn from the actual material differences concerning each indicator (e.g. adult literacy among the Kikuyu is about five times higher than among the Maasai).

/ Insert table II /

As it becomes apparent from this table, the Kikuyu are by far the leading group on practically all the "development"-related indicators and in the over-all ranking. However, they also have the highest rate of population growth, a very high population density in their home area and are among those groups with the least favorable ratio of high potential land equivalents per person. This is one of the main reasons for their very high rate of migration to other provinces and the major cities. The crime rate is also the highest of all groups both in Kenya as a whole and in Nairobi. The Kamba, Mijikenda, Luyia, and Luo show a rather mixed picture, one group being ahead on one indicator, another on a second one. If the rank sums for each group are any indication (varying between 27 and 30), they are all not very far apart. The Kalenjin lie somewhat behind on some indicators (as e.g. literacy, water supplies, or hospital beds), but they still enjoy a relatively favorable agricultural favorable land: population ratio, which gives them a good basis for further development (at least for those subgroups living in the climatically favored parts). The Maasai, on the other hand, clearly rank last on almost all scores, reflecting the still mostly traditional way of life of a great majority of them.

The actual living conditions of each group and further chances of improvement can only be fully appreciated, however, after we have discussed each of them in a more comprehensive manner in the following chapters.

TABLE II: COMPARATIVE DATA FOR KENYA'S MAIN ETHNIC GROUPS:

Ethnic group: ²²⁾ Variable:							
	Kikuyu	Kamba	Miji- kenda	Luyia	Luo	Kalen- jin	Maasai
<u>1. total tribal land area (km²)</u> ²³⁾	13,173	43,567	20,371	8,223	10,330	26,060	39,476
a) agricultural land (=high potential land equivalents) ²⁴⁾	9,120	5,890	3,250	7,410	10,050	10,160	9,550
b) in %	69.2	13.5	16.0	90.1	97.3	39.0	24.2
<u>2. total population (in millions)</u> ²⁵⁾	2.20	1.20	0.52	1.45	1.52	1.19	0.15
a) of which in tribal home area ²⁶⁾	1.61	1.03	0.45	1.17	1.32	1.64 ²⁷⁾	0.14
b) in %	73.2	85.4	87.1	80.6	87.0	91.6	95
c) of which in major cities (Nairobi/ Mombasa) in % ²⁸⁾	9.4	7.5	11.7	5.5	5.6	0.5	0.8
d) rate of growth (1962-1969 of total popul.) ²⁹⁾	3.7	3.2	2.9	3.6	3.5	3.5	0.1
e) rate of urbanization (% living in towns over 2000) ³⁰⁾	2.74	1.41	3.09	0.80	2.61	1.90	1.24
f) population density in home area (pers./km ²) ³¹⁾	128	24	25	161	140	42	5
<u>3. religious affiliation in % of total population (1972)</u> ³²⁾							
Roman Catholic	26	14	7	39	39	19	1
Protestant (incl Anglicans+Indep.)	47	47	15	55	50	26	21
Muslim	--	--	40	2	1	--	--
traditional	27	39	38	4	10	55	78
<u>4. ha of high potential land equivalents in home area/pers.</u> ³³⁾	0.57	0.57	0.72	0.63	0.76	1.10	6.82
<u>5. land registration</u>							
a) in % of potential ³⁴⁾	99.5	15.1	16.7	95.6	47.6	40.4	62.2

Ethnic group:							
Variable:	Kikuyu	Kamba	Miji- kenda	Luyia	Luo	Kalen- jin	Maasai
b) <u>average size of holding in registered area</u> (ha)	2.0	6.2	3.4	2.5	2.5	18.4	--
c) <u>% of small scale farms of less than 2 ha</u>	65.5 ³⁵⁾	n.a. ³⁶⁾	n.a.	42.4	51.6	22.6 ³⁷⁾	--
2.0 - 4.9 ha	28.8	--	--	32.5	24.1	49.0	--
5.0 - 9.9 ha	4.8	--	--	18.9	10.7	25.0	--
more than 10 ha (av. size in this group)	0.9 (16.3ha)	--	--	6.1 (15.1)	13.6 (17.2)	3.4 (16.5)	--
6. <u>area under cash crops (as % of cultivated area)</u>							
a) Definition A	54.5	59.6	61.2	55.0	32.6	52.6 ³⁹⁾	--
b) " B ("pure" cash crops)	28.6	20.6	21.8	14.4	17.2	15.2	--
7. <u>persons in non-agric. employment in the mod. sector as % of total popul. in home area</u>							
40)	3.7	1.5	1.5	1.3	2.3	1.5	-- ⁴¹⁾
8a. <u>% of adult population with minim. literacy (home area only)</u>							
44)	51	31	15	43	30	26	10-12 ⁴⁵⁾
b) <u>primary school enrolment: as % of potential primary school popul. (home area only)</u>							
46)	88.6	73.0	27.9	60.9	53.5	42.6	14-15 ⁴⁷⁾
c) <u>secondary school enrolment as % potential second. school populat. (home area only)</u>							
48)	13.4	6.1	2.6	7.4	6.2	4.2	1.0
9a) <u>pers./hospital bed</u>	724	1,037	998	1,025	1,097	1,140	787
b) <u>pers./health unit</u>	6677 ⁴⁹⁾	11,170	7,672	12,893	11,305	4,295	3,836
50)							
10a) <u>% of pop. served with rur. water supplies</u>							
51)	18.5	5.1	12.0	11.3	11.9	10.0	13.2
b) <u>km of roads per 1000 km² in home area</u>							
52)	171.8	48.9	59.2	165.7	160.2	94.9	42.2

table continued, p. 3

Ethnic group:							
Variable:	Kikuyu	Kamba	Miji- kenda	Luyia	Luo	Kalen- jin	Maas.
<u>11. contributions to self-help projects 1972</u> (Kshs./pers. ⁵³)	11.00	5.00	1.60	2.80	3.20	7.20	2.20
<u>12. crimes (per '000 pop.)</u> Kenya av. ⁵⁷⁾							
a) <u>Kenya total</u> 2.73	3.84	2.62	2.00	2.94	2.28	2.24	3.81
of which ⁵⁶⁾							
against persons 1.11	1.56	1.10	0.76	1.34	0.90	1.03	1.21
property 1.22	1.68	1.19	0.95	1.23	1.06	0.95	1.76
Nair.av.							
b) <u>Nair. total</u> 8.82 ⁵⁸⁾	13.69	9.49	6.00	6.4	6.29	7.09	13.5 ⁵⁹⁾
persons 3.05	4.93	2.85	1.50	2.51	1.76	2.18	6.19
property 4.54	6.99	5.54	3.83	3.09	3.33	2.73	2.06
<u>13. Political participation: 60)</u>							
a) voter registration 1974: (in % of eligible voters)	73	77	61	61	83	66	66
b) voting turnout 1974: (in % of eligible voters)	56	46	37	33	48	48	46
<u>14. Over-all rank of</u>							
a) "development"	1	5	4	3	2	6	7
b) rank sums:	7	30	29	28	27	32	38

- 22) Since for most of the variables considered here there were no detailed statistics available on an ethnic basis we had to calculate most of our figures on the basis of the respective administrative districts, the boundaries of which still coincide to a large extent with those of the traditional tribal areas. Thus, for our purposes, we considered all districts of Central Province to be the traditional Kikuyu homeland. (Nyandarua District as part of the former "White Highlands" and a settlement area is a certain exception in this respect, but more than 90% of its population are Kikuyu nowadays.) The districts of Kitui and Machakos were taken to represent the Kamba and those of Kwale and Kilifi the Mijikenda peoples. Bungoma, Busia and Kakamega Districts were defined as the Luyia area and Baringo, Elgeyo-Marakwet, Kericho, Nandi and West Pokot Districts as the territory of the Kalenjin-speaking groups. Narok and Kajiado Districts represent the Maasai homeland and Kisumu, Siaya and South Nyanza were taken as the Luo area. Although some of these districts also constitute the traditional homeland for some smaller groups (as, e.g., Busia for the Itego or South Nyanza for the Kuria peoples) and although some members of other tribes live (mostly pursuing non-agricultural occupations), the groups considered here are by far the dominant ones in their respective districts. We are fairly confident that the figures given here represent a satisfactory approximation (and the only one available!) for some characteristic differences between Kenya's main ethnic groups. Only in a few instances where the characteristics of the minority groups assumed to be very different from those of the predominant one (as, e.g., in Narok and Kajiado Districts) we attempted, as far as possible, to take this into account for some of the variables.
- 23) Source: Statistical Abstract 1973, p. 2.
- 24) Ibid., p 99. High potential agricultural land is defined as consisting of areas with an average annual rainfall of 857,5 mm or more (over 980 mm, in Coast Provinces), medium potential land has a rainfall of 735 - 857,5 mm, (735 - 980 mm, in Coast Province) and low potential lands are areas which have rainfalls below this figure. The high potential land equivalents have been calculated assuming 5 ha. of medium potential and 100 ha. of low potential land to be equivalent to 1 ha. of high potential land (Cf. ILO-report, loc. cit., p 35). Although this figure does not take into account differences of the general topography of these areas, of their altitude and of the varying fertility of their soil it is the only one available and seems to be sufficient for our purposes.

- 25) Population Census 1969, Vol. I, Table 2, pp. 69ff.
- 26) Ibid.
- 27) In this figure we have included the Kalenjin living in Uasin Gishu District (a part of the former "White Highlands"), which is adjacent to the "pure" Kalenjin districts and where they constitute almost 60% of the population.
- 28) Population Census, 1969, Vol. II, Table 3, pp. 3ff.
- 29) Computed from the census data of 1962 and 1969.
- 30) Population Census 1969, Vol. II, Table 1, p. 1,
- 31) Computed from lines 1 and 2 a above.
- 32) Kenya Churches Handbook, Kisumu: Evangel Publishing House, 1973, Table 4, p. 181

The pattern of religious affiliation is not homogenous among the subgroups of these peoples. Among the Mijikenda, for example, most of the Digo are Muslims whereas a considerable number of the Giriama profess traditional beliefs. Most of the Pokot and more than half of the Elgeyo, the Marakwet and the Tugen are also traditionalists, in contrast to their more Christianized Nandi and Kipsigis kinsmen.

- 33) Computed from lines 1 a and 2 a above.
- 34) Economic Survey 1974, p. 78,
- 35) Statistical Abstract 1973, Table 90, pp. 106-108 and Table 95 a, pp. 112ff..
- 36) This figure excludes Nyandarua, a former large-scale farming area.
- 37) This figure includes only Kericho and Nandi Districts.
- 38) Statistical Abstract 1970, Table 78, p. 81
Definition A includes as cash-crops: improved maize, wheat, all pulses other than beans, all temporary industrial crops (including cotton, sugar cane, pyrethrum, ground nuts and oil seeds), English potatoes, cabbages, certain other vegetables and other temporary crops and all permanent crops (including coffee, tea, coconuts, cashew nuts, paw-paws, bananas and other fruit).

Definition B includes as cash-crops: wheat, all temporary industrial crops, English potatoes, cabbages, certain other vegetables, coffee, tea and cashew nuts, but not, as it is often done, coconuts in the case of Coast Province, because these can be considered to be a traditional subsistence crop in this area as well. Where there is a

considerable difference in the cash crop acreage, depending on the respective definition (e.g. in Machakos, Bungoma, Kakamega or Nandi Districts), this is largely accounted for by the planting of improved maize in these areas. Since, however, this is also a food crop, only a very small amount of it may actually be sold, particularly in districts with a very high population density (like Kakamega or Kisii). This difference may therefore indicate a pattern of "involutionary growth" in these areas.

- 39) The figures available are only for Kericho, Nandi and Elgeyo-Marakwet.
- 40) Employment and Earnings in the Modern Sector 1971, pp. 29/30.
- 41) There are 4,780 persons (2.3%) in this category in the Maasai home districts of Kajiado and Narok, but since there are also 65,000 persons of other ethnic communities living there, it is highly unlikely that a significant number of Maasai can be found in this group.
- 42) Employment and Earnings in the Modern Sector 1971, pp. 31/32.
- 43) Here the non-adjusted figure would be 0.7 for the districts of Kajiado and Narok.
- 44) Population Census 1969, Vol. III, Table I, pp. 1-49, Minimal literacy is defined to include these persons aged 15 and above who reported having attended school some time even if only for one year. This definition is, of course, arbitrary, as are many others. Thus it may include people who never quite achieved literacy or who may have lost it in the meantime. On the other hand, there may be more people, who can be termed "literate" even though they have never attended an ordinary school, but who may have taken adult literacy classes or are self-taught in one way or another.
- 45) The actual district figure is 20%, but if we assume the literacy rates of the non Maasai living there to be equivalent to the overall national average and if we deduct this group accordingly, we arrive at these values of 10 to 12 % for the Maasai alone.
- 46) Ministry of Education, Annual Report 1969, Table 5, pp. 38 ff.. The potential primary school population is assumed to be 21% of the total population. Again this assumption is arbitrary, but it is the one which is used in some of the Regional Physical Development Plans and it corresponds approximately to the national average for the corresponding age group.

- 47) The actual district figure is 28,6%, it has again been adjusted for the Maasai proper.
- 48) Ministry of Education, Annual Report 1964, Table 18, pp. 60 ff..
The potential secondary school population is assumed to be 12% of the total population.
- 49) Ministry of Health, Annual Report 1968 (published 1974), Appendix VI, pp. 125 ff.. These figures include only government and mission hospitals.
- 50) Ibid., Appendix IX, pp. 130 ff.. These figures include health centers, sub-health centers and dispensaries supported by either the government, missions, or self-help efforts.
- 51) Ministry of Agriculture, Water Department, Rural Water Supplies Programme I and II, Progress Reports, Feb. and June 1974, Tables 3.1, 3.2, 4.2, 4.2.2, and Ministry of Health, Proposed Environmental Sanitation Programme, Phases I - IX, 1960/61 - 1971/72. These figures include only those rural water supplies which have been planned and executed by the Water Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and by the Ministry of Health under the WHO/Unicef environmental sanitation program, phases I-IX (1960-1972), as the two most important programs. It was not possible to obtain reliable, more comprehensive data including water projects initiated by other authorities such as County Councils, the Ministry of Lands and Settlements, or local self-help groups. In some cases only rough estimates were available. The figures for the large-farm areas understate the actual number of people served in these districts, since these farms usually have their own water supplies.
- 52) Computed from ILO-Report, loc. cit., pp. 78/79.
- 53) Computed from: Ministry of Co-operatives and Social Services, Department of Social Services, A Statistical Analysis of Self-Help Projects 1972, table K, pp. 57 ff..
- 54) This figure includes the districts of Baringo, Elgeyo-Marakwet, Kericho, Nandi and West Pokot.
- 55) This figure refers to the total population of Kajiado and Nandi districts.
- 56) Computed from Muga, Erasto, Crime and Delinquency in Kenya, Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1973, Table 1, p. 5; and Kenya Population Census 1969, loc. cit., p. 69. (The data analyzed by Muga are for the year 1970.)
- 57) This figure is for all "Coast tribes".

- 58) Computed from Muga, loc. cit., Table 20, p. 51; and Kenya Population Census 1969, loc. cit., p. 70.
- 59) The total number of offenses committed by Maasai in Nairobi was only 13, these rates should, therefore, be taken with caution.
- 60) Computed from the election results by constituency as published in Daily Nation and Standard, October 15, 1974 and later editions.

2.) General Background:

The area of traditional Kikuyu settlement stretches from the slopes of snow-capped Mount Kenya (17,058 feet = 5,199 meters) in the northeast of the territory to the long mountain range of the Aberdares (highest elevation: 13,120 feet = 3,998 meters) in the west. This runs in a north-south direction and forms a part of the eastern border of the Rift Valley, ending in the wide Athi Plains. It is there, at the borderline between the mountainous area and the open grassland, that Kenya's present-day capital Nairobi, is situated. In the east and north, Kikuyu country is bordered by the neighboring and related groups of the Sabo and Mury who live on the slopes around Mount Kenya. Further east and south it borders the hilly but more arid region of "Ombaka" (Kamba country).²⁾ Much of Kikuyu territory lies at an altitude of about 6,000 feet above sea level, which, despite the vicinity of the equator, gives it a relatively mild and at times even chilly climate. The area experiences regular and sufficient rainfalls. The main rainy seasons are between April and June and in November and December each year. The territory is well watered by permanent rivers and streams

1) The current designations, in their own language, are Mugikuyu (pl. Agikuyu) for the people, Ukikuyu for the country and Gikikuyu for the language. These prefixes are very similar to the corresponding ones in Swahili: Mkiikuyu (pl. Wakiikuyu), Ukiikuyu and Gikiikuyu.

2) See the next chapter below.

CHAPTER 1: THE KIKUYU:¹⁾

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which originate in the Aberdares Range or near Mount Kenya and almost all of which flow in an easterly direction. These rivers cut the country into fairly regular valleys and ridges, which range from about 200 - 600 feet in height. The landscape thus exhibits a very characteristic pattern which reminds some observers of "the waves of a heavy cross sea".³⁾ Today, all major lines of communication run along these ridges. Most of the country has rich and fertile soil, mostly of volcanic origin, although today problems of overuse and soil erosion have become apparent in some areas.

Administratively, Kikuyu country today forms Kenya's "Central Province", which consists of the three traditional Kikuyu districts of Kiambu, Murang'a (formerly "Fort Hall") and Nyeri, to which have been added the newly created district of Kirinyaga on the southern slope of Mount Kenya and the settlement area of Nyandarua (formerly: "Thomson's Falls"), the latter having originally belonged to Rift Valley Province. The Kikuyu today number approximately 2,2 million people and are thus the largest single ethnic group in Kenya. 1,6 million of them, i. e. about 73 %, still live in their original home area of Central Province. This means that, comparatively speaking, a greater percentage than from any other group has moved to other areas, mainly Nairobi and the Rift Valley, but also to other parts of Kenya. The rate of urbanization in the home area is 2,74 %, the main urban centers being the present and former district capitals. The population density of the home area is 128 persons per square kilometer which

3) Routledge, W. S. and K., With a Prehistoric People: The Akikuyu, London: 1910, p. 2.

is among the highest in Kenya. The average annual rate of population growth between the last two censuses of 1962 and 1969 was 3,7 %, which is the highest in Kenya and which also explains to a certain extent the high rate of migration into other provinces and the increasing population pressure in the home area. Of the total home area, 13,133 square kilometers, about 70 % is of high agricultural potential which means that there are about 0,5 hectares of high potential land equivalents per person.⁴⁾

The Kikuyu language belongs to the "Bantu" family of languages and is "tonal" in character. The Kikuyu are grouped linguistically with the neighboring Kamba, Embu, Meru and some smaller groups to form the category of "Central Bantu" in Kenya, which can be distinguished from the "Coastal Bantu", consisting of the "Mijikenda", Taita and some other ethnic groups in the Coast Province, and the "Western Bantu", the main representatives of which are the Luyia and Kisii in Western and Nyanza Provinces.⁵⁾

The Kikuyu people probably moved into their present area of settlement about 1500 A. D. having come from the east and south, from what are today the northeastern parts of Tanzania.⁶⁾ In the new home are the partly dislocated

4) For references for all these figures cf. also our table "Comparative data for Kenya's main ethnic groups".

5) There is some controversy about the most appropriate classification of African languages and ethnic groups. This is the one used in the official population census.

6) The most detailed single work on the pre-colonial history of the Kikuyu is Muriuki, Godfrey, A History of the Kikuyu 1500 - 1900, Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1974.

the original inhabitants, probably mostly members of the "Dorobo", a people of hunters and gatherers living in the forest. They also intermarried with this group, as they did with other neighboring peoples, e. g. the Maasai and Kamba, so that today the Kikuyu are not a "pure" stock in any physical or genetical sense of the word.

As most African peoples the Kikuyu also have a "myth of origin".⁷⁾ It says that all members of the tribe are descended from a man called Gikuyu and his wife Mumbi,⁸⁾ who were given the present homeland by Ngai, the central deity of the Kikuyu, who is believed to reside on Mount Kenya.⁹⁾ Gikuyu and Mumbi had nine daughters who were married to nine young men, also provided by Ngai, and thus founded with their families the nine principle clans ("mihiriga") of the Kikuyu.¹⁰⁾ Another myth also explains the predominant mode of production.¹¹⁾ Gikuyu and his two brothers, Maasai and Dorobo (or Kamba in some stories), were shown by Ngai three different imple-

7) Kenyatta, Jomo, Facing Mount Kenya, first edition: London: Secker and Warburg, 1938; edition used by us: London: Mercury Books, 1961, pp. 3 ff., Kenyatta is also the author of a brief booklet: My people of Kikuyu, Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1966.

8) The spelling of this name and others differs very much in the literature (e. g. Moombi, Muumbi, Muumbi etc.). In order to avoid further confusion, a transcription which most closely resembles that of modern Swahili is used throughout this work.

9) For other important aspects of Kikuyu religion see also section d of this chapter below.

10) The traditional social structure of the Kikuyu is described below in section c of this chapter.

11) Cf., e. g., Middleton, John and Kershaw, Gretha, The Kikuyu and Kamba of Kenya: The Central Tribes of the North-Eastern Bantu, London: International African Institute, revised edition: 1965, p. 15; this study is part of the ethnographic survey of Africa, loc. cit.

ments to choose from: a spear, a bow and a digging-stick. Maasai took the spear, Dorobo the bow, and Gikuyu the digging-stick, which then served as their principal means for earning their livelihood, namely as pastoralists, hunters, and farmers. In a related story¹²⁾ the present patriarchal kinship system of the Kikuyu is explained: In the beginning the nine daughters of Gikuyu, as founders of the clan, were also the heads of their respective families and, accordingly, all Kikuyu families were dominated by women. Polyandry was also practised. After a period of time, however, the women became too domineering and ruthless and the men planned a revolt against their superiors. They decided to make all women, and especially the leaders among them, pregnant at a certain time, so that after a few months when the women were handicapped by their condition, they could successfully overthrow their rule. Their plot succeeded and ever since that time men have been the heads of the families in Kikuyu society with polygyny instead of polyandry becoming a common form of marriage.

b.) The Economy:

As indicated in one of the myths of origin the Kikuyu have traditionally practised a mostly agricultural way of life. The main crops were sorghum, millet, beans, and sweet potatoes. Traditionally the land was cultivated with the help of a wooden "digging-stick" or a big machete-like knife ("panga") which, in different variants, is common in many parts of Kenya. Nowadays a tractor, in most cases operated by a private owner, is

12) Cf. Kenyatta, op. cit., pp. 6 ff.

frequently hired for plowing. The Kikuyu kept cattle, sheep and goats. The latter served as the main unit of reckoning, e. g. for establishing the amount of bride-wealth to be paid, and goats were often used for ceremonial purposes as well. Fish and chicken were not eaten traditionally, game very rarely. The main diet was thus largely vegetarian, because the slaughter of a goat was largely restricted to ceremonial occasions.

Today the main staple crop is maize, often a hybrid variant, but cassava, yams, bananas, sugar-cane, English potatoes and many kinds of fruit and vegetables are quite common, too. The main cash crops, in addition to some of the fruit and vegetables which are sold on local markets and in Nairobi, are coffee (since the restrictions on growing were lifted in the 1950's), tea and pyrethrum. Almost one third of all agricultural land today is devoted to the growing of "pure cash crops", this is by far the highest percentage for any major ethnic group in Kenya. Dairy cattle of various European breeds have been introduced successfully and many small farms in Kikuyu country have a least one or two "grade" cows. The keeping of poultry also has become quite popular and chicken and eggs are a welcome and nutritious supplement to the traditional diet.

In our sample¹³⁾ almost 90 % of all farmers grew some maize, about 15 % of which was of the "improved" variety.

13) For the exact specifications of this sample see also our "Methodological Appendix" below. In order to avoid an impression of "false accuracy" by quoting percentages etc. up to the last decimal point we report only rounded figures wherever this seems appropriate. Despite the limitations of our sample, we do feel that the reported results by and large reflect a correct order of magnitude for the total population.

40 % also planted some traditional food crops like yams and cassava, 30 % had pulses under cultivation. By far the most popular cash crop was coffee (60 %), with the amounts of tea and pyrethrum being comparatively small (less than 10 %). About one quarter of all farmers also produced English potatoes, tomatoes, pineapples and other fruit and vegetables, most of which (particularly from Kiambu) was sold on the Nairobi market. About four fifths of all farms had some cattle, of which almost 80 % were grade cattle. Very few herds in the small-scale farming areas numbered more than 5 head of either grade or local cattle, the mean being between 2 and 3. About three quarters of all farmers sold some of the milk (most of them between 2 and 10 liters per day). About one fifth of the farmers also kept sheep and goats (between 2 and 5 on the average), about one third had some chickens.

The Kikuyu traditionally lived in scattered homesteads ("mucii"), each family on its own piece of land, surrounded by their fields ("shamba").¹⁴⁾ "Villages", as a territorially more compact form of settlement, did not exist until the "Emergency" of the 1950's when larger groups of people were settled in fortified compounds. As soon as the emergency was over, however, most people moved back to their original shamba. Today, with the programs of land consolidation and registration, initiated in 1954, almost completed in Kikuyu country (by 1974 99, 5 % of all land had been registered), the title deeds which have been issued make this decentralized pattern of settlement even more permanent. The average size of a holding in the re-

14) For any kind of agricultural holding, even if only a garden, this is the common Swahili term which has come into use in most parts of Kenya.

15) Cf., e. g., Cliffe, Lionel and Saul, John S. (eds.), *Socialism in Tanzania, Dar es Salaam: East African Publishing House, 2 vols., 1972.*

gistered area is approximately 5 acres (1 acre = 0,4 ha). About two thirds of all holdings have less than 5 acres each. Somewhat less than 30 % of the farms comprise between 5 and 12 acres, and about another 5 % between 12 and 25 acres. Less than 1 % of all holdings have more than 25 acres, with an average size in this group of 40 acres.¹⁵⁾ The majority of our respondents cultivated between 2 and 5 acres each. About 10 % had less than 2 acres, 15 % cultivated between 6 and 10 acres, and slightly more than 10 % possessed between 11 and 20 acres. Only in the settlement area of Nyandarua District (where about 10 % of our rural Kikuyu respondents live) can larger farm sizes for "smallholders"¹⁶⁾ (between 30 and 40 acres on the average) be found. This area is, however, of somewhat lower potential and most of the farms have not yet been fully "developed".

In modern times the dispersed form of settlement has certain disadvantages since it is much more difficult and costly to establish a modern infrastructure in rural areas (e. g. all-weather roads, schools, hospitals, market-centers etc., but also, eventually, piped water and electricity for every home) if the homesteads are very far apart from each other. At least from this "technocratic" point of view, the Tanzanian program of establishing consolidated "ujamaa villages", apart from the particular and apparently somewhat problematic patterns of land holding and work organization which go with it, certainly offers some benefits.¹⁷⁾ On the other hand, Kikuyu country is so

15) See our table "Comparative data..." above.

16) The truly large farms of the former "scheduled areas", some of which are also situated in the present districts of Kiambu and Nyandarua, are, of course, a different matter.

17) Cf., e. g., Cliffe, Lionel and Saul, John S. (eds.), Socialism in Tanzania, Dar es Salaam: East African Publishing House, 2 vols., 1972.

densely populated today, that the farm houses are not very far apart anyway, and the disadvantages of being somewhat further away from the community center have to be weighed against the advantages of being a short distance from the daily work on the shamba. The particular geographical character of the area also makes the implementation of an effective infrastructure (e. g. roads, waterpipes, etc. running along the top of the ridges) relatively easy.

Land in all its aspects was of central concern in traditional Kikuyu society (and it still is for many "modern" Kikuyu). Being agriculturalists, they have depended upon land as the principal means of securing their material existence, but beyond that there has also been a deep spiritual attachment. As, for example, Kenyatta puts it: "Communion with the spirits is perpetuated through contact with the soil in which the ancestors of the tribe lie buried. The Kikuyu consider the earth as the 'mother' of the tribe."¹⁸⁾

Questions of land rights were, therefore, a principal factor in many disputes between the Kikuyu and the British in the colonial era and the prime cause for the "Mau Mau"-uprisings in the 1950's.¹⁹⁾

The traditional Kikuyu system of land tenure was based on the extended family or "lineage" ("mbari"), which jointly owned a piece of land ("githaka"), usually located on the same ridge, the characteristic geographical division in Kikuyu country. Within the mbari each elementary family (i. e. a husband and his wife or wives and children) had its own pieces of land, which did not necessarily form a single consolidated unit. Each wife then cultivated a

18) Kenyatta, op. cit., p. 21.

19) See also Part I, chapter 2 c above.

portion allocated to her to feed her children and husband. When the father died the land and other property associated with the mother was inherited by her sons. The eldest son of the first wife sometimes acted as a trustee, when his brothers or half-brothers were still minors, but in principle all sons had the same rights in regard to the property, associated with their mother. When there were no sons, the property went to the deceased husband's brothers or their respective heirs.²⁰⁾ In our sample about 50 % of the respondents stated that their property would be inherited one day by all their children, 15 % specified the eldest son, 10 % said "all sons", 5 % the "favorite child". The rest were undecided, partly because they were still too young and did not have any children or property yet.

The original rights to this land were established either through clearing it or by purchasing it from the original inhabitants of the area, the Dorobo. Whereas in former times there was still a considerable "reserve" of forest land to be cleared, with other parts of land being left idle, nowadays, due to the increasing population pressure, practically every suitable inch of soil is cultivated in some form or another, and also the former communal grazing grounds have largely disappeared. But even in former times it was not uncommon that a githaca could no longer support all the members of an extended mbari and some, mostly younger, people had to move elsewhere, either to clear new land of their own, or to ask the permission of a family of another mbari which still had plenty of land if they could cultivate some part of it. This was done purely on the basis of mutual friendship and no rent or other forms of payment were required.

20) Cf., e. g., Middleton and Kershaw, op. cit., pp. 46 ff., or Kenyatta, op. cit., pp. 32 ff..

However, the fact that a head of a family could afford to give cultivation rights to others seems to have given him a certain prestige as a wealthy and influential person in the community. The tenant ("muhoi", pl.: "ahoi") was not allowed to plant any permanent crops, and he was also obliged to leave again when he was asked to do so.

This somewhat hidden pattern of rural stratification between owners of land and others who had only cultivation rights became of great significance in the wake of the land reforms in the 1950's when land ownership was vested in persons or in the nuclear family. In many cases the former ahoi had to leave the newly consolidated individual holdings, because most of these were relatively small in size. In this way a new rural proletariat of landless people began to emerge and their ranks are still swelling rapidly due to the continuing population pressure. This tendency, apparent throughout Kenya, is most pronounced among the Kikuyu where a tradition of people who owned no land had existed, where the land reforms of the 1950's were carried out first and in the most complete manner, and where the increase of the population in relationship to the available land is felt most severely. This emerging class structure in the rural areas is spreading to other parts of Kenya as well and it is already quite significant for the very densely populated homelands of, for example, the Luyia and the Kisii.

The traditional division of labor among the Kikuyu was based on sex and age. The men were responsible for the clearing of fields, the tending of cattle in all its aspects, the heavier work in house-building (such as the cutting and erecting of timber, the building of fences and granaries), and some occasional military duties. The women's work consisted of the planting, weeding and

harvesting of almost all crops, the collection of fire wood, the fetching of water from near-by rivers, thatching and plastering in hut-building, sewing of skins, making pottery, and cooking and child-care.²¹⁾ As can easily be seen from this list, women had the much more regular, and time-consuming duties, and, to make matters worse, the tasks of the men have decreased in modern times (the clearing of bushland and forests has practically come to an end in this area, and "military duties" are no longer needed), whereas the women's chores have become even more burdensome since the supply of firewood near the home-steads has been almost completely exhausted and they have to walk longer and longer distances with heavy loads on their backs. It is not rare, therefore, for women to look quite old and worn out at a relatively young age. The introduction of piped water, which has already begun in some areas, and eventually perhaps of electricity, which is virtually non-existent in rural Kenya so far, may one day make the women's work easier, too.

In contrast, the men can often be found at leisure, drinking home-made "pombe" (local beer) or, in some other parts of Kenya, "chang'aa" (a very powerful local liquor) quite early in the afternoon. What in former days had been the privilege of the "wazee" (the old men), has today become an every day pastime for the males of all generations in all areas. Nowadays certain exception in this regard occurs when men begin to share women's work by planting and harvesting certain crops, in particular cashcrops like coffee, tea, but also bananas, vegetables and sugar-cane. They also devote a substantial amount of their time to the more delicate and time-consuming care of grade cattle. The

21) Cf. Middleton and Kershaw, op. cit., pp. 20 f.

marketing of the major products is also mostly their task. This latter duty also puts them in control of most of the cash income of the family, considerable amounts of which they then not rarely use for their own consumption only.

Most agricultural plots in Kikuyu country are rather well-"developed", i. e. terraced where necessary, carefully planned in their layout and used to their full potential. Given the small size of most plots this amounts to an intensive form of what can almost be called "horticulture". In our sample almost 60 % of the farm owners said that they had received some advice from the agricultural extension service and an almost equal number had attended a course at a farmers' training center. Also about one third had received a loan to improve their shamba. Approximately 40 % of the farmers were members of a cooperative, the Kenya Farmers' Association or a similar professional organization. 90 % of those who had grade cattle used artificial insemination and about the same percentage of farmers regularly brought their cattle to a cattle-dip. All these figures are the highest for any of the ethnic groups considered here and they indicate the high degree of "modernity" reached in Kikuyu country, but also relatively ample attention they are getting from the government, which provides many of these services. Almost 90 % of the farm owners stated that they planned to further improve their shamba in the near future, about half of them by planting new crops, one quarter by upgrading their cattle and another 15 % by improving the infrastructure or installing a water supply. About 80 % said that they intended to buy more land or grade cattle sometime. Approximately one third of our agricultural Kikuyu respondents had an average cash family income of less than Kshs. 100,-- (i. e. less than US \$ 15) per

month, another third earned between Kshs. 100,-- and 200,--, the rest had incomes above that level reaching up to Kshs. 800,-- per month.

In the past there were very few specialized full-time occupations outside of agriculture. The only major exception were ironsmiths, who belonged to certain families, and "medicine-men" (mundu mugo), who practised good or "white" magic (in contrast to evil or "black" magic or sorcery) and who performed many important medical and ritual tasks.²²⁾ Today this has changed and there are, among the rural Kikuyu, quite a number of specialized traders, craftsmen and owners of other businesses and enterprises, often in combination with a shamba. The percentage of non-agricultural employment in the modern sector for the Kikuyu home area (3,7 %) is the highest for any tribal-land in Kenya, and also the number of self-employed in non-agricultural occupations in the modern sector (0,25 % of the total population in the home area) is the highest anywhere.²³⁾ Together with those in "informal" occupations, including all the family members of this group, the total population in the non-agricultural sector in Kikuyu country can be estimated to be about 10 %. In our sample about 40 % of those in predominantly non-agricultural occupations stated, however, that they also possessed a shamba or a share of one. This was in most cases cultivated by the wife or some other family member. In some instances hired labor was also employed. Practically all the crops planted served for subsistence purposes only. Three fourths of our rural Kikuyu respondents had contributed at some time to a "Harambee" or

22) See also section d of this chapter below.

23) See table "Comparative data..." above.

other self-help scheme (40 % of which were for school purposes, 16 % for churches, and the rest for health centers, water supplies and other public projects). In absolute figures the total contribution was Kshs. 11 per person in all of Kikuyu country in 1972,²⁴⁾ again a figure which is not reached anywhere else.

c.) Social and Political Structures:

Traditionally the structure of Kikuyu society was differentiated both "horizontally", based on ties of kinship and marriage, but also on some variations between different geographical areas, and "vertically", based on a system of age and status-groups which cut across these structures. The most basic horizontal division was that between the nine main "clans" ("mihiriga") of the Kikuyu.²⁵⁾ As has already been mentioned above these were named after the nine daughters of the mythological founder of the tribe, namely: Achira, Agachiko, Airimo, Ambui, Anare, Anjiro, Angoi, Aithaga, and Aithirando.²⁶⁾ Variations of these clan names are still the most common Kikuyu names for girls (e. g. Wangare, Wambui etc.). Today these clans have several hundred thousand members each and are dispersed all over Kikuyu country. It is

24) Cf. ibid.

25) There are also a number of minor ones which seem to be branches of the original clans.

26) Cf., e. g., Kenyatta, op. cit., p. 6. The spelling of these names differs somewhat among the various authors, but they all agree that these are the main clans. These clan-names were also mentioned most often by our respondents. A tenth main clan, Aicakamuyu, seems to have been added at a later time, bringing the total number of main clans to "full nine" ("kenda muiyuru") i. e. ten, as the Kikuyu put it.

doubtful whether the clans ever formed the basis of distinct regional units, and they are not exogamous groups either, as has been assumed by some authors.²⁷⁾ Since they also do not possess any effective internal organizations which comprise the whole clan, the social and political significance of the mihiriga is limited, although practically all Kikuyu respondents in our rural sample were able to identify themselves as members of a clan.

The clans are further divided into sub-clans and a series of even smaller units which are all, however, also of little actual significance. The only economically and socially effective unit today seems to be the smallest one, the "mbari". A mbari is a group of families who trace their descent from a common ancestor following the paternal line, often for up to seven or eight generations. Mbari vary in size, but many number in the hundreds. Most members know each other and the kind and degree of their relationship. In addition to its functions as the most important traditional land-holding unit in Kikuyu society (this has changed somewhat as a result of the land reforms of the 1950's which gave holding rights to individuals and the "nuclear" family), the mbari is an important social reference-group for many Kikuyu and still plays an effective role in many economic and social relationships including the more modern ones.

Traditionally, the "muramati" was the head of a mbari. As a rule he was the first son of the first wife of his father from whom he had inherited the decision making

27) Cf., e. g., Routledge, op. cit., p. 20.

rights concerning the distribution of land among the members of the mbari, the granting of cultivation rights to ahoi or similar matters.²⁸⁾ A muramati was expected to allocate the land fairly to the other members of the group, and he himself did not have any more cultivation rights than his brothers. Occasionally other senior and respected members who were not firstborn sons of their father seemed to have been able to acquire the function of muramati, especially after the original one had proved to be incapable, or after some severe quarrels over land had arisen. Today the position of the muramati has been weakened, partly as a result of the land reforms which largely curtailed his original function.

In addition to this organization of Kikuyu society based on kinship, there is also a geographical organization. First of all there is the "village" ("itura") which comprises a number of neighboring families, but which does not represent, as has been mentioned above, a unit of more compact settlement as, e. g., in Europe. In contemporary administrative terms an "itura" may best be conceived of as a "sub-location" or "location". Next, there is a certain unity of living conditions and interests among people living on the same ridge ("rugongo"), the characteristic geographical division of Kikuyu-country, which often (but not necessarily!) coincides with the "githaka" of a mbari. Then, in a more general sense, the Kikuyu are geographically divided among the three main administrative districts ("bururi") of Kiambu, Muranga'a, and Nyeri, which were already important social units (e. g. for ceremonial purposes) in pre-colonial times, although the present

28) Cf. Kenyatta, op. cit., pp. 33 ff..

boundaries do not completely coincide with the previous ones. This geographical division has been further accentuated in recent times by the differential economic development of these districts and, in particular, by differences in access to urban employment and government services. It is widely felt that the people of Kiambu who live in the vicinity of Nairobi and who have been strongly represented in all post-independence cabinets, including President Kenyatta himself, have been unduly favored in this respect.

A further division is into what has been called the "Kikuyu guilds".²⁹⁾ These consist of the "Maasai guild" and the "Kikuyu guild" proper, but the distinctions refer only to some differences in the ceremonial patterns on certain occasions, as e. g. somewhat different initiation rites etc., and do not seem to be of any greater social or political significance. Today with the disappearance of some customs and some considerable changes in others their importance has declined even further.

The most important vertical stratification in traditional Kikuyu society was based on sex and age. Other ascribed or achieved criteria which determine a person's status in other societies, e. g. the prestige of the family, one's wealth, income, level of education etc., etc. were relatively unimportant. In this sense traditional Kikuyu society clearly was an egalitarian one since everybody had the same chance to achieve status (at least among members of the same sex), and everyone went through the different stages in an equal and almost automatic way (depending on the fulfillment of certain conditions).

29) Cf., e. g., Middleton and Kershaw, op. cit., p. 64.

The term "egalitarian-segmentarian" has been coined by some authors for the description of social structures of this kind.³⁰⁾ The main "age-grades"³¹⁾ for a male person, for example, were:

gakenge	- baby boy
kahi	- small boy
kihi	- uncircumcised boy
mumo	- circumcised youth
mwanake	- warrior, adult man
muthuri	- elder.

All age-grades were set apart by certain "rites de passage" which clearly demarcated the transition from one to another. The most important and dramatic ritual in this respect was the circumcision ("irua") of boys and girls when they were initiated into early adulthood. For girls this procedure (which in its most basic physical aspect consisted of a clitoridectomy) took place once a year (usually in the period between the "long" and the "short" rains), since it

30) Descriptions of social and political structures of this kind can also be found, for example, in: Fortes, M. and Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (eds.), African Political Systems, London: Oxford University Press, first edition: 1940, Middleton, John F. and Tait D. (eds.), Tribes without Rulers: Studies in African Segmentary Systems, London: Routledge, 1958; or Mair, Lucy, Primitive Government, Hammondswoth: Penguin, 1962.

For the Kikuyu cf. also:

Lambert, H. E., Kikuyu Social and Political Institutions, London: Oxford University Press, 1956; or Leakey, Lous S. B., Mau Mau and the Kikuyu, London: Methuen, 1952.

31) This term has become the standard expression in social anthropology for a status-group based on age, i. e. the abstract "rank" of such a group. An "age-set", on the other hand, is the concrete community of co-equals passing through the different "age-grades", while an "age-group" is a somewhat looser term used by some authors for either of the above meanings.

was important to perform this operation before a girl reached puberty. Boys circumcision ceremonies (which were the same in ritual and timing for the whole of one of the three major districts) took place every four to five years. All those who were circumcised together formed a particular "age-set" ("rika", pl. "marika") which constituted a kind of "blood-brotherhood". This was particularly important during the time of warriorhood and its significance tended to decrease in later years, but membership in an age-set remained one of the most essential social bonds during a person's lifetime. Each age-set was given a name referring to some kind of extraordinary event which happened at about the time of circumcision, for example, a period of famine ("ng'aragu"), or, in more recent times, they were sometimes called after the year of initiation, for example, the already mentioned "Forty Group" ("anake a 40").³²⁾ Each age-set had a leader who was selected at the time of initiation by a race of all boys over a distance of about two miles to a sacred tree. The boy who arrived first and threw his spear over the tree became the leader and spokesman of the group. This selection of leadership was interpreted as a kind of ordeal, and as, e. g., Kenyatta put it: "It is believed that such a one is chosen by the will of the ancestral spirits in communion with Ngai, and is therefore highly respected."³³⁾

A vertical division in an even wider sense, also based on age, was a system of what has been called "generation-sets" or "moieties". These consisted of two groups, each of which comprised all male Kikuyu within one "generation",

32) See also Part I, chapter 2 c above.

33) Kenyatta, op. cit., pp. 140 f..

i. e. a period of about thirty years. These sets were alternately called "Maina" or "Mwangi", i. e. if the father belonged to the Maina set, his son would belong to the Mwangi and his grandson again to the Maina. The older set ruled for the duration of one generation until the next one was instituted in a solemn series of ceremonies ("ituika"). The last completed ituika in Kikuyu country took place in the 1890's. The ceremony which was started in the early 1930's was interrupted and then prohibited by the colonial government. By the time the next generation should have taken over again in the 1960's in meanwhile independent Kenya this custom had lost its significance and apparently there have been no efforts to revive it.

The system of age-sets has also disappeared among the Kikuyu after the last ones apparently were instituted in the 1940's. Less than half of our rural respondents still said they belonged to such a group. Only about a quarter of those who were below the age of 40 were able to indicate their age-set membership, while 85 % of those who were aged 40 and above could still do so. Male circumcision is still practiced, however, and seems to survive, although today it is performed in most cases by hospital surgeons and no longer by the traditional practitioners. It has also become a largely private affair, and only a few boys of neighboring or otherwise related families are still circumcised together. Male circumcision thus has lost its original social function. Female circumcision, on the other hand, seems to be dying out completely, perhaps because the modern rationalization of cleanliness and hygiene given for the practice of circumcision seems to be more convincing for males than for females. It also should not be overlooked that the existence or non-existence of male circumcision still is an important factor in the relations between different ethnic groups in Kenya. The

very low rate of inter-marriage, for example, between the Kikuyu and the Luo (who do not practice circumcision), can to a certain extent be attributed to this factor.³⁴⁾

The more directly political structures of traditional Kikuyu society were based on the system of age-grades and the various geographical divisions which existed. For each relevant geographical unit the elders ("athuri") formed a council which was responsible for the supervision of all important political, ceremonial and judicial matters affecting their area. The "kiama kia itora" (village council) and the "kiama kia rugongo" (council of the ridge "district", in a narrower sense of the word) seem to have been the most important decision-making bodies in this respect. In addition there was a separate council of the members of the mwanake ("warrior") age-grade "kiama kia ita" (the "council of war"). However, this council could not decide over matters of war and peace by itself and the final responsibility remained with the athuri.

The members of each council of elders elected a spokesman and leader ("muthamaki") from among themselves choosing the one who was most respected for his experience and wisdom. Not rarely did it occur that a muthamaki became so well-known that his advice and arbitration were sought even from people outside his original sphere of jurisdiction. His functions should not be confused, however, with that of "chiefs" as they existed in other more hierarchically structured African societies. There were no special powers or privileges which distinguished the muthamaki in any way from the other elders. His influence was based purely on personal merit and could not be

34) See also Part III, chapter 5 below.

inherited or transferred by the incumbent in other ways.

With the arrival of the British, who sought to institute the system of "indirect rule" which they had already practiced in parts of West Africa, the position of a "chief" was introduced.³⁵⁾ The powers of this office, however, rested solely on the backing of the colonial authorities, and appointment to the office did not require the consent of the local populace or the existing council of elders. Only in a few cases did the British happen to appoint men who were widely respected in their own communities (as, e. g., "Chiefs" Wang'ombe³⁶⁾ or, somewhat later, Koinange), so that both sources of authority, the external and the indigenous ones, coincided.

The only important traditional social structure which has survived in present-day Kenya seems to be the extended family group, which still determines in many ways a person's allegiances, his group solidarity, and his behavior in general. This extended family does not necessarily coincide, however, with the former mbari. At any rate, as will be shown in more detail below,³⁷⁾ the extent and degree of primary group identification varies a great deal nowadays within and among the different ethnic groups and important changes in this respect are still taking place.

35) See also Part I, chapter 2 c above.

36) Cf., e. g., the account by Kenyatta in his My People of Kikuyu, loc. cit., pp. 27 ff..

37) See Part III, chapter 1 below.

Today all traditional forms of political organization have disappeared together with the system of age-sets and have been replaced by a centralized system of administration and the new political institutions of independent Kenya.³⁸⁾ The only modern organization which has exclusive Kikuyu membership (also including the related groups of the Embu and Meru) is the "Gikuyu, Embu, and Meru Association" (GEMA). In contrast to similar organizations among other groups, as, for example, the "Luyia Union" or the "Akamba Association" founded during the 1950's, GEMA only became active in the late 1960's and early 1970's. Although it claims to be purely a "tribal welfare organization" concerned with such matter as raising money for local Harambee projects, organizing sports events, etc., it is quite clear that GEMA, even more than similar organizations among the other groups, must be considered as a latent political party, ready to fight for the political interests of its members on an ethnic basis, if this should become necessary.

Social differentiation among the Kikuyu is increasingly determined by economic factors and at least four broad categories can be distinguished in this respect in the traditional homeland: First of all there are the "progressive" cash crop farmers, who under favorable world and national market conditions have significantly augmented their income and their general standard of living in recent years and who are now beginning to form a kind of agricultural "bourgeoisie". This group comprises today about one third of all farmers, i. e.

38) See Part I, chapter 2 d above.

about 30 % of the total rural Kikuyu population. Only about 1 % of them, however, can be termed "kulaks", i. e. "medium-scale" farmers who cultivate more than 10 ha in a modern market-oriented way and who may employ some additional labor from outside their own immediate family. Secondly, there are the "poor" farmers (about 60 % of the total population) who either are still pursuing a mostly subsistence-oriented type of farming, or even if they are growing cash crops, have only very small plots for cultivation. The standard of living of this group has more or less remained the same in the last few decades, although their aspirations and therefore their relative dissatisfaction may have been growing. They can be counted among the "proletaroids" in Kenyan society.

Thirdly, there is the increasing number of totally landless Kikuyus who earn a meagre income as farm laborers and who constitute a true rural proletariat. It is difficult to quantify the exact size of this group, since it constitutes the major reservoir for the migration out of Central Province, particularly by young people. An estimate of about 5 % of landless Kikuyu in the home area probably comes close to reality. The fourth and final group consists of all those in primarily non-agricultural occupations in the rural areas (about 4 - 5 % altogether), whose numbers are also increasing and whose standard of living is rising. They form the nucleus of both "old" and "new" non-agricultural middle classes in the countryside. This pattern of stratification is now cutting across older groupings and it increasingly determines the shape of

internal Kikuyu conflicts. It has also become a factor on Kenya's national political scene.³⁹⁾

d.) Some Significant Cultural Aspects:

The traditional form of education among the Kikuyu was, as Kenyatta emphasizes,⁴⁰⁾ a life-long process. It was closely linked to the different family structures, but also to the wider social organization based on age-grades and the various stages a person went through in his or her life-time. During the first few years a child was in almost constant contact with its mother who carried it on her back while she was following her normal duties. Until the time of weaning, which usually took place when a child was about two years old, it could be assured of the almost permanent attention of the mother, because in traditional Kikuyu society a woman was not supposed to have intercourse while her child was dependent on her, and a certain "spacing" of children was thus achieved.⁴¹⁾ As a result the children, (during their first years of life) grew up in a protected, very intimate and cozy atmosphere and only very rarely could a child be found crying because of lack of food or other care.

39) The consequences of this kind of vertical stratification and its interaction with other potential political conflict-groups in Kenya will be discussed in more detail in Part IV below.

40) Cf. Kenyatta, Facing Mount Kenya, loc cit., pp. 98 ff..

41) Cf., e. g., Molnos, Angela (ed.), Cultural Source Materials for Population Planning in East Africa, Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1973, vol. III, pp. 11 ff..

We do not want to attach any more specific or "deeper" psychoanalytic meaning to this pattern of early childhood training which, in our opinion, has been over-emphasized in many of the "national character" studies,⁴²⁾ and which, in any case, would require much more careful and intensive research. But it can probably be said with a certain degree of safety that in traditional society Kikuyu (and many other African) children grew up in an atmosphere of relative emotional security which certainly was of importance for their later lives.

The mother would also begin to teach a child his first rudimentary skills. In lullabies and other songs she would slowly make him familiar with many things of the outside world and particular emphasis was put on the proper learning of the names of other family members including the ancestors, and the kind and degree of their relationships. After the birth of the next brother or sister whom the mother was then caring for most intensely, a child was usually looked after during much of the day by older siblings who might also be have been the children of one of the mothers's co-wives. In this way children began to learn their future roles by imitating other children of the same sex and also, when they became older, they continued this "learning by doing" by joining their parents in their daily duties. At first children did this in a playful manner, but then they gradually took over some responsibilities of their own, as, e. g., the herding of livestock for boys or some household or agricultural work for the girls. More direct teaching of social traditions

42) A good review of these studies can be found, for example, in: Inkeles, Alex and Levinson, Daniel J., "National Character: The Study of Modal Personality and Socio-cultural Systems" in: Lindzey, Gardner (ed.), Handbook of Social Psychology, Cambridge/Mass.: Addison-Wesley, vol. 4, 1969, pp. 418 - 506.

and the expected roles of behavior was done in the evenings, usually in the mother's or grandmother's hut. Most of this was again done in the form of song or was contained in proverbs, children's stories and other folktales. Riddles and puzzles also provided some mental exercise. In this way the children learned the most important facts of life, including sexual education, and the guiding norms of their society. If children occasionally did not conform to certain rules of conduct, the parents would be severely criticized and considerable social pressure could be exercised in this way.

An even more direct formal kind of teaching occurred in connection with the different initiation ceremonies which were held when a person was passing from one age-grade to the next. At the time of circumcision, for example, a child was "adopted" by an elder and his wife; as his "sponsors" during the different ceremonies, they carefully taught and explained all the relevant procedures to him. At a later stage, when a warrior became an elder, i. e. after he had married and his first child was born, he again had to go through a kind of "apprenticeship" during which he learned the most important rules. In this way a person was constantly influenced by socially directed learning which guided him through his life and through his world.

Today a great deal of this has changed, and in particular the old stages of learning have often been replaced by much more formal, and sometimes more irrelevant kinds of education. At the time of the last census (1969) 36,1 % of all Kikuyus living in their home area had some kind of formal schooling, which can be taken as an approximate indicator of the extent of "minimal literacy" in this group. In the same year, almost 90 % of all children of the relevant age group in the Kikuyu home area were

attending primary school. This figure is now close to 100 % since as of December 1973 school fees have no longer been charged for the first four years of primary education. In 1969, 13.4 % of all Kikuyu children of the age-group in question also attended secondary schools in their home area. Almost 80 % of the respondents in our survey reported some kind of formal education, about one fifth had attended secondary school, at least for a few years. The majority of them had attended government schools, 30 % had been to mission schools, and most of the rest had attended "Harambee" or other "independent" schools. In the parents' generation about 30 % of the fathers and 10 % of the mothers had received some kind of formal schooling. All these figures are the highest for any ethnic group in Kenya⁴³⁾ and reflects the keen interest of most Kikuyus to give their children as much school education as possible in order to improve their chances in modern life.

This desire has become particularly manifest in the many efforts which have been made to establish more secondary schools on a self-help ("Harambee") basis after it had become apparent in the late 1960's that many primary school leavers would not find suitable employment or a place in one of the government or mission secondary schools. In 1969 there were 110 "unaided" schools in Central Province, by far the greatest number in any part of Kenya, compared to 61 "aided" ones. However, only about 40 % of the teachers at these schools were properly qualified compared with the more than 80 % at the aided schools.⁴⁴⁾ Parents have to pay very dearly for these schools. In

43) See table "Comparative data..." above.

44) Republic of Kenya, Ministry of Education, Annual Report 1969, table 18, p. 60.

addition to the school buildings which they have erected with donations and their own labor the annual cost per pupil (including fees, school uniforms, tuition material etc.) frequently exceeds Kshs. 1000,-- and this for families who often have a cash income of less than Kshs. 300,-- per month. In our sample 35 % of the respondents who had children in school reported that they were paying less than Kshs. 100,-- per year. 40 % contributed school fees between Kshs. 100,-- and 400,--, almost 10 % between Kshs. 400,-- and 800,--, and the rest were spending more than Kshs. 1000,-- annually for their children's education.

Thus enormous sacrifices are often made to put one child through secondary school, at least up to Form Four ("O - level" in terms of the British system). But because the qualifications of the teachers and a good deal of the teaching material have often been very poor, only 32 % of the candidates from these schools sitting for the East African Certificate of Education obtained satisfactory grades compared with 75 % in the aided schools.⁴⁵⁾ Those who failed had learned very little which could help them in their daily life, since most of the curricula are still only geared to lead to the next step on the academic ladder and have very little practical value for those who leave earlier. Even those who make it, often do not find adequate employment or get a chance for some kind of further education. Thus a great deal of this effort and sacrifice has been misdirected and in vain. Given the deteriorating employment conditions in Kenya,⁴⁶⁾ this situation, the

45) Ibid., table 21, p. 65.

46) Cf., e. g., International Labour Office, Employment, Incomes and Equality - A Strategy for Increasing Productive Employment in Kenya, Geneva, 1972.

seriousness of which is still increasing, is most accentuated in Central Province, at least for this kind of schooling and at this level of education, but it exists in other provinces as well. The attitudes which are inculcated by the schools vary widely, of course. This would have to be the subject of much more specialized research and is beyond the scope of our present study.⁴⁷⁾ Here it should suffice to say that in one important aspect the prevailing atmosphere in Kenyan schools is quite different from that in many European and, even more, American ones: The "discipline" in the classrooms is in most cases remarkable and the "authority" of the teacher is usually beyond doubt. This may, to a certain extent, be the result of the relatively authoritarian tradition of the early missionary and colonial schools in Kenya, but it also reflects the realization on the part of many of the children that their parents are making enormous sacrifices in order to make it possible for them to go to school at all and they do not want to spoil this by any lack of discipline.

Modern conditions have also produced great changes in the traditional family structures and the patterns of family education. First of all, the "spacing" of children, which was practised in former times due to the late time of weaning, has largely disappeared. This, together with other factors causing a higher fertility rate and, even more importantly, a lower mortality rate for new-born children, has led to a considerable increase in the size of the average elementary family with the consequence that the time a mother can devote to a single child has some-

47) For an attempt of this kind cf., e. g., Prewitt, Kenneth (ed.), Education and Political Values - An East African Case Study, Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1971.

what diminished. Under urban conditions, where a small flat has replaced the large homesteads, socializing influences of the family and the neighborhood have changed even more and often a less stable and secure environment now seems to prevail there.

Some of the most fundamental values transmitted by any kind of educational system relate to the sphere of transcendental beliefs. The traditional religion of the Kikuyu basically fulfills the same function as similar beliefs in other societies,⁴⁸⁾ namely, to provide an explanation of man's existence and of all that is related to it, i. e. a complete cosmology. But even more importantly from a sociologist's point of view, it also provides an explanation and often legitimization of the social order of which one is a member. In this way one's own place in society is also explained, which helps to give a personal meaning to one's existence, including convictions concerning possible forms of "life" after death. These beliefs are expressed in different societies in widely varying forms of rituals and are institutionalized in certain specialized social roles and structures.

48) The universality of certain social functions of religion is, for example, in Emile Durkheim's classic study Les Formes Elémentaires de la Vie Religieuse, first edition: Paris, 1912.

49) This also explains the title of Kenyatta's study Facing Mount Kenya, loc. cit.

The traditional religious beliefs of the Kikuyu related to two fairly distinct levels: the belief in a single God ("Ngai") and the belief in ancestor spirits ("ngoma"). Ngai (the same name is used by the two neighboring peoples, the Kamba and the Maasai,⁴⁹⁾ for their single deity is the creator of the universe and the supreme being responsible for all things occurring in nature and society. Ngai lives in the sky, but has temporary homes in sacred trees and on high mountains (in particular on Mount Kenya, towards which the Kikuyu turn when they offer their prayers and sacrifices).⁵⁰⁾ In this concept of Ngai the social function of religion becomes more clearly visible. The powers of the deity are invoked only on the occasion of major social events, as, e. g., at the time of the circumcision ceremonies, at important points in the production cycle, e. g. before planting or harvesting, or during particular crises, as, e. g., epidemics or droughts. Ngai's help is sought only by a group of elders, acting on behalf of the mbari, but often also on behalf of a larger group of people, living on the same ridge (rugongo) or in the same district (bururi). The deity is not supposed to be contacted for any minor events or by single individuals acting on their own

49) See the corresponding chapters in this part below.

50) This also explains the title of Kenyatta's study Facing Mount Kenya, loc. cit..

51) Cf., *ibid.*, p. 238, or Njoroti, *Ngũgũ, Kikuyu Proverbs*, London: Macmillan, 1969, p. 105.

52) Kenyatta, *op. cit.*, p. V.

behalf. "Ngai ndagiagiagwo" ("Ngai is not to be pestered"⁵¹⁾) is a common saying. In this respect there is, therefore, a considerable difference between the central Kikuyu deity and the Christian God of the New Testament, particularly in its Lutheran or other Protestant interpretation as above all a personal God concerned with the sins and the salvation of individuals.

This personal element is represented by the ancestor spirits in traditional Kikuyu religion. They were thought to be in direct communion with their descendants and could be contacted in all matters affecting the individual or his more immediate family. Indeed, and this is one of the major differences between most African religions and what is often called the "Western" way of thinking, there are no clear-cut differences between the world of the ancestors and that of their descendants. This thought is clearly expressed, for example, in the dedication of Kenyatta's book to "the dead, the living and the unborn" who, he hoped, would unite again to fight for African freedom.⁵²⁾ The ancestors thus participated in all aspects of the family life and their advice was often sought. They took part, for example, in the daily meals when some part of the food or of the drink was dedicated to them. "To slaughter a goat and pour out beer for the spirits" is a synonym for communion with the ancestors.

There was no official priesthood or any other form of a more rigid religious institutionalization or church in traditional Kikuyu religion. All major social or religious functions were performed by the councils of elders and also sacrifices to one's ancestral spirits could only be

51) Cf., *ibid.*, p. 238, or Njururi, Ngumbu, Gikuyu Proverbs, London: Macmillan, 1969, p. 105.

52) Kenyatta, op. cit., p. V.

made by the head of a family. There were, however, a few specialized roles which were related to religious practices. Among the elders, there may have been a very wise and respected person or seer ("murathi") believed to be in direct communion with Ngai, who gave him his instructions, usually in dreams. If, for example, a crisis occurred, then, on the advice of the murathi, sacrifices were offered to placate the deity. The office of murathi, however, was only concerned with the welfare of the community and was never to be used for personal gain.

The murathi is not to be confused with the "medicine man" ("mundu mugo"), who served as a kind of "general practitioner" in traditional Kikuyu society. The mundu mugo was selected and initiated by his "colleagues" in the district and practiced mostly for private clients. One of his main tasks was to give help and advice in medical matters. In addition to his assistance in general health care and his knowledge of certain healing herbs and other medicines, he could purify his patients from ritual uncleanness ("thahu"). This was believed to be the major source of any kind of illness or suffering. It could be caused by the voluntary or involuntary failure to observe certain rules of ritual avoidance (as, e. g., to look towards heaven during thunder storms, to have sexual intercourse while food is being cooked, to count sheep or cattle, etc.), but it could also be the result of specific magic or sorcery performed by another ill-wishing person. If the latter was the case, a mundu mugo could act as a diviner to find out the cause of the misfortune and to prescribe a cure. He could also prepare charms as protection against sorcery or evil spirits.

A third distinct role was that of the sorcerer ("murogi") who practiced "black" or evil magic in contrast to the "white" or beneficial magic of the mundu mugo. A murogi usually worked at night and kept his practices secret. This kind of wizardry⁵³⁾ was widely feared and a murogi or a group of them could spread great terror in a community. If an actual or believed murogi was found out, he could be put to death. Generally speaking, this kind of evil magic does not seem to have been as wide-spread and as much feared among the Kikuyu as among some of the other groups as, for example, the Kamba, the Luyia or various coastal peoples who are all renowned for their powers of witchcraft or sorcery. On the other hand, the Maasai hardly know this practice at all and do not seem to be very much afraid of it.⁵⁴⁾

53) We employ this term, following the suggestion made by Middleton and Winter, as a superimposed concept comprising both sorcery, which is defined by Evans-Pritchard as an acquired capability, and witchcraft, an innate power, which is inherited in certain families or clans and which a person can possess against his will. Cf. Middleton, John and Winter, E. H. (eds.), Witchcraft and Sorcery in East Africa, London: Routledge and Kegan, Paul, 1963; and Evans-Pritchard, E. E., Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande, Oxford, 1937. - The Kikuyu and some of the other people we are dealing with here do not make this distinction themselves. The term murogi is applied both to sorcerers and witches, the latter apparently belonging to a branch of the Aithanga clan, cf. Middleton and Kershaw, op. cit., p. 66.

54) For this point cf., e. g., also Baxter, Paul "Absence makes the heart grow fonder: some suggestions why witchcraft accusations are rare among East African pastoralists", in: Gluckman, Max (ed.), The Allocation of Responsibility, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1972. For a comparative discussion of some of these beliefs see also Part III, chapter 2 below.

55) See table "Comparative Witchcraft and Sorcery"

Today 73 % of all Kikuyus are members of Christian churches and only about a quarter can still be considered to be adherents of traditional beliefs.⁵⁵⁾ But to be a member of a Christian church does not necessarily mean that all elements of traditional religion have also been rejected. The proliferation of a great number of "Independent Churches" among the Kikuyu, for example, which also has political reasons, may be an indication of this fact.

Together with the basic religious elements which form a very profound part of any person's (and society's!) belief system, there are other values which tend to dominate a people's culture. These are frequently expressed, for example, in literature (even if this was only verbally transmitted) consisting of songs, folk-tales, proverbs, etc.. If we attempt to list here some of the values which seem to have been more dominant in traditional Kikuyu society, a word of warning must be added. Any selection of this kind is bound to have severe limitations and there is no way, given the relative scarcity of sources, to determine their respective deficiencies. Even if the accuracy of our sources could be established, we would still not be able to state the degree of representativeness of the collected material. Thus some items emphasized in exciting collections may be at the "heart" of Kikuyu culture, representing some very fundamental values, while others may only be of a very ephemeral nature. Not rarely, also, if one finds a proverb saying one thing, one may find an equally "convincing" one stating just the opposite. Furthermore, caution is necessary in making inferences about actual behavior on the basis of stated attitudes. Much of this material is of a "dialectical" nature,

55) See table "Comparative data..." above.

i. e. it may very well be that some of the rules of behavior are so strongly expressed in the traditional folklore just because they are so frequently broken, so that it would be wrong to conclude from the repeated recommendation of a certain mode of behavior that it was particularly frequent. Just the opposite may be the case. Keeping these limitations in mind, we shall nevertheless attempt to point out some of the more prominent values of traditional Kikuyu culture as they are expressed in the available literature.⁵⁶⁾ In the following section, we shall then present a quantitatively more balanced and up-to-date comparative account of some important elements of Kikuyu political culture based on our survey data.⁵⁷⁾ Hopefully the two sources can provide mutual support.

One constant theme in Kikuyu folk-tales and proverbs is the praise of social unity and harmony. Thus one proverb says: "Andu matari ndundu mahuragwo na njuguma imwe" ("people who have no unity are conquered with one club").⁵⁸⁾ Or another: "Kaara kamwe gatiuragagu ndaa" ("one finger cannot kill a louse").⁵⁹⁾ One reason for this emphasis

56) In addition to the anthropological sources which we have already quoted there are two major collections of proverbs: Njururi, *op. cit.*, and Barra, G., *1.000 Kikuyu Proverbs*, London: Macmillan, 1960. Useful collections of folk-tales are, e. g., Njururi, Ngumbau, *Agikuyu Folk Tales*, London: Oxford University Press, 1966; and Gecau, Rose N., *Kikuyu folktales*, Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1970

57) See Part III below.

58) Njururi, *Gikuyu Proverbs*, *loc. cit.*, p. 3.

59) *Ibid.*, p. 47. For an expression of this attitude cf. also, e. g., Kenyatta, *op. cit.*, pp. 119 ff.; or Gecau, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

on social cooperation may have been the constant threat of cattle raids by neighboring Maasai groups and similar kinds of traditional inter-ethnic warfare. It is unlikely, however, that this kind of cooperation ever involved all Kikuyus at the same time, because their military organization was based on small groups in limited geographical areas, and in addition, their more important ceremonial functions did not extend beyond the district ("bururi") level. Attitudes of "tribalism", including all members of an ethnic community, are the result of inter-ethnic competition in the newly created political unit of "Kenya", and thus are of relatively recent origin. A sense of "tribal identity" in traditional society, is a different phenomenon, which had outside groups as its most important point of reference. Given the relatively low level of communications and the limited nature of conflicts between these groups, however, this feeling does not seem to have been very prominent in the past.

Much more basic was the feeling of identity with and loyalty towards one's own family group. For example, proverbs like "rumwe rutiuranagwo" ("blood relationship is not separable")⁶⁰⁾ or "guciara ti kumia" ("parturition is not the same as defecation")⁶¹⁾ are frequently quoted and seem to express a widely shared attitude. These relationships are taken as a matter of fact ("nyumba na rika itiumagwo", "clan and age groups cannot be changed")⁶²⁾ and thus have hardly ever been questioned. This means that in traditional society a person could rely on his relatives

60) Njururi, Gikuyu Proverbs, loc. cit., p. 123.

61) Ibid., p. 21.

62) Ibid., p. 116.

in times of need and was always sure to find, at least, something to eat and a place to sleep. It was a clear understanding, however, that these obligations were mutual and that they would be reciprocated at any time, if the need arose. In order that such a relationship did not become parasitic, in that it was always the active family members who had to support the lazier ones, it was also understood that if one stayed at somebody else's place for any length of time, the guest had to join in the daily work of the host and thus to contribute to the livelihood of the family.

Whereas this sense of responsibility towards the members of one's family (which always was a relatively large group reaching up to the "mbari" level) was an element of security and strength in traditional society it can become a source of strain under modern urban conditions. People who have found a position in town are continually besieged by their kin with requests for financial assistance or for provision of food and shelter. In these cases where the chance to reciprocate adequately no longer exists, because the living conditions and income opportunities have become so different, a change in the nature of the relationship can be expected in the longer run.⁶³⁾

A sense of trust among the Kikuyu is also usually confined to members of one's family, one's age-set or to other close personal acquaintances.⁶⁴⁾ Towards other persons, even if they are members of the same ethnic

63) This was expressed in some of the responses to our survey, cf. also Part III below.

64) See also Part III, chapter 1 d below.

group, a more general attitude of suspicion seems to prevail. "Arume mari ruamba" ("men are rough"),⁶⁵⁾ and "Hungu igithil iguru itiatigire thi kuri kwega" ("hawks make their nests in the trees because they do not feel secure on the ground")⁶⁶⁾ are common expressions. This suspicion, often based on the fear of harmful magic or actual poisoning, is expressed, for example, in the saying "yambagio ndahi ni nwere" ("he who pours the beer drinks the first glass").⁶⁷⁾ This gesture was to show to the stranger that there was no poison in the beer and that it was thus offered as a sign of good will and trust.

Another attitude which is emphasized in Kikuyu culture is that of hard work and endurance. The proverbs "Ng'aragu ya muthenya umwe niyagiruo" ("one day's hunger can be endured")⁶⁸⁾ and "muthii tene ainukaga tene"⁶⁹⁾ (for which the English phrase of "the early bird catches the worm" seems to be the appropriate equivalent) indicate this orientation. In a related context creativeness and innovation are also valued. The sayings "Mageria nomo mahota" ("trying is succeeding") and, in a more colorful way, "Muharuo niwe uthingataga githaka" ("he who has diarrhoea looks for the bush", for which the English equivalent "necessity is the mother of invention" is given)⁷⁰⁾ express this attitude.

65) Njururi, Gikuyu Proverbs, p. 3.

66) Ibid., p. 35.

67) Ibid., p. 149.

68) Ibid., p. 106.

69) Ibid., p. 93.

70) Ibid., p. 79.

Some sayings also show quite clearly an awareness of a certain economic differentiation and of an inequitable distribution of wealth within Kikuyu society: "Gitonga kigiragio igango gikarima" ("a wealthy person who is refused permission to cultivate a shamba will certainly occupy it one day"; "might makes right" is the English equivalent given).⁷¹⁾ Or, put in another way: "Uthuri wa gitonga ndunungaga" ("a rich man's wind is odorless").⁷²⁾ A certain consolation in these circumstances is expressed by the phrase "thina nduri miri" ("poverty has no roots")⁷³⁾ which can mean that the poor man of today may become the rich man of tomorrow, but which also means that, at least for the time being, a poor man has no choice but to accept humiliation.

A similar attitude is expressed in some proverbs about political leadership: "ruui ranenehagio ni tuthima" ("a river is enlarged by its tributaries", for which the English equivalent of "there would be no great ones if there were no little ones" is given).⁷⁴⁾ But a warning is also added: "Iri gukura iriagwo iguku ni aka" ("When a bull becomes old, his hump is eaten by women."),⁷⁵⁾ which means that age may finally weaken a man who was formerly feared.

These characteristics of traditional Kikuyu culture are to a certain extent reflected in the images and stereotypes

71) Ibid., p. 20.

72) Ibid., p. 138.

73) Ibid., p. 129.

74) Ibid., p. 125.

75) Ibid., p. 44.

other Kenyan people have of the Kikuyu: They are generally regarded as hard-working, particularly the women. They are considered to be good farmers and good businessmen. If the opportunity arises, however, they may also take shortcuts to become rich. They are, therefore, thought to be amenable to corruption and also the number of "thieves and robbers" among them is believed to be high. They are often considered to be arrogant and particularly tribalistic. Kikuyu men rarely marry women from other tribes, the women mix more freely. They consider circumcision, at least for men, to be very important. Kikuyus are suspicious towards others and even among themselves. They fought more for Uhuru than anyone else, but they also are prone to show very violent forms of behavior in other more ordinary circumstances. They are regarded to be generally clever, but sometimes also cunning and tricky. They are strong-willed and have a high sense of achievement. In sports, however, except for boxing, they are rather poor.

In concluding this chapter we can thus note that the Kikuyu are the largest and economically most active ethnic group in Kenya. In their social institutions and culture they form a relatively homogeneous community. The differences in the over-all vertical social stratification have, however, become the most pronounced of any of the peoples considered here. In particular, the cleavages which are emerging between the progressive "agricultural bourgeoisie", the poor "proletaroid" farmers and the swelling ranks of completely landless people provide the basis for increasing conflict potential at this level. To a certain extent these potential internal conflicts are further accentuated by the geographical divisions between the main districts of Nyeri, Murang'a and Kiambu, and in particular the advantages

some people from the latter area enjoy due to their proximity to the economic and political center of Nairobi. On the national scene the Kikuyu are clearly the dominant ethnic group today, both economically and politically. Their active involvement in the struggle for independence serves as a justification for many of them "to keep the flag (i. e. the presidency) in the house of Muumbi". The representation of their interests through groups like GEMA has been effectively organized, in addition to the many more informal contacts they enjoy with the "center". Their very economic success and political dominance makes them, however, an object of envy and political hostility for some of the other groups. The possible dimensions of and the actual potential for conflicts of this kind will be discussed more fully after we have considered Kenya's other ethnic groups.

- 1) The correct designations, in their own languages, are Mukamba (pl. Akamba) for the people, Bantu of Ukamba for the country and Kikamba for the language.
- 2) The most important sources on traditional Kamba society are: Hoby, Charles W., Ethnology of the Kamba and other East African Peoples, London: Cambridge University Press, 1940; 2nd ed., 1954; East Africa and Zanzibar, first edition: London, 1912; new edition: London: Pinter Press, 1967; Lindblom, Gerard, The Peoples in Eastern East Africa, Uppsala: Appelberg, 1940; Middleton and Korshov, op. cit.; Mott, Kiruto, Elements of Kamba Life, Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1972; Pennell, S. J., Kamba Culture and Language, Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, first printed 1951, reprinted 1972; Middleton and Korshov, Mott and Salata, op. cit., also have comprehensive bibliographies.
- 3) This is the classificatory term used in the Population Census. Other authors employ somewhat different categories. A discussion of the relationships between different Bantu languages can be found, for example, in Mott, op. cit., pp. 25-26.

CHAPTER 2: THE KAMBA:¹⁾

a.) General Background:²⁾

The most important eastern neighbors of the Kikuyu are the Kamba. Although these peoples are closely related in many ways, they form quite distinct social and political units, and exhibit a number of unique features which set them apart. Their languages both belong to the "Central Bantu" group in Kenya³⁾ and are to a certain extent mutually understandable. Although the exact borderline between "dialect" and "language" is often drawn in a somewhat arbitrary manner, it is generally agreed that the differences

- 1) The correct designations, in their own language, are Mukamba (pl. Akamba) for the people, Ukamba or Ukambani for the country and Kikamba for the language.
- 2) The most important sources on traditional Kamba society are: Hobley, Charles W., Ethnology of the Akamba and other East African Tribes, London: Cambridge University Press, 1910; idem, Bantu Beliefs and Magic, first edition: London, 1922; new edition: London: Frank Cass, 1967;
Lindblom, Gerhard, The Akamba in British East Africa, Uppsala: Appelberg, 1920;
Middleton and Kershaw, op. cit.;
Ndeti, Kiruto, Elements of Akamba Life, Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1972;
Penwill, D. J., Kamba Customary Law, Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, first printed 1951, reprinted 1972;
Middleton and Kershaw, Ndeti, and Molnos, op. cit., also have comprehensive bibliographies.
- 3) This is the classificatory term used in the Population Census. Other authors employ somewhat different categories. A discussion of the relationships between different Bantu languages can be found, for example, in Ndeti, op. cit., pp. 25 ff.

in vocabulary and pronunciation between Kikikuyu and Kikamba are sufficiently great to call them two different languages. Their relative distinctiveness can, perhaps, be compared to that between High-German and Dutch, whereas the relationship between Kikikuyu and Kiembu, a language more closely related to Kikikuyu can be compared to that between High-German and Swiss-German.

The main area of Kamba settlement descends in several steps towards the coast from a mountainous region in the west. In the southwest and south the borderline is formed by the Nairobi-Mombasa Railway which separates the Kamba from the Maasai, who live on the plains of Rift Valley Province. In the southeast the "Tsavo East National Park" limits the area of Kamba settlement. In the north the Embu living on the southern slopes of Mount Kenya are their closest neighbors, and in the east Kamba country ends in the vast unpopulated lowlands west of the Tana River. The altitude of the territory ranges between a level of 5,000 to 7,000 feet (1,500 to 2,100 m) in the hilly parts of the west to 1,000 to 3,000 feet (300 to 900 m) above sea level in the vast plains of the east and north, with the latter section constituting about two-thirds of the total area. This lower area is interspersed with rock formations which are largely volcanic in origin.

The climate varies more or less according to the altitude. In the northwest the average temperatures are moderate and rainfall is generally sufficient, whereas the main part of Kamba country experiences mean annual temperatures of more than 80° Fahrenheit (about 25° Centigrade) and rainfall of less than 25 inches (625 mm). The annual rainy seasons are from March to May and from October to December, but in large parts of Ukambani the rains are

insufficient or often (in three out of five years) completely lacking. With the exception of the Athi River, the streams and rivers of the area are dry during most of the year. Because of the insufficient and unreliable rainfall only 13,5 % of the total land area of 43,567 sq.km. is arable. Most of this land is situated in the areas of high altitude in the northwest, whereas the other areas are mostly covered with dry bushland and thicket.⁴⁾

Ukambani was divided during colonial times into the two administrative districts of Machakos (originally: Masaku) in the west and Kitui in the east, which now belong to Kenya's Eastern Province. The Athi River constitutes the largest part of the borderline between the two districts. This division, however, is purely administrative in nature and does not reflect any deeper social distinctions going back to pre-colonial times, as was the case to a certain extent in Kikuyu country. Due to the differences in the agricultural potential of the two districts, differences in their development exist as well.⁵⁾ The regional variations of the dialects spoken in the different parts of Ukambani, do not reflect any deeper social divisions.

At the time of the last census there were approximately 1,2 million Kamba in Kenya making them (after the Kikuyu, Luo, and Luyia) the fourth largest single ethnic group in the country. A little more than one million (i. e. about 85 %) still live in the traditional home area. The average population density in the home area is 24 persons per sq.km.. This may seem relatively low, but in relation

4) Cf., e. g., Republic of Kenya, Regional Physical Development Plan, Eastern Province, Nairobi: Government Printer, 1970.

5) Cf., e. g., our "District Development Index" below.

to the available agricultural land the figure is about the same (0,57 ha. of high potential land per person) as for the very densely populated Kikuyu country. The population is still growing at an average annual rate of about 3,2 % p. a.. At 1,4 % the rate of urbanization in the home area is also relatively low.⁶⁾

In addition to the Kamba population in the Machakos and Kitui districts there are some Kamba who have settled in the neighboring Embu district (about 7.000) and in the Kwale (7.000) and Kilifi (3.000) districts of the Coast Province. In contrast to the more recent immigrants to other areas who usually pursue non-agricultural occupations in towns or are employed on large-scale farms, these people are small-scale agriculturalists who in most cases have been living in Embu, Kwale or Kilifi for a considerable period of time. Some of them have been driven from Kitui to the more fertile Embu area by the perennial droughts; others, mainly those at the coast, may be remnants of the earlier migrations of the Kamba people who supposedly once lived near the coast. Later they migrated into the neighborhood of Mount Kilimanjaro and further onward to the Mbooni Mountains from where they moved into their present settlements.⁷⁾

As is the case with other Kenyan peoples, there is very little reliable information about the origins of the Kamba. They do have, however, their own myths about their origin, although these myths are not widely known and the importance attached to them is not as great as among the

6) For all these figures see our table "Comparative data..." above.

7) For different theories concerning the origin of the Kamba people cf. Ndeti, loc. cit.

Kikuyu. The myths basically say that Mulungu, the Supreme Being, in the beginning created two couples of human beings. One couple was thrust with their live-stock, from heaven and landed on a huge rock in Nzaui where the prints of this landing can still be seen today. The other couple came out of ant holes in the earth. One couple had sons and the other daughters who then married and became the forefathers of all the peoples in the area. After many years, however, the people forgot to pay respect to their creators who then stopped the regular rainfalls causing a great famine. Many people, therefore, migrated to distant places and then became the founders of the neighboring peoples of today. Those who remained were the Akamba, but their different clans were now geographically dispersed.⁸⁾

b.) The Economy:

The mainstay of the Kamba economy is agriculture, although the people keep considerable numbers of livestock and are fond of hunting and collecting honey. Traditionally the main crops were sorghum, maize, and millet, but different varieties of peas and beans, sweet potatoes, yams and manioc were also grown. Today coffee, tea, pyrethrum and hybrid maize have been introduced as major cash crops in areas with sufficient rainfall (mostly in the northwest). Vegetables and fruit are also successfully grown, particularly in the area of the Mua Hills. An attempt has been made to raise cotton and sisal in some of the drier parts of Ukambani. Altogether about one-fifth of the

8) Cf. ibid. pp. 27 ff.; or Lindblom, Gerhard, Kamba Folklore, Uppsala: Appelberg, 1928, pp. 96 ff..

entire cultivated area, a relatively small portion of the total territory, is devoted to "pure" cash crops today.⁹⁾

In our sample practically all of our agricultural respondents grew some maize, none of which was of the improved variety. Pulses were planted by most of them. These basic items of the daily diet are supplemented by some of the farmers with other local temporary crops such as yams or cassava and fruit. The most important cash crops are coffee (planted by about one-sixth of our respondents) and cotton (cultivated by about 10 %).

The main problem with all the agricultural activities in Ukambani is the lack of a regular water supply. As mentioned above, there is insufficient rainfall in large areas for three out of every five years, and people then see their freshly planted crops wither again and again, leading to periods of severe famine. During prolonged periods of drought some Kamba migrate, at least temporarily, to other areas where they seek help from more distant relatives and clan members. Others nowadays become entirely dependent on programs of famine relief, most of which are carried out by international donors. There have been efforts to dam the rivers, to drill water-holes, and to introduce artificial irrigation on a larger scale, but, apart from being very costly, these schemes in many instances have encountered serious problems. Bad maintenance of the installations and an overuse of land near the points of water supply have thwarted many efforts of this kind. Reservoirs often silted over a period of a very few years, and water-holes dried out during prolonged droughts.¹⁰⁾ Frequently during long periods of drought heavy clouds

9) See table "Comparative data..." above.

10) Cf. Regional Physical Development Plan, Eastern Province, loc. cit..

drift inland from the coast but do not shed their water until they reach the higher altitudes of the central mountain ranges. Perhaps a program of "cloud-seeding", successfully used in parts of Australia and the United States, would be feasible here.

Since depending on agricultural produce alone is precarious in many areas, the keeping of livestock assumes a relatively greater importance for the Kamba than for the Kikuyu. In addition to their land many Kamba families own a considerable number of cattle, sheep and goats. The number of cattle, usually the short-horned Zebu type, is also an important status symbol, and many social and economic transactions, including the payment of bride-wealth, are carried out using cattle. Goats also serve many social and ceremonial functions. They are most numerous in the more arid parts of Ukambani, since, being browsers, they are relatively best adapted to the dry brushlands there. None of our agricultural respondents possessed any grade cattle, but about 60 % had some local cattle. The great majority of the latter (about 75 %) owned less than 5 heads, none had more than 20. Milk was sold by only a few (about 15 %) and in rather small quantities (less than 5 liters per day on the average). About two thirds of our agricultural respondents possessed some goats, one third had sheep; the numbers hardly ever exceeded 10 heads per owner. Three fourths of our respondents had some chickens.

The social importance attached to the keeping of livestock, particularly cattle, beyond their immediate economic value has at times led to severe overstocking with the ensuing problems of overgrazing and soil erosion in many parts of Ukambani. This problem became severe during

the 1940s and 1950s when the colonial government introduced programs of compulsory de-stocking and soil conservation. Initially this was strongly resented by most Kamba. Today the situation has considerably improved after large-scale projects of land-terracing and other programs of water-control and soil conservation have been carried out and the necessity of such measures is better understood by the people. As far as the respective value of land and cattle is concerned the Kamba are in an intermediate position in comparison to some of the other ethnic groups in Kenya. Land and cattle constitute, of course, the bases of their material existence, but neither acquires the singular spiritual importance or determines the whole way of life, as, for example, land does among the Kikuyu or cattle among some of the pastoral groups.

The Kamba also used to be great hunters and were renowned for their skillful use of bows and (often poisoned!) arrows. There were some taboos, however, concerning the hunting of some kinds of animals by members of certain clans.¹¹⁾ Many families also kept their own beehives for honey and in this way added another important element to their diet.

The traditional pattern of settlement is similar to that of the Kikuyu, i. e. the Kamba live in individual homesteads (*musyi*, pl. *misyi*) which are scattered across the countryside. In the drier parts of Ukambani these homesteads are somewhat more concentrated along rivers and other sources of water. The traditional land holding unit is the extended family (*muvia*, pl. *mivia*). Within the territory of each *muvia* individual plots of cultivated

11) See also section c of this chapter below.

land (ng'undu) then are demarcated. The plot of land worked by one woman within a ng'undu is called mbee. Several mivia form a larger territorial unit, an utui (pl. motui), which can be compared to the Kikuyu ituura ("villages"). Each utui also has a common grazing ground (weu). Within the weu an area of exclusive grazing rights (kisesi, pl. isesi) can be established by special demarcation, when the elders of all concerned mivia consent.¹²⁾ Only 15 % of the total land area has so far been consolidated and registered under the land reform program. This is the lowest percentage for all of the agricultural ethnic groups considered in this study.¹³⁾ The average size of the farms is again rather small. In our sample three quarters of our agricultural respondents cultivated less than 5 acres each, the rest had slightly more than that.

When the head of an elementary family dies his land and other possessions are inherited by his wives, each of them getting the piece of land she worked on. When the wife dies the land is passed on to her sons who have equal rights. A woman without a male heir can "adopt" a son, possibly from one of her co-wives, who then inherits her share. A sonless woman can also "marry" another woman, the sons of whom then become her heirs.¹⁴⁾ In our sample about 50 % of our respondents stated that their property would be inherited by their sons, of whom about one third specified the eldest son. Another 35 % of the total said that all children would be their heirs, the rest either named someone else or did not know yet.

12) Cf., e. g., Middleton and Kershaw, op. cit., pp. 78 f..

13) See table "Comparative data...".

14) See also section d of this chapter below.

A system of owner-tenant relationships, somewhat similar to that of the Kikuyu, can also be found among the Kamba. Since the shortage of land is not as severe a problem in Ukambani as in Kikuyu country, however, this system is of much less importance for the pattern of present-day rural stratification.

There are, of course, differences in the size of the farm and the number of cattle a single elementary family may own. But given the often quite precarious living conditions, these differences are relatively less pronounced among the Kamba than among the Kikuyu. A certain indication of the distribution of wealth in traditional Kamba society was the number of wives a man could "afford". Also in this respect it is quite evident that there were only relatively few people who could pay the bridewealth ("ngasia") for a second wife, most of them being "old and established" individuals.¹⁵⁾ In our sample about one fourth of our respondents reported that they lived in a polygamous household. The average household comprised between nine and ten persons altogether. About half of our agricultural respondents had an average cash family income of less than Kshs. 100,-- per month, one fourth earned between Kshs. 100,-- and 200,--, the rest was in the Kshs. 200,-- to 800,-- income bracket.

The most important economic and social distinction nowadays is that between subsistence and cash crop farmers in rural Kamba society. The magnitude of this distinction is indicated by the percentage of the cultivated area used for "pure" cash crops (approximately 20 %). This is considerably lower than in Kikuyu country, but somewhat higher than among the Luyia, Kalenjin, or Luo.¹⁶⁾ Cash crop farming is, however,

15) Cf., e. g., Ndeti, op. cit., pp. 68 ff.

16) See table "Comparative data...".

largely confined to the areas of high altitude and regular rainfall, most of which are located in the north-western parts of the Machakos District.

Agricultural "modernization" among the Kamba has largely been restricted so far to the climatically more favorable regions. Less than 20 % of our respondents had ever received some advice from the agricultural extension service, only a single respondent had attended a course at a farmers' training center, no respondent had ever received a loan for "development" purposes. Cattle-dips, on the other hand, were available for about three fourths of our agricultural respondents. Two thirds of those who did not yet have a title-deed for their land stated that they would like to have one. About 80 % of the land owners said that they were planning improvements in the near future, most of which consisted of the planting of new or better crops. Some also planned infra-structural improvements such as terracing; 70 % of this group said that they were thinking of buying or cultivating more land, about 50 % also thought of buying grade-cattle.

The traditional division of labor is based on sex and age, and is in this respect quite similar to that of the Kikuyu. Most of the daily household and agricultural work is a task for the women, whereas tending the livestock, hunting, and bee-keeping are men's occupations. Similarly, there are only very few specialized economic roles in traditional Kamba society. Again the major exceptions are the smiths and medicine-men ("mundu mue", pl. "andu awe"). There is one great difference, however, which distinguishes

the economy of the Kamba from that of the other indigenous Kenyan ethnic groups, namely, their traditional involvement in all aspects of interterritorial trade. Even in pre-colonial times Kamba trading reached from the coast deep into the interior to what is today Lake Victoria and beyond, and south into present-day Tanzania. The most important commodity was ivory, but foodstuffs and occasionally slaves, who were captured from other ethnic groups, were also traded. Traditionally their main trading partners for exporting these goods were the Arabs and the Swahili-speaking peoples from the coast. Even today a considerable number of Kamba is engaged in trade and transport activities, which are of course of a more "modern" nature, as the operation of bus services, for example.

In modern times the economic activities of the Kamba, like those in other areas, have become more diversified. Today there are many more full-time craftsmen and businessmen in the rural areas. A total of 1,5 % of all persons living up-country are regularly employed and another 0,11 % are self-employed in non-agricultural occupations.¹⁷⁾ One craft the Kamba have become known for in the last few decades is the carving of wooden masks and sculptures. Although woodcarving does not have the same importance for dances and rituals in traditional Kamba society as it has among the Makonde of southern Tanzania or in parts of present-day Zaire, the Kamba have quickly picked up the opportunity offered to them by the modern souvenir and tourist industry and produce all kinds of wooden implements in large numbers.

17) Ibid..

In the public sector the Kamba are strongly represented in the police and armed forces. This goes back to colonial times, when the British preferred to recruit Kamba whom they considered to be good soldiers and who, moreover, were not involved in the Mau Mau activities as were the Kikuyu. Up to the present day there seems to be a certain preference among the Kamba for these occupations; a considerable number of them can still be found in the higher ranks of the Kenyan army. The general recruitment pattern today has become somewhat broader based, however, and the Kikuyu in particular have made considerable advances in recent years.¹⁸⁾

c.) The Social and Political Structures:

The pattern of traditional social and political organization of the Kamba is in many aspects quite similar to that of the Kikuyu. The most basic horizontal division in Kamba society is that between different kinds of kinship groups, some of which are also geographically dispersed. In a vertical sense a system of age-sets and the corresponding social and political institutions are the dominant features of traditional Kamba society. There are, however, a number of variations between the Kikuyu and the Kamba system, concerning for example the number, size, internal coherence and co-operation among these groups. This gives this pattern a somewhat different quality which can still be felt in present-day intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic relations.

18) This information was obtained from a number of reliable sources, but there are no official statistics (for understandable reasons) of the actual ethnic composition of the armed forces or of the civil service.

The largest kinship group among the Kamba is the "mbai" ("clan"). Today in Ukambani there are about forty mbai, which vary in size and importance.¹⁹⁾ All mbai are patrilineal descent-groups and are named after a particularly outstanding common ancestor. Among the Kamba these clans are exogamous units. This contrasts with the mihiriga of the Kikuyu, where this aspect, probably because of the smaller number and larger size of the clans, has lost its importance. Each mbai, also in contrast to the Kikuyu mihiriga, had a certain totem, usually an animal, as its symbol. Each clan member had to observe certain taboos and rituals in this respect. If a clan member, for example, accidentally killed his totem animal or harmed it in any other way, he had to undergo ritual purification. Certain attributed characteristics of the totem animal, as they are described in the numerous and very popular animal stories,²⁰⁾ were also believed to be typical for members of these clans. The Kamba system of totemic clans tends to support the interpretation by Durkheim and others²¹⁾ who regard the universality of these totems as an embodiment of the total cosmological reality as perceived by a people. Today this totemic aspect of the mbai has largely been lost and many Kamba cannot name their clan totem

19) Cf. e. g., Mbiti, John S., Akamba Stories, p. 8; other sources give 25 as an approximate number, cf., e. g., Middleton and Kershaw, op. cit., p. 72, or Ndeti, op. cit., p. 70. The latter also makes a distinction between "major" mbai which he calls "clans" and "minor" ones which he refers to as "lineages".

20) Major collections of such stories are Mbiti, op. cit., and Lindblom, Gerhard, Kamba Folklore, 2 vols., Uppsala: Appelberg, 1928 and 1935.

21) Cf. Durkheim, op. cit.; some of the limitations and shortcomings of Durkheim's theory are discussed, for example, by Evans-Pritchard, E. E., Theories of Primitive Religion, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1965; or Goode, William J., Religion Among the Primitives, New York: The Free Press, first edition, 1951.

anymore.²²⁾, but all of our rural respondents were still able to give us the name of their clan.

Another difference in comparison with the Kikuyu clans is the relative uncertainty among the Kamba about the exact number of clans. This is probably due to the fact that all clans, at least in the view of their members, do not share the same mythological origin because the various descent groups apparently evolved at different points in time. This may also be an indication, at least at the most abstract level of mythological unity, of the differences in the sense of ethnic identity between the members of these two groups. On the other hand, the mbai of the Kamba today is still a much more effective kind of social organization than the mihiriga of the Kikuyu. It is still a very relevant unit for common action, e. g. in some instances for the collection of money for mbai members to pay for studies overseas.²³⁾ In this respect the mbai resembles the mbari of the Kikuyu, although the mbari is a smaller and geographically more concentrated unit.

In other respects the mbari can be better compared to the next smaller kinship unit among the Kamba, the "muvia" (pl. mivia). This term literally can be translated as "gate", which refers to the entrance in the stockade around the homesteads of several related elementary families and thus designates an extended three or four generation family. A muvia is the basic landholding unit of the Kamba. It plays a predominant role in all matters relating to the most important aspects of the everyday life of this group, including all major decisions con-

22) Cf., e. g., Lambert, H. E., "Land Tenure among the Akamba", African Studies, 6, 3, 1947, p. 131.

23) Cf. e. g., Ndeti, op. cit., p. 74.

cerning the agricultural production cycle, questions of land use and inheritance, but also common sacrifices to the spirits of the ancestors, etc. A muvia also shares a shaded open space ("thome") outside the stockade where the men assemble in the evenings and discuss their daily affairs. A mbari of the Kikuyu thus falls, both in size and function, somewhere between the mbai and the muvia of the Kamba.

In a territorial sense the most basic unit in Ukambani is the musyi ("homestead"). This may comprise a single elementary family (i. e. husband and wife or wives, their children and sometimes the paternal grandparents), but also in some instances a whole muvia. A larger number of neighboring misyi then form an utui (pl. motui). This territorial unit may comprise members with different family and clan affiliations. It is also the most basic political unit in traditional Kamba society and shares a number of common institutions and a common place of worship ("ithembo").

The largest intra-ethnic territorial grouping among the Kamba is the kivalo (pl. ivalo), which comprises several motui and which in some ways is an equivalent to the Kikuyu "bururi" ("district"). Within the kivalo the greatest number of social interactions take place, including marriage. The kivalo also constitutes the territorial framework for the Kamba system of age-grades and age-sets and is the largest ceremonial entity for these purposes. In addition, it is the basic unit for the recruitment of warriors in traditional warfare. A kivalo has a common dancing ground and a common place of worship for ceremonies which are relevant at this level. In former times there were some occasional alliances between

several *ivalo*, e. g. for purposes of warfare, but there were no permanent territorial or political institutions above this level extending to the whole of Ukambani.

Vertically, traditional Kamba society was divided by a system of age-grades and age-sets. This system shows many similarities to that of the Kikuyu along with some important differences. A male person, for example, for whom these distinctions were of greater social significance than for the female, went through the following major stages during his life:

Kakenge	baby boy	(up to two years of age, who is not weaned and cannot yet walk)
Kaana	small boy	(two to six years, who can walk)
Kivisi	uncircumcised boy	(about seven to thirteen years, who herds cattle and begins to learn other social roles)
Kamwana	circumcised boy	(about fourteen to sixteen years, puberty is not yet completed)
Mwanake	warrior	(about seventeen to twenty-eight years, a fully grown adult)
Nthele	married adult with children	(about twenty-nine to forty-nine years)
Mutumia	elder	(fifty years and older, after his children have been circumcised). 24)

24) Cf., e. g., Middleton and Kershaw, op. cit., pp. 74 f.; or Ndeti, op. cit., pp. 84 ff..

Among the elders (atumia) a further distinction was made between the more junior members ("atumia ma kisuka") and the more senior ones ("atumia ma nzama"). The senior members also constituted the highest political, judicial and ceremonial authority in the utui.

The transitions between all these grades were marked by certain biological changes during a persons's lifetime, but also, and more important, by very distinct social criteria and rituals. The most dramatic of these initiation rites were again the acts of male and female circumcision. Among the Kamba circumcision was carried out in two distinct ceremonies which took place several years apart from each other. The first kind of circumcision ("nzaiko ila nini", literally: "small circumcision"), which included the actual physical operation, may have been carried out at an age of only five or six years. The second circumcision ("nzaiko ila nene", "big circumcision"), which was socially the more important one, took place when a person reached puberty and again involved a series of elaborate rites and ceremonies. But in contrast to the Kikuyu, who did not practice a "small circumcision", no major physical operation was required at this point.

These circumcision ceremonies were carried out yearly, usually in the longer dry season, approximately between July and October. There were no "closed periods" of several years between these ceremonies, as for example among the Kikuyu and the Maasai, so that the corresponding "age-sets" among the Kamba were much less pronounced and were not named in any particular way. There was also no system of "generation-sets" among the Kamba as was the case for the Kikuyu. In our sample most of our Kamba respondents were not able, irrespective of their age, to indicate their age-set membership.

The traditional political institutions of the Kamba incorporated the system of age-sets within the described geographical units. The most important institution was a council of elders. At the utui level, which in turn was the most important geographical unit, it was called nzama. The secular authority of the elders was based on their experience and wisdom, particularly in judicial matters, but this secular authority was also transcended to a certain extent by religious beliefs. As one observer puts it: " The community thought of an old person as having transhuman capacities - near to the deity by age and wisdom".²⁵⁾ Traditionally some of the elders who were particularly respected for their judicial wisdom were called "asili". Sometimes these were even requested to judge a matter occurring outside of their own utui.

In addition to these judicial functions the atumia ma nzama also acted as the main decision-making body in other matters affecting the traditional community. This included decisions on the waging of war, which usually consisted of cattle raids on groups of the neighboring Maasai. In this case some experienced war leaders were also selected. The actual raids were then carried out by members of the anake (warrior) and sometimes nthele (young married men) age-grades. In traditional society these age-grades, sometimes together with the more junior elders (atumia ma kisuka), also carried out other decisions of the nzama. This might have included the impounding of property of someone who had been found liable to pay compensation for a certain act which violated traditional norms. To continue the analogy these age-grades may also be called the executive branch of

²⁵⁾ See also Part I, chapters 2 c and 3 above.

traditional Kamba government. It should be noted, however, that decisions of this kind never affected the ethnic group as a whole and that there were no centralized institutions in traditional Kamba society which would make actions at this level possible.

Today the political and social institutions of the Kamba have also changed, of course. The authority of the council of elders was superseded and then replaced, at first by colonial institutions and then by the modern political structures of independent Kenya.²⁶⁾ Whereas, for a time at least, the judicial services of the elders were still sought in certain matters, these have practically ceased today at the official level. The corresponding system of age-sets has also lost much of its significance. To a certain extent more "modern" criteria of formal educational achievements or of a person's economic position have replaced older criteria in the status hierarchy. Circumcision, in the sense of the actual physical act, is still carried out, however, but it has become almost completely a private affair involving only close relatives and friends. The actual operation is nowadays often performed in hospitals. Again, as among the Kikuyu, the institution of male circumcision seems to survive in modern times, although it has largely been deprived of its social function. Female circumcision, on the other hand, seems to be on the decline. It is still more frequent among the Kamba than among the Kikuyu, particularly in the more remote and economically less developed areas.

Two other institutions have been adapted somewhat more successfully to modern times. One is the mbai as the major

26) See also Part I, chapter 2 c and d above.

unit for more large-scale family actions, when mutual support is sought for certain purposes. The other is the utui as the still most relevant arena for communal action ("mwethya") which cuts across kinship ties. Nowadays these are concerned, for example, with Harambee projects and similar matters.²⁷⁾ The modern system of economic and social stratification has largely superseded the older structures as has been described for the Kikuyu.²⁸⁾ As yet, however, the pattern of the emerging "class" stratification is less pronounced among the Kamba than among the Kikuyu. The number of cash crop farmers, for example, and of other members of the "old" and "new" middle classes is not as high. The number of totally landless people, on the other hand, is by far not as significant as among the Kikuyu.²⁹⁾

A modern social and, implicitly, also political organization was the "Akamba Association" which was founded in the mid-1950s. This group consisted mostly of Nairobi-based Kamba working in modern non-agricultural occupations and of government-appointed chiefs in the rural areas. One of its main functions was to reassure the colonial government of the "loyalty" of this group of Akamba during the "Mau Mau"-disturbances. In the early 1960s this organization was superseded by the "New Akamba Union". It soon became a springboard for aspiring politi-

27) Cf., e. g., Mutiso, Gideon Cyrus, "Machakos: Intra-Ethnic Political Evolution", in: idem, Kenya-Politics, Policy and Society, Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1975, pp. 212 ff.

28) See Part II, chapter 1 c above.

29) Further aspects of the emerging pattern of class stratification and its interaction with ethnic factors will be discussed in Part III below.

cians of different factions in the framework of pre- and post-independence national politics. This is still one of its main functions. In addition it serves as one of Kenya's most important "tribal welfare associations"³⁰⁾ in carrying out various social activities.

d.) Some Significant Cultural Aspects:

Kamba "culture" resembles that of the Kikuyu in many ways, but is quite distinct in others. Traditional Kamba education, for example, does not seem to have been very dissimilar from that of the Kikuyu. It emphasized to some personal and social aspects of learning and was carried out mostly in informal ways. In the personal teaching of a child the grandparents, perhaps, played an even greater role among the Kamba than among the Kikuyu. They were the most experienced members of the more immediate family and were not so much preoccupied with the chores of daily work; they were then the most "natural" teachers. They also used to see in their grandchildren the continuation of their own life cycle which found its symbolic expression in the naming of the grandchildren. The first grandson was named after the paternal grandfather, the second after the maternal grandfather, the first granddaughter after the paternal grandmother, etc.. There was also a taboo for grown-up children to go near their parents' sleeping place. This tended to make the parent-child relation more restrained.³¹⁾ All this was not very different from what could be found among the Kikuyu. The procedures for the more pronounced social training of the

30) Cf. also Mutiso, op. cit..

31) Cf., e. g., Ndeti, op. cit., pp. 78 f..

child differed slightly because of the differences in some of the more important initiation rituals of the age-grades, in particular the "double" circumcision which was practised among the Kamba.³²⁾

Today education among the Kamba has become much more formal. Almost three out of four children in the relevant age group in the rural areas attended primary schools in 1969, which represented the second highest percentage in Kenya (after the Kikuyu). In the same year slightly more than 6 % of all children in the respective age group attended secondary schools. This was about the same percentage as that for the Luyia or Luo and more than for any of the other groups, but less than half of the figure for the Kikuyu.³³⁾ In our sample about 40 % of our respondents had no formal education, approximately 50 % had received some primary, and 10 % some secondary schooling. In the parents' generation 90 % of the fathers and almost all of the mothers had not been to school. Among those of our respondents who had children in school about one third were paying school fees of less than Kshs. 100,--, another third between Kshs. 100,-- and 400,--, and the rest more than Kshs. 400,--.

The similarities between Kikuyu and Kamba societies also extend into the sphere of religion. Much of what has been said above concerning the Kikuyu applies to the Kamba as well. The Kamba recognize a single supreme being which is called, more or less interchangeably, Mulungu, Ngai (as among the Kikuyu and Maasai), or Mumbi ("the creator").

32) For a comparative assessment of some of these socializing processes see also Part III, chapter 1 a below.

33) see table "Comparative data...".

Mulungu again is a rather "remote" deity who resides in heaven ("ituni") or, temporarily, on high mountains or trees and who is not to be bothered with any personal or private affairs. Only in times of great crises affecting a larger community (e. g. when the rains do not begin on time) is the help of the deity sought and sacrifices are offered.

The second "level" of Kamba religion again is the much more relevant one for most daily affairs. It refers to the world of the "ancestor spirits" (aimu, sing.: imu) and their connections with the living and the unborn. It also provides a much better insight into the Kamba way of interpreting man's essence and existence. This continuation of a person's life through his descendents is of utmost importance for all Kamba. It is reflected, for example, in the intricate marriage arrangements which exist among the Kamba and which, in our opinion, can be properly understood only when seen in this light. Thus, for example, a woman whose husband has died and who does not have children of her own or who is too old to marry one of her husband's brothers can "marry" another woman. This woman can bear children in the first woman's name, the children having been fathered by a male relative of the "husband" or by another friend. The first woman in this case is considered to be the social "father" of these children regardless of who their actual genitor is. In the same way, if a man dies without having had any children of his own, his wife (if he was married) can have children by one of her late husband's brothers or by a member of his age-set. These children are still considered to belong to the original husband. If a man had not yet been married, a girl can marry the "ghost" of the deceased and again all her children are regarded as this man's descendents who continue his life cycle.

In part also the traditional practice of cattle raids by groups of Kamba warriors on neighboring people, particularly on the Maasai, can be better understood if one takes into account the great importance of marriage for the Kamba. These raids provided welcome opportunities for young men to obtain the number of cattle which was needed to be given as bridewealth to a prospective wife's family. Thus, if understood in this way, one soon realizes that "religion" is an inseparable part of the whole social order of the Kamba which pervades every sphere of their life.

The "aimu" can be of two kinds. The first consists of a person's immediate ancestors whose names he still knows and who may be remembered for about four or five generations. They virtually share all aspects of their descendants' lives and are regularly contacted and given food and drink. For this reason they are also called the "living-dead" by some authors.³⁴⁾ In this way the mystery of death becomes comprehensible for every Mukamba. It is seen simply as a transition from one form of life to another and need not be feared. Should the constant care of one's ancestors be neglected, misfortune and accidents may be brought about by the aimu.

The second kind of aimu must be distinguished from the direct personal ancestors. These are spirits who have passed beyond the horizon of personal memory and who now live in an "aimu-world" of their own. They may reside, for example, in trees, around rocks or other elevated places, but occasionally may even take the shape of certain animals or strangers who may suddenly appear. These aimu possess transhuman capabilities and are greatly feared because

34) Cf., e. g. Mbiti, op. cit., p. 15.

of their often malicious character. This type of aimu is the one which is found most often in the many stories and folktales so popular among the Kamba. In their daily lives people are aware that the stories about the aimu are "fiction", but where fiction ends and "reality" begins is indiscernible for many of them. Aimu of this kind also can "possess" a person, for example, during one of the very popular and at times quite ecstatic dances. It then becomes necessary to "exorcise" this spirit either with the help of the medicine-man ("mundu mue") who prescribes sacrifices or often through another very vigorous dance ("kilume" is one very popular type).³⁵⁾

The mundu mue (pl. andu awe), by and large, is the equivalent of the mundu mugo of the Kikuyu. He is a specialist in traditional medicine who prescribes herbs and specific drugs to cure certain diseases. He practices "white" or good magic to find out why a certain person has been inflicted with a particular illness. Harmful magic practices of others or the interference of some bad aimu are often seen as the reason for an illness. A mundu mue can protect persons from such harmful influences. He thus can act both as a healer and a diviner. Not rarely, however, these two functions are carried out by separate specialized practitioners. The necessary knowledge to practice medicine and perform rituals is usually transmitted from father to son. Divination is carried out either by interpreting the diviner's dreams or by using certain devices like a "divining calabash". Both techniques are seen to bring the diviner into contact with the ancestors. A mundu mue can also purify a person from ritual uncleanness ("makwa" or,

35) Cf., e. g., Ndeti, op. cit., pp. 166 ff..

apparently less seriously, "thavu"). Makwa and thavu again are similar to the "thahu" of the Kikuyu, but it seems that this concept is of much less importance to the Kamba than it used to be for the Kikuyu.³⁶⁾

The "evil counterpart" of a mundu mue, the witch³⁷⁾ ("mundu muoi"), plays a much more important role for the Kamba than for both the Kikuyu and many of the other peoples in Kenya. Many Kamba are constantly afraid of being bewitched. Many occurrences are attributed to the practice of witchcraft ("uoi"). These may include a person's being killed by an animal or in an accident or perhaps a child's dying from a current epidemic. No one admits to being a witch, and witchcraft, whether real or imaginary, is practiced at night and in utmost secrecy. In Kamba society, however, certain images of what a witch may look like do exist. As one author puts it: "Witchcraft is associated with old, wrinkled, ugly people, cripples, squint-eyes, ugly facial features, or any crudeness in a person".³⁸⁾ Thus certain "outcasts" fit this description best and it seems that many of the latent fears of the "ordinary" members of society are in this way projected on this group. If a (real or imaginary) witch is detected, she may be lynched by the community.

A third more specialized role is that of the "muathani" (which is usually translated as "seer" or prophet) and

36) Cf., e. g., Middleton and Kershaw, op. cit., p. 86, see also Nottingham, John C., "Sorcery in Kenya", Journal of African Administration, XI, No. 1, Jan. 1959, pp. 9 f..

37) According to Evans-Pritchard's distinction (see also footnote 53 in Chapter 1 of this part above) this seems to be the appropriate translation, since "uoi" is a power which is believed to be transmitted from mother to daughter and to reside in certain families.

38) Ndeti, op. cit., p. 122.

who can be compared to the Kikuyu "murathi". His function was limited, however, in traditional Kamba society and his powers were invoked only at times of great crises, in particular when the rains had failed to come in time. He could then prescribe sacrifices and give a prediction, based on his general knowledge and experience, as to when the rains would start. Most Kamba believed in this prediction.

Today slightly more than 60 % of all Kamba profess to be members of Christian churches (14 % are Roman Catholic, the rest are members of various Protestant denominations). The figure of 40 % for those who still adhere to traditional beliefs is much higher than that for the Kikuyu or Luo and Luyia, but considerably lower than for the Kalenjin or Maasai.³⁹⁾ Membership in a Christian church alone indicates very little, however, about the actual beliefs of these persons.

In addition to their basic religious convictions, the Kamba share a number of other dominant values which strongly influence their way of thinking and behavior. These, again, find their expression in the rich body of oral literature which exists in Kamba culture. A part of this literature consists of the considerable number of proverbs and sayings which embody the traditional wisdom of the Kamba and serve as an important means of instruction. The elders in particular are very fond of quoting these proverbs. They use them to explain certain events or to justify their judgments. There is also an extraordinarily large number of folktales and stories as the Kamba, compared to some of the other peoples, place a particular emphasis on this art form. Every Mukamba is expected to be able to tell

39) See table "Comparative data...".

stories in a way grasps his audience; some individuals have become widely known and are considered to be respected experts in this art.

Many of the proverbs strike already familiar themes,⁴⁰⁾ emphasizing the importance of social unity ("Kia kimue kiua nda"⁴¹⁾ - "one finger cannot kill a louse"), and expressing the necessity of mutual social dependence ("Meika imue mainganasia usi" - "those of the same age-group cannot help each other cross the river")⁴²⁾. Others indicate a certain degree of suspicion ("Kithika ki mato" - "the wilderness has ears")⁴³⁾. A sense of individual responsibility and achievement is also emphasized: "Wende nduetawe ni kwitwa" - ("popularity does not come by calling")⁴⁴⁾. Ascribed characteristics, on the other hand, are of relatively little value: "Ninia a ngumbau ni matako" ("the mother of a brave son is usually a simple woman")⁴⁵⁾.

40) Collections of Kamba proverbs can be found in: Lindblom, Gerhard, Kamba Riddles, Proverbs and Songs, Uppsala: Appelberg, 1943; and Ndeti, op. cit., pp. 204 ff..

41) Ndeti, op. cit., p. 204. These proverbs are given by Ndeti in their phonetic transcriptions. For the sake of uniformity we have rendered them here in the way they would be written in Standard Swahili. Slight differences in spelling may thus occur.

42) Ibid., p. 205.

43) Ibid., p. 204.

44) Ibid.

45) Ibid., p. 205.

As far as the folktales are concerned, these fall into three major categories:⁴⁶⁾ Stories about general domestic life and facts of nature, animal stories, and stories about the "aimu". The latter usually are malicious in nature. Whereas the first-mentioned folktales are common among many Kenyan and other African peoples, the stories about the "aimu" seem to play a particularly important role in Kamba culture. Generally speaking, these aimu stories provide an explanation for otherwise incomprehensible phenomena, but they also seem to instill a sense of fear of certain natural events (as, e. g., thunderstorms) and of the possibly malicious and destructive behavior of others. Although in the oral literature of other ethnic groups, as for example the Kikuyu,⁴⁷⁾ stories of ogres and similar monsters are quite common, there seems to be both a quantitative and a qualitative difference in the importance of the aimu stories in Kamba folklore. What also strikes an outsider in all the stories is the relatively stark picture of social reality and the frequent occurrence of violence and death in many of them. The incident, for example, that a child has been buried alive by his stepmother,⁴⁸⁾ or that people have been eaten by the aimu (a frequent occurrence), is reported in a matter-of-fact manner, apparently with relatively little emotional involvement. In the first case, the father calls the next-of-kin of the bad stepmother and two village elders as witnesses and then puts her to death. In the other cases the stories often end with the reported killing of a person by an imu,⁴⁹⁾

46) Cf., e. g., Mbiti, op. cit., pp. 30 ff..

47) Cf., e. g., Gecau, op. cit..

48) Cf. e. g., story 4 in Mbiti's collection, loc. cit., pp. 52 ff..

49) Cf., e. g., story no. 2 in Ndeti, op. cit. p. 194; or story no. 9 in Mbiti, op. cit., pp. 62 f..

and a "happy ending" is not very frequent. This might be compared to the Grimm Fairy Tales of Germany, where a "happy ending" is the rule despite the frequency of many other cruelties.

Some of these cultural features are again reflected in stereotypes, which are predominant in Kenya.⁵⁰⁾ Unlike the Kikuyu, the Kamba are not very renowned for their economic activities, one exception being their skill in hunting and trading. Another exception with some economic implications is their well known talent of wood-carving. This is related to a general respect for the artistic gifts of the Kamba, a respect for their love of music, and their art of storytelling. The most outstanding feature of these artistic gifts is their fame as dancers. Their dances belong to the most varied and acrobatic ones in Kenya. Another prevailing image is that of the Kamba as "the sex-kings of Kenya". An unusual preoccupation and, it seems, also extraordinary quality in this respect are attributed to both Kamba men and women. These usually quite favorable assessments are counteracted by a great fear of the strong powers of witchcraft which the Kamba are believed to possess. This, at least, is the most important reason given for a more general sense of suspicion towards them. They are also often considered to be cunning and to cheat others if they find it advantageous.

In general the Kamba occupy an intermediate position in Kenya's society today. In terms of their economic and educational achievements they clearly fall behind the dominating Kikuyu, but they can be ranked to be at approxi-

50) For our sources of information concerning these stereotypes and some of the necessary qualifications see also the introduction to Part II above.

mately the same level as the other major ethnic groups of the Luo, Luyia, or Kalenjin, and they are distinctly more "advanced" than most of the Coast peoples or those in the pastoral areas. Their geographical proximity to the capital of Nairobi makes them an important factor and ally in all major political developments at the center.

The "Miji Kenda" (literally: "Nine Tribes" or "tribes") form the largest cluster of ethnic groups in the Coast Province of Kenya. Altogether they comprised about 520,000 members at the time of the last census in 1969. Other major African peoples, which are part of the "Coastal" cluster of Bantu language groups,¹⁾ include the Taita

- 1) Some of the most important early sources on these peoples are: Damman, F., Beiträge aus arabischen Quellen zur Kenntnis des nördlichen Afrika, Kiel, 1929; Dundas, C., "Native Life of some Bantu tribes of East Africa", Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, L I (1921), pp. 217 - 228; Griffiths, J. B., "Glimpses of a Nyika Tribe: Viduruma", Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, 1915, pp. 85 - 97; Krapf, J. L., Reisen in Ost-Afrika, 3 vols., Stuttgart, 1858; Werner, Alice, "The Bantu Coast Tribes of the East African Protectorate", Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, 45, 1915, pp. 128 - 214. The most comprehensive account is: Prins, A. B. J., The Coastal Tribes of the North-Eastern Bantu, Ethnographic Survey of Africa, East Central Africa, Part III, London: International African Institute, 1952. Two more recent studies are: Champion, Arthur B., The Agiryama of Kenya, London: Royal Anthropological Institute, Occasional paper no. 25, 1967 and Perkins, David J., Palms, Nines and Witnesses, San Francisco: Chandler, 1972.
- 2) This designation can be interpreted to be a reference to the traditional form of fortified settlements ("kaya") of these groups, see also below.
- 3) For classifications of this kind cf., e. g., Surdani, P. S., Africa: Its Peoples and their Culture and History, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959; or Greenberg, Joseph H., Studies in African Linguistic Classifications, New Haven: Compass, 1953.

CHAPTER 3: THE MIJIKENDA:¹⁾

a.) General Background:

The "Miji Kenda" (literally: "Nine Towns"²⁾ or "tribes") form the largest cluster of ethnic groups in the Coast Province of Kenya. Altogether they comprised about 520,000 members at the time of the last census in 1969. Other major African peoples, which are part of the "Coastal" cluster of Bantu language groups,³⁾ include the Taita

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2) This designation can be interpreted to be a reference to the traditional form of fortified settlements ("kaya") of these groups, see also below.

3) For classifications of this kind cf., e. g., Murdock, P. G., Africa: Its Peoples and their Culture and History, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959; or Greenberg, Joseph H., Studies in African Linguistic Classifications, New Haven: Compass, 1955.

(104,000 in 1969), the Pokomo (33,000), the Taveta (6,000) and the Boni (4,000). In addition there are the "mixed" groups of the 26,000 Bajun and the 8,000 Swahili proper⁴⁾ who are the main representatives of the "Swahili culture".⁵⁾ The Bajun are clearly of African descent but prided themselves in former times of their "Arab" origin. The third ethnic element in the coastal area are the "immigrant" groups of 24,000 "Arabs" (90 % of whom are Kenyan citizens) and 42,000 "Asians" (60 % citizens). Again, particularly in the case of the Arabs, the distinction between the indigenous and the foreign elements is not very clear-cut; in the course of many centuries a good deal of intermarriage and intercultural exchanges has occurred between these groups.

The available secondary material on many of the coastal ethnic groups is rather scant and to deal adequately with all of them in our field research would by far exceed our limited resources. For this reason we limit our presentation here to the "Mijikenda" peoples. This group is far less homogenous than some of the other peoples treated in this study and has been subject to a long history of di-

4) This is the official census figure of 1969 for those who identify themselves as members of this category. Other estimates of the size of this group are much higher (e. g. 45.000 in Kenya for 1948, about half of which were of Arab extraction, cf. Prins, Swahili-speaking Peoples..., pp. 20 ff.). These may also include some other "de-tribalized" and "swahili-ized" members of other ethnic groups.

5) The best account of these groups is: Prins, A. H. J., The Swahili-speaking Peoples of Zanzibar and the East African Coast, Ethnographic Survey of Africa, East Central Africa, Part XII, London: International African Institute, 1967. A recent history of these peoples is: Salim, A. I., Swahili-speaking Peoples of Kenya's Coast 1895 - 1965, Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1973.

verging external influences. The picture which emerges is therefore much more varied and less distinct than that of the other groups presented here.

The Mijikenda (formerly called "Nyika", because they live in the coastal hinterland, Swahili: "nyika") consist of nine distinct sub-groups: the Giriama⁶⁾ (about 200,000 people), the Duruma and Digo (about 100,000 each), the Rabai and Chonyi (who number between 20,000 and 30,000), and the Kambe (not to be confused with the Central Bantu group of the Kamba!), Kauma, Ribe and Jibana, who all have less than 10,000 members each.⁷⁾ Their languages are closely related and, to a large extent, mutually understandable. This is also the case with Swahili, the native language of the "Swahili" proper, which is also the lingua franca of all coastal groups and, in somewhat simplified forms, of most up-country multi-ethnic settlements. Linguistically the Mijikenda are more closely related to the cluster of the "Central Bantu" in Kenya than those are to the "Western Bantu", for example the Luyia or the Kisii.⁸⁾ The relationship to the other Bantu groups of Coast Province (Taita, Pokomo, etc.) is also close, although they all quite clearly have their own identity. The differentiation of "the nine" from the other coastal groups is, therefore, a matter

6) Again, for the sake of clarity and convenience, we employ only the most common designations, using only the roots and not the proper prefixes of the names of these groups here. Thus the Giriama, for example, are called more correctly "Agiriama" (sing: "Mgiriama"), their language "Kigiriama" and their area of residence "Ugiriama".

7) Cf., Kenya Population Census 1969, vol. I, loc. cit.. Since these groups are not listed separately in the census, the approximate order of magnitude for the size of each group has been derived from the listings by location.

8) For these relationships cf., e. g., also the "linguistic tree of the Bantu languages" in Ndeti, op. cit., p. 37.

of degree, but their similarities (and their awareness of them!) are still sufficiently large to justify their grouping together in a category of their own.

The Mijikenda groups inhabit a belt of land beyond the immediate coastal strip, which before 1890 had been under the rule of the Sultan of Zanzibar. These former political and legal boundaries did not necessarily coincide in all places with the area of settlement of the indigenous peoples. In fact some Mijikenda groups, such as the Digo, also had some settlements on the coast. On the average, the area inhabited by the Mijikenda is about 30 to 40 miles wide and reaches from the Tanzania border (south of which another related group, the Segeju are living) to the settlements north of the Sabaki River. Its average altitude lies between 60 and 300 m (200 to 1,000 feet) but it also includes some higher elevations such as the Shimba Hills (420 m). The soils are generally fertile, but the actual agricultural potential is determined by the average amount of rainfall which becomes very scarce inland. Thus only 16 % of the total area can be said to be of high agricultural potential, which means that there are only 0,72 ha of high potential land equivalents per person in the Mijikenda home area.⁹⁾ There are two main rainy seasons (April to June and October and November), but the reliability of the rainfall varies a great deal. In a large part of the territory the necessary minimum of 30 inches or 762 mm is not even reached in one or two out of every five years.¹⁰⁾ In such years the crops fail, showing the precarious living conditions of a good

9) Cf., table "Comparative data..." above.

10) Cf. Republic of Kenya, Regional Physical Development Plan, Coast Province, Nairobi: Government Printer, 1974, chapter I.

part of this population, not unlike those in the drier parts of Ukambani.¹¹⁾ There are very few permanent, but quite a number of seasonal rivers. The climate is very hot and, especially nearer to the coast, quite humid.

Of "the nine", the Digo live in the southern-most part of this territory, relatively close to the coast. Farther inland and extending farther north, but still mostly within the modern administrative division of "Kwale" District, is the settlement area of the Duruma. "Kilifi" District, which today is the other main administrative unit, is inhabited (north of the Duruma) by the Rabai and then farther north, reaching the border of the territory of Mijikenda settlements, by the largest group, the Giriama. Between these two groups and the coastal plains live the five smaller sections of the Ribe, Jibana, Kambe, Chonyi, and Kauma (in this order from south to north). About 87 % of all Mijikenda still live in their original home area, and less than 6 % live outside of Coast Province. The population density of 25 persons per sq.km is relatively low, but it must be taken into account that a considerable part of the country consists of scrub and grasslands. The population is growing at an average rate of 2,9 % per year which is lower than the rate for most of the other ethnic groups in Kenya, but is still very high by international standards. More than 3 % of the population in the home area live in towns of more than 2,000 people, which is the highest rate for any ethnic group in Kenya and which, in part, reflects the traditionally more compound pattern of settlement of this group.¹²⁾

11) See chapter II, 2, above.

12) Cf. table "Comparative data...".

All sub-groups of the Mijikenda claim a common place of origin, "Shungwaya", which was probably situated somewhere in Jubaland in present-day Somalia. The same place of origin is also claimed by the neighboring groups of the Pokomo and Taita and even by some groups in northern Tanzania. Unlike the myths of origin prevalent among most of the other Kenyan peoples,¹³⁾ this claim seems to be closer to reality. It has also been confirmed by a number of early historical documents and even by some more recent archaeological findings.¹⁴⁾ The main wave of this migration seems to have taken place in the 16th century.

b.) The Economy:

All Mijikenda peoples are basically agriculturalists, but, to a varying degree, the keeping of livestock, hunting, and fishing near the coast, also supplement their diet. The main food crops are maize, millet, beans and cassava. In the better-watered areas mangoes, oranges, bananas and other fruit are grown. Cashew-nuts are the most important source of cash. But the most characteristic plant for the climatically more favored parts of the Coast Province is the coconut tree, which provides its owners with almost all necessities of daily life. The trunk is used as building material, the branches for thatching. The coconut itself can serve both as food and drink and also becomes a ready source of cash in the form of copra, from which coconut oil is extracted. In addition, skillful tappers produce

13) Cf., e. g., those for the Kikuyu and Kamba in chapters II, 1 and II, 2 above.

14) Cf., e. g., Prins, *The Coastal Tribes...*, loc. cit., pp. 43 ff.;
or idem, *The Swahili-speaking Peoples...*, loc. cit., pp. 33 ff..

"palm-wine" ("tembo") from the natural juices of the tree which ferment overnight and render a good-tasting, quite intoxicating liquor. Not surprisingly, therefore, the more fertile parts of Coast Province have sometimes been referred to as a second Garden of Eden where most of the pleasant things in life can be obtained with very little effort. In reality, however, the paradisaic parts are limited and, today, very heavily populated, so that only a few people can still enjoy a more leisurely way of life.

Altogether today about one-fifth of the total cultivated area is devoted to "pure" cash crops.¹⁵⁾ This figure is somewhat higher than the one for most other parts of Kenya, but it is still considerably lower than the corresponding percentage for Kikuyu country. Coconuts, however, are used partly for sale and partly for subsistence. If they are included in the list of cashcrops the figure becomes the highest for all of Kenya.¹⁶⁾ In our sample about half the farmers grew maize (all of which was of the "unimproved" variety), and one third cultivated other local temporary crops as cassava for subsistence. Approximately 50 % possessed coconut palms, 30 % produced cashew nuts, and about 20 % planted different kinds of fruit.

A number of Mijikenda groups is said to have possessed large herds of cattle and other livestock in former days. But these were allegedly depleted by Maasai raids¹⁷⁾ and no new herds have been built up since that time. The

15) Cf. table "Comparative data...".

16) See *ibid.*, definition "A".

17) Cf., e. g. Baumann, V., Usambara und seine Nachbargebiete, Berlin, 1891, pp. 148 ff..

Duruma are the only group among the nine for whom the keeping of cattle is still of some importance. They also supply milk for Mombasa.¹⁸⁾ The Digo and Giriama raise only sheep, goats and chickens. In our sample only one respondent owned a few heads of local cattle, but he did not sell any milk. About 20 % of the agricultural respondents possessed some goats (about 5 on the average), a little more than half of them had some chickens. Fishing along the coast, with small traditional fishing boats in much the same way as it is done by the Arabs and Swahilis, is an important part of the Digo economy. The Giriama catch fish in some of the inland lakes and streams and are good at trapping game.

In contrast to all other agricultural peoples of Kenya who live in homesteads scattered over the countryside, more centralized forms of settlement can be found among most Mijikenda groups. Two types must be distinguished: the "kaya", traditionally a fortified tribal center, and the "mudzi", a more common kind of village.¹⁹⁾ The kaya, of which each of the nine has at least one, are situated on hill-tops and were formerly surrounded by stockades. They served as a major center of the economic, political and religious activities of each group and included the tribal council house ("moro"), the council houses of the clans ("nyanda"), and the shrine of the tribal emblems.²⁰⁾ They also contained a cultivated area, and the graves of the elders were placed within the enclosure. In this way the Mijikenda groups were able to defend themselves against intruders from the sea and the coastal strip who raided them for food and slaves. Today the stockades have

18) Cf. Physical Development Plan..., op. cit., pp. 44 ff..

19) Among the Giriama this term refers to the single family homestead.

20) See also sections c and d of this chapter below.

disappeared and except for some ritual purposes the kaya has lost most of its original functions. The "mudzi", on the other hand, still serve a number of groups as centers of settlement and often include both agriculturalists and fishermen (for example among the Digo on the coast). They often contain several hundred people, sometimes even more than a thousand.

The pattern of land tenure in the coastal area has been influenced by its particular historical development. When the British Protectorate over the coastal strip was established, the individual property rights of the former subjects of the Sultan of Zanzibar were respected and their land was registered under individual "free-hold" titles. The rest of the territory was deemed to be "Crown Land". At the time of independence the individual property rights in this area again were explicitly recognized and guaranteed in the constitution. Thus a number of larger estates comprising a total area of about 40,000 ha., most of which is still owned by people of "Arab" descent, can be found along the coast. The "Crown Land" was converted to "State Land" and the former "Native Land Units" which covered the main areas of Mijikenda settlement further inland were now entrusted to the local County Councils.²¹⁾ Within these units the traditional forms of land tenure have persisted to a certain extent, but they have also been influenced to a varying degree by Muslim laws of land ownership. Thus among the more Islamized groups of the Mijikenda, as e. g. the Digo, the Muslim law of individual free-hold property prevails today and land can be bought or sold freely by any individual or single family.

21) Cf., Regional Physical Development Plan..., loc. cit., pp. 80 ff..

In the less Islamized parts of Mijikenda country the whole "tribe" was traditionally the main land-holding unit and the respective tribal boundaries were quite clearly defined. This was in contrast to the pattern among the more numerous up-country peoples where clans and other sub-groups often were the owners of the land. Within the territory of each group each individual or family could clear and cultivate unused land over which they then had exclusive occupation rights ("mani"). If, in the pattern of shifting cultivation so common in the past, a site was cultivated which previously had been somebody's garden ("munda") the permission of the previous occupant had to be obtained and a certain fee was usually paid. If permanent crops had been planted on a piece of land these became the inheritable property of a family, the land as such, however, could not be sold. In the same way each single coconut or mango tree had its specific owner, even where no particular pattern of planting was apparent to an outsider. In addition to the cultivated gardens and the fallow lands ("shamba"), there was open grassland ("vuwe") which could be used by all members of the group.²²⁾

Inheritance among the Digo and Duruma traditionally was by the nearest matrilineal relatives, i. e., the eldest sibling or half-sibling by the same mother, or, more commonly, their children. Thus a Digo often inherited property from his mother's brother or sister. In the northern groups a system of male primogeniture seems to have been the rule, but the information available on this point is inadequate.²³⁾ In our sample, more than 50 % of the respondents indicated that their property would

22) Cf. Prins, *The Coastal Tribes...*, loc. cit., pp. 84 ff..

23) Cf. ibid., pp. 86 ff..

one day be inherited by their children in equal parts, whereas another 25 % specified the eldest son. This difference does not seem to be related, however, to the membership in any of the particular sub-groups of the Mijikenda or to Islam.

The program of land consolidation and registration which has been initiated in the 1950s in other parts of Kenya has also been introduced in Kwale and Kilifi districts. However only about 17 % of the land, most of it apparently in the former 10-mile strip, has been registered. This represents one of the lowest figures for any area. The average farm sizes are also quite small. There are no official figures available for this part of the country, but in our sample no respondent owned more than ten acres of land; by far the majority had even less than five acres each. In this respect the degree of rural stratification is not as pronounced for the Mijikenda as, for example, for the Kikuyu. The level of modernization also does not seem to vary as much among the individual Mijikenda farmers as it does among the Kikuyu.

None of our respondents had ever taken part in a course at a farmers' training center or received extension advice or a loan for purposes of agricultural development. None of them possessed a title-deed for his land and apparently hardly anyone cared much about getting one. About one third of our agricultural respondents said that they planned some improvements in the future (which was the lowest figure for all the agricultural groups), but they were rather vague when they were asked to specify. About one fourth said that they were thinking of buying some more land or cattle sometime. 70 % of our agricultural respondents reported a monthly average cash income of less than Kshs. 100,--, 25 % made between Kshs. 100,-- and 200,--, and only very few earned more than that.

In the area of the former 10-mile strip a stratum of squatters exists on farms which are under individual freehold ownership, but which often have been neglected or abandoned by their legal owners. Altogether there are about 12,000 squatter families in Kwale and Kilifi Districts, most of whom probably belonging to the Mijikenda groups. Although there have been some attempts to settle these people in a permanent way, no solution has yet been found for the majority of them.²⁴⁾

The division of labor in the traditional Mijikenda societies was, as among the other Kenyan peoples, based on sex and age. The women did most of the household work and cultivated their small agricultural plots. The men were responsible for fishing or hunting, and looking after livestock, cutting coconuts or tapping palm-wine. In contrast to most of the up-country peoples there was, however, even in traditional society, a greater number of specialized economic roles. In particular there is a long tradition of craftsmanship among these peoples which undoubtedly is also a result of their long history of contact with the outside world. The most common crafts were carpentry, smithery, mat-making and pottery. The latter two were usually performed by women. The percentage of our Mijikenda respondents who reported that they were earning some additional income in this way was the highest for all the ethnic groups considered here. There was a constant trade of cloth, food, spices, and all kinds of household goods and agricultural implements between the inland ("nyika") peoples and their Swahili and Arab neighbors. Following the example of the Swahilis and Arabs, some groups such as

24) Cf. Regional Physical Development Plan..., loc. cit., pp. 86 ff..

the Digo and Duruma also kept slaves for their agricultural and household work. A slave was, however, allowed to own property and marriages between slave girls and free men were also quite common.²⁵⁾

Today, 1,5 % of all Mijikenda living in their home area are in modern non-agricultural occupations, 0,12 % are self-employed. These figures are about the same as for most of the other ethnic groups, but less than among the Luo or Kikuyu.²⁶⁾ The small number of Mijikenda living outside their home area is also an indication for the relatively low level of involvement in overall nationwide economic or administrative activities.

In summing up the economic situation of the Mijikenda we can thus say that many of the more "modern" developments in Kenya still have largely bypassed this group. This is true also for the modern tourist business along the coast which, even in its purely occupational aspects, has provided more income opportunities for people coming from outside of the area than for local residents. One future chance may lie, for example, in the growing of more fruits and vegetables to satisfy the demands of the nearby Mombasa market and the tourist resorts, or even in the commercial use of palm-wine, if some suitable method for its preservation can be found. Another opportunity may be the growing of cloves and other spices, for which Zanzibar and the adjacent islands have so far been able to maintain their (quite lucrative!) monopoly. It seems that in order to realize possibilities of this kind, a change of both the prevailing attitudes and the infra-structural conditions, in particular adequate roads and water supplies, but also educational facilities and health services will be required.

25) Cf. Prins, op. cit., p. 87.

26) Cf. table "Comparative data...".

c.) Social and Political Structures:

The traditional society of the Mijikenda peoples was organized by a number of clans and smaller descent groups in a "horizontal" direction, and a system of age-grades and age-sets in a vertical sense. This pattern of stratification is, however, less clear-cut than for the other major ethnic groups in Kenya. There is a good deal of variation among "the nine", a confusion in the terminology, for instance between "tribes" ("kabila"), "clans" (Digo: "mafuko") and "lineages" (Giriama: "mbari"). This is reflected in the relatively sparse literature on this subject,²⁷⁾ and in a certain overlapping of clan-names between some of the groups, which may be a result of their common migration from "Shungwaya". Moreover, the original social and political structures have, to a certain extent, been superseded by certain external powers of the ruling Arab and Swahili families on the coast. In this respect the influence of Islam has also been felt, particularly among the southern groups.

There are six clans among the Digo and Giriama, five among the Kauma and Kambe, four among the Rabai, Ribe, Jibana, and Chonyi, and three among the Duruma. The more relevant units, however, which are also the smallest effective exogamous groups, are the "lineages", which in most groups are called "mbari".²⁸⁾ There are 26 lineages among the Giriama, 20 among the Duruma and Kambe, 18 among the Rabai, 16 among the Kauma, 14 among the Jibana and 13 among the Chonyi. For the Digo and Ribe no specific numbers are

27) Cf., e. g., Prins, op. cit., pp. 60 ff..

28) There is, however, a certain diffuseness of reference in the use of this term. In some cases it may include a "clan" or even a whole "tribe", in others it comprises only sub-lineages or even just single homesteads, cf., e. g., Parkins, op. cit., pp. 22 ff..

mentioned in the available literature. A certain degree of caution must be taken, however, in evaluating the figures for the other groups, since there seems to have been some changes over time in these numbers. There is also a certain degree of overlapping from tribe to tribe, at least as far as the names of some of these groups are concerned. All lineages in this sense are agnatic descent groups, which determine the most important kinship relations and all ensuing social rights and obligations. Among the Digo, Duruma and Rabai there are also parallel matrilineal groups, the function of which is mostly restricted to questions concerning inheritance and certain judicial and marriage affairs.²⁹⁾

In most groups each clan traditionally had its own "council-house" or "club-house" (Giriama: "nyonga") which was located in the "kaya" and which was used for important social, political and ceremonial purposes. The Mijikenda clans are not totemic, in contrast to some of the other ethnic groups in Kenya, but in some of them there are certain taboos concerning the killing of animals such as the hyena ("fisi"). Today these institutions, together with the "kaya" (at least in its physical, fortified form) have largely disappeared; some of the other functions of the clan also seem to be diminishing. Only about three quarters of our Mijikenda respondents, for example, were able to indicate their clan affiliation, which is the lowest figure for all groups in our sample. A major factor which seems to account for this rather low percentage is the Muslim religion of about half of our respondents.

29) Cf. Prins, op. cit., pp. 63 ff..

Below the lineage other groupings with varying degrees of kinship exist, the socially most relevant of which are the "extended families" (in some groups called "nyumba", literally: "house") which generally combine the closest relatives over a span of about three generations. The smallest unit is the homestead (Giriama: "mudzi") which comprises the head of the homestead ("mwenye mudzi") and his wife or wives together with their children, and possibly some of his younger brothers who may also be married, or some already married sons with their immediate families. The homestead is also the smallest geographical unit of residence. Beyond the homestead, kinship ties influence the pattern of residence to a varying degree among the Mijikenda groups. Whereas among the Digo "extended families" and even "lineages" live together in the same locations or "villages" (also called "mudzi" by the Digo, but usually larger than the Giriama ones).³⁰⁾ These kinship groups are dispersed over a larger area³¹⁾ among the Giriama. "Villages" in the wider sense are often loose clusters of neighboring homesteads without any particular boundaries or functions setting them apart. A more relevant geographical unit is the "district" (Digo: "lalo", pl. "malalo"), which should not, however, be confused with the modern administrative division of this name. It is still a rather small geographical unit which corresponds approximately to the size of today's "sub-locations". Thus one author counted, for example, at least 64 "malalo" among the Giriama.³²⁾

30) Cf. ibid., pp. 77 f..

31) Cf., e. g., Parkins, op. cit., pp. 21 f..

32) Taylor, W. E., Vocabulary of the Giriama language, London, 1887, pp. V ff..

The vertical social division among the Mijikenda is, as among many other ethnic groups in Kenya, characterized by a system of age-grades, age-sets and successive "generations". There is some variation in this pattern among the "nine", but some of the more general aspects seem to be similar among all of them. Thus among the Giriama, for example, a male person goes through ten different "grades" during his lifetime from early childhood ("uhoho") to the rank of senior elder ("mhere a fisini"). There is a somewhat parallel system for females, which is, however, of less significance. The entering of each successive stage is accompanied by initiation-rites and the payment of a fee (usually goats which are used during the ceremony). The most important steps in this ladder of social rank are those between childhood and adulthood ("habasi", which consists of four distinct grades) and between the last grade of "habasi" ("kivao") and the council of elders ("kambi"), which consists of two different grades, a junior ("waya") and a more senior one ("fisi"). All those who have been circumcised together during this life-cycle (both male and female circumcision were traditionally practiced) form an age-set ("rika", pl. "marika"). Each age-set is given a specific name. Among the Giriama, for instance, there are thirteen fixed names for the age-sets of thirteen successive years, after which these names are repeated in the same order. After this period of thirteen years the ruling group of elders hands over its power to the next one, so that this year marks a major change in the government of the people. An even more important change occurs after a period of approximately forty years when three of these successive ruling groups are given a common "generation"-name which sets them apart from previous and following generations so marking an important

33) Cf., e. g., Prins, *op. cit.*, pp. 71 ff.

34) Cf. Parkins, *op. cit.*

stage in the history of these peoples. Among the Giriama it is said that just about seven "generations" (which are also called "kambi") have passed since their departure from Shungwaya.³³⁾

Today this system of age-grades and age-sets has also undergone considerable changes and many of its original functions have been reduced or have disappeared altogether. Thus, only one fifth of our Mijikenda respondents reported the membership in a particular age-set, which is much less than, for example, among the rural Kikuyu (45 %), or among the Kalenjin and Maasai where practically 100 % identified themselves in this way. Circumcision still seems to be widely practiced, although, as among most of the other ethnic groups in Kenya, it has largely become a private affair. Instead, their "vertical" social stratification is increasingly characterized by economic factors, as among the other groups. A differentiation between successful and still "accumulating" cash crop farmers and those who only produce for their own subsistence can be observed. This process is, however, still less pronounced in this area than, for example, in Kikuyu country or the more "developed" parts of Machakos District. It is noteworthy that in this process, at least in a period of transition, some of the old customs like the payment of bridewealth and funeral expenditures take on a new significance in light of these economic differentiations. Some functions of the elders have also been strengthened.³⁴⁾ As long as an official registration is not yet available in this part of the country, for instance, they are needed as witnesses for transactions of land and other property, in particular palm trees.

33) Cf., e. g., Prins, op. cit., pp. 71 ff..

34) Cf. Parkins, op. cit..

The traditional political structure of the Mijikenda was also more varied than that of other Kenyan ethnic groups and both "egalitarian-segmentarian" and more "authoritarian" elements can be found together, some influenced by external factors, in a form unique in Kenya. Thus at least some Mijikenda groups (as for example the Digo) claim to have been ruled by a paramount chief or king ("mfalme") before their departure from Shungwaya. It is not quite clear whether this applies to other groups as well, but in any case in more recent times the "segmentarian-egalitarian" ("gerontocratic") elements, which we also know from other Kenyan peoples, prevailed. In this system authority was traditionally placed on the elders of each larger regional unit who formed a council (Digo: "mngaro", Duruma: "moro", Giriama: "kambi") and who performed the most important judicial and other public decision-making functions. From each of these councils usually three most senior or most respected elders were selected who were called "akambi a mvaya" ("chiefs of the elders") among the Duruma, "enyetsi" ("possessors of the land") among the Giriama, or just "jumbe" (chief) by some other groups. In this sense a more centralized system of government existed, but for most groups this did not comprise the entire "tribe" and was, at the highest level, either confined to the district ("lalo") or the area controlled by a single "kaya".³⁵⁾

In addition to their internal political structures, some Mijikenda groups have been subject to the overrule of certain Arab or Swahili families living in Mombasa, the

35) On this subject there is even less information in the available literature than on some of the other aspects of the lives of the Mijikenda peoples. For this reason we can only give a very broad outline here. Cf. also Prins, op. cit., pp. 78 ff..

heads of which were considered as the "sheikhs" of these peoples. They received regular tribute and exercised what was called by one author a "fictitious suzerainty".³⁶⁾ These sheikhs also provided, however, a certain protection from other outside influences and, when a succession in office occurred, they in turn had to be recognized by their respective groups and to make specific payments to them. When the ruling Mazrui family in Mombasa was replaced by the Said-Said dynasty from Zanzibar in the last century this system of external overrule seems to have lost much of its significance, and at least the payment of tribute was stopped at this time.

Political activities among the Mijikenda³⁷⁾ during the period leading to Kenya's independence were rather restrained, particularly if they are compared with those of the Kikuyu or groups like the Luo. Some "tribal welfare unions", such as the "Digo Welfare Association", the "Young Duruma Association", or the "Mijikenda Union" were founded in the late 1940's and early 1950's, but they do not seem to have reached a large following in the rural areas at this time. Most "Coast politics" centered around Mombasa, where different factions mainly based on racial (i. e. Arab and Asian) or ethnic allegiances (confronting Africans from the Mijikenda groups with those from up-country, particularly Kamba, Kikuyu and Luo) were vying for influence in the pre-independence negotiations with the colonial authorities. In 1960 the "Coast African Political Union" (CAPU) was founded as an instrument to represent the interests of Coastal Africans. Soon after

36) Prins, op. cit., p. 82.

37) For political developments in this area, cf., e. g., also Salim, op. cit., or Stren, Richard, "Factional Politics and Central Control in Mombasa, 1960 - 1969", Canadian Journal of African Studies, Winter 1970, pp. 33 - 56, see also Part I, chapter 2 c above.

its inception CAPU merged with some of the other political organizations, mainly from the Rift Valley and Western Province, to form the "Kenya African Democratic Union" (KADU). This party merged with KANU in 1964. Since then there has been no separate political organization to articulate the interests of the Mijikenda. The original "Mijikenda Union" is still in existence, but is of relatively little actual significance compared with, for instance, GEMA, the "New Akamba Union" or the "Luo Union".

d.) Some Significant Cultural Aspects:

Culturally, the Mijikenda groups have a good deal in common with other Bantu peoples in Kenya, but, due to their geographical position and their relatively early contact with the outside world, their way of life has been influenced, to a varying degree, by elements of Arab and "Swahili" culture. Thus the traditional way of educating children very much resembles that of the inland peoples and not much needs to be added here which has not already been said, for example, about the Kikuyu or Kamba. In general, both the socializing structures (i. e., for example, the dominating role of the grandparents) and the methods of education have been similar. Punishments do seem to be somewhat more severe among the Mijikenda than among most of the other groups. In our sample 95 % of the respondents reported quite severe physical punishments ("beating", "caning") for the parents' generation and 90 % for their own families. The figure for the parents' generation is the highest for any of the ethnic groups we interviewed and for the respondents themselves this figure is only slightly exceeded by that for the Maasai. Among the more Islamized groups of the Mijikenda (as, e. g., the Digo) a more formal system of education also existed, but

attendance at the "Koran-schools" does not seem to have been really high in the past and the teaching was mostly confined to religious matters. Today only about 15 % of all adult Mijikenda can be said to possess "minimal literacy". 28 % of the children in the relevant age-groups are enrolled in primary schools, 2,6 % attend secondary institutions.³⁸⁾ In our sample none of the fathers and only one of the mothers of our respondents were able to read and write. All these figures are the lowest for any of the agricultural groups dealt with in this study.

The traditional religion of the Mijikenda has the same "dual" characteristics as that of many of the other groups. Thus, at the highest level, they believe in the existence of a single deity ("mulungu") whose authority may be invoked, however, only on rare and important occasions in matters affecting the whole group. At a much more immediate and personal level lies the belief in certain "spirits". These again are of two kinds, those of one's immediate ancestors (who are called "koma"), and the more impersonal spirits ("mzuka" or "mzimu") which may inhabit certain places and which often are considered to be of a malevolent nature. Regular offerings of food and drink were traditionally made to the "koma" who are thought to share the daily affairs of their descendants; sacrifices were also offered to the "mzuka" on certain occasions. If these sacrifices were made on behalf of the whole group, in order to pray for rain, for example, or in the course of some of the traditional social ceremonies, they were performed at the "kaya" which traditionally also contained separate "spirit-huts". Among the Rabai, Ribe,

38) Cf. table "Comparative data..."

Kambe, Chonyi, and Jibana the dead were also buried inside or, at least, near the kaya and the traditional funeral rites were performed there.³⁹⁾

There were no "priests" among the Mijikenda, but certain specialized tasks, like that of a "rain-maker" seem to have been inheritable in some families. In addition there were the traditional "medicine-men" who formed special societies in each of the groups named after their principle "charms" ("karapo"). Among the Duruma, for example, there were seven such societies. It seems that in most groups the members of these societies had to have achieved the highest rank of elder ("fisi") before they could join. Their spells were believed to be potentially fatal, which may also explain, to a certain extent, the great terror which could be inspired by members of the "fisi". But in general these medicine-men practiced good or "white" magic; only the sorcerers who were believed to operate secretly, performed bad or "black" magic.⁴⁰⁾

Today the religious beliefs of some of the Mijikenda groups have been greatly influenced by both Islam and Christianity. The Digo, for example, are almost all members of the Chafiitic sect of Islam, whereas some of their traditional beliefs and rites have been incorporated in their new religion in a syncretistic manner. Among the Rabai, Ribe, and some other groups, where the first Christian mission stations were opened in the middle of the last century, a certain number of people have been converted to the Protestant or Catholic faiths. The Giriama,

39) Cf., e. g., Prins, op. cit., pp. 87 ff..

40) Cf. ibid., p. 78.

42) The role of women is discussed more fully in chapter 4 b of Part III below.

on the other hand, have almost completely resisted such attempts so far. Altogether today about 40 % of the Mijikenda still follow their traditional beliefs, another 40 % are Muslims and the rest belong to Christian churches.⁴¹⁾

These religious differences also find their expression in the outward appearance of the Mijikenda. The men usually wear a waist-cloth reaching down to their ankles ("kikoi"). In addition, Muslim men wear a round rimless cap with a flat top ("kofia"). Older men characteristically also carry a walking stick. Muslim women, if they go out in public, are covered from head to foot by a long black cloth ("bui bui") which is wrapped around them and which often only leaves one eye open. Non-Muslim women, on the other hand, such as most of the Giriama, often wear nothing but a waist-cloth. The appearance side by side of women who have ethnically many things in common, some walking around entirely wrapped up and others half naked, is at first a peculiar sight for a stranger.⁴²⁾

In the more general cultural sphere again certain values are stressed in the traditional folklore of these peoples. We must emphasize at this point, however, that the material we have at hand for an analysis of this kind is not as plentiful as that for most of the other groups we are presenting here, and certain variations which may exist among "the nine" also have to be neglected. Moreover, some of the "hybrid" aspects of these peoples, due to Arab and Swahili influences, can again be recognized. In some instances

41) Cf. table "Comparative data...".

42) The role of women is discussed more fully in chapter 4 b of Part III below.

it is not possible to draw a clear dividing line between the more properly "African" and the "Swahili" elements.

One of the attitudes which is emphasized in traditional folklore is a certain sense of family solidarity. The Giriama, for example, say that "a bad child is not abandoned" ("mwana mui k'atsufwa") or, somewhat more colorfully, "the place on your lap where the child has made a mess is not cut out" ("kinyereruacho ni mwana k'akitsindzwa"⁴³). Also a sense of modesty and self-restraint seems to prevail: "What I shall eat with it, is not the same as what I shall eat" ("ndaryanani kavinga ndaryani"⁴⁴), meaning that as long as you have something to eat, it does not matter whether you have any luxuries. A similar connotation is transmitted by the saying "Thine own bad thing is better than the good thing belonging to someone else" ("kii chako ni baha kuriko kidzo cha mut'u"⁴⁵). On the whole, human beings are considered to be egoistic. "He who pegs out the skin of an animal draws it towards himself" ("mukoti wa kingo yuvuhira kwakwe"), for which the English equivalent "every man for himself" is given.⁴⁶ Social differentiations in wealth and status are clearly perceived: "The word of an orphan is not believed" (Duruma: "ra mwana chiya k'arigwirwa"), which is interpreted as the rich man's child can do many things

43) Hollis, A. C., "Nyika Proverbs", Journal of the African Society, XVI, 1916, p. 67.

44) Ibid., p. 68.

45) Ibid., p. 66.

46) Ibid., p. 63.

that are not permitted of the orphan.⁴⁷⁾ The Giriama express a related attitude: "the big cow covers her excrement with her tail" ("goma ra ngombe rafinikira mavi na mukira"⁴⁸⁾). Status in the Mijikenda societies, on the other hand, is not only linked to the amount of a person's property; elders, for example, are seen to perform useful roles: "An elder is a rubbish heap to carry everything to, good and evil" (Giriama: "mut'u muzima ni dzala ni kutsukula gosi, madzo na mai"⁴⁹⁾). A final judgement about any person has to be reserved, however, until after his death: "The Giriama do not praise, praise is for a man who has gone to the grave" ("Agiriama k'amulika, mulika mut'u yudzakwenda mbirani"⁵⁰⁾). The particular relationship towards their Swahili overlords for whom they often had to work without payment is expressed by the sayings "I am a gogota bird and I build for the gande bird" ("mimi ni gogota nijengera gande"⁵¹⁾), or "It is lawful for a Swahili to eat the fruit of a Nyika" ("cha mnyika kuliwa na mjomba ni halali"⁵²⁾).

But in the course of time, elements of the Swahili culture proper have also filtered into the lives of these peoples, at least the more Islamized ones, e. g. the Digo. Their culture, which itself is a certain "hybrid", promotes the ideal of a good Muslim and "gentleman". The features of "adabu" ("good manners", which include moral conduct and

47) Ibid., p. 69.

48) Ibid., p. 66.

49) Ibid..

50) Ibid., p. 62.

51) Ibid., p. 65.

52) Ibid., p. 64.

self-restraint) and "akili" (sound judgement and intelligence) are therefore highly valued. Intelligence should not impair, however, one's ability to act, as it is expressed in the saying "Much intelligence impairs prudence" ("akili nyingi huondoa maarifa"⁵³). It seems to be clear, however, that on the whole Swahili culture stresses more the hierarchical elements of society and some of the attitudes and ideals that go with it, in contrast to the traditionally more egalitarian values of the Mijikenda peoples. Thus the concepts of pride and honor, for example, are very prominent: "A gentleman without honor is an ox without horns" ("mngwana asiye ari kama ngombe asiye pembe"⁵⁴), and the knowledge of and respect for a person's social origin (as expressed in the phrase "mtu wa asili", "a man of noble lineage") are strongly emphasized.

Some of the values expressed in this traditional folklore and the corresponding forms of behavior have also hardened into certain stereotypes which other Kenyan peoples have about the Mijikenda, or, more generally, the "Coast People". Some of the typical characterizations are, that the "Coast People" are often ethnically mixed and have different shades of skin color. Many of them are Muslims, speak good Swahili and like to live in towns. They are considered to love music, to be humorous and easygoing. On the other hand, some of them are said to be pretentious and not to like people from up-country whom they consider to be primitive (this aspect probably refers to the more clearly "Arab" and "Swahili" elements on the coast). They are often feared by others, because of their powers of witchcraft and they are said to be full of superstitions themselves. They can also

53) Prins, The Swahili-speaking Peoples..., loc. cit., p. 108.

54) Ibid..

be cunning and tricky and are often not to be trusted. Their attitude towards work is often criticized; one of the most widespread and persistent images is that the "Coast People" are lazy and like to lie all day long under the coconut trees which provide them with food, drink, liquor and all the necessities of daily life. Men are said to be by far dominant in this culture and women are subjugated to their menial tasks and are not given any chance to obtain an education or to improve their daily lives by initiatives of their own.

Looking back at some of the features which characterize the Mijikenda as a distinct group in Kenya's society, we can note that they belong to the economically and socially least "advanced" agricultural peoples in Kenya, who are still pursuing a largely traditional, subsistence-oriented way of life. In contrast to some of the other groups, such as the Luyia or Luo, the population pressure among them has not quite reached the same proportions, so that their rate of out-migration and their involvement in the overall national economy and society is also lower than among these groups. There still seems to be some potential for "development" in the area, but relatively few of these chances have been realized so far.

2) The correct Swahili names, in their own language, are *Amaluyia* or *Amaluyia* (pl.) and *Amaluyia* (pl.) for the people, *Amaluyia* for the language and *Amaluyia* for the country. The term "Amaluyia" literally means "those of the Amaluyia". Different spellings of this word (e. g. *Amaluyia*, *Amaluyia* etc.) are also in use. As was the case with the other peoples, here again we employ the spelling which has become most commonly accepted in recent years.

3) Cf. table "Comparative data..." above.

CHAPTER 4: THE LUYIA:¹⁾

a.) General Background:

The Luyia²⁾ form the largest cluster of Bantu-speaking peoples in western Kenya. At the time of the last census in 1969 they numbered 1,450,000 members³⁾. Together with the Kisii (700,000) and the Kuria (60,000) they belong to the group of the "Western Bantu" in Kenya, which is linguistically further removed from the "Central" and "Coastal Bantu", but which has some closer linguistic "relatives" (e. g., the Soga and Ganda) in neighboring Uganda. A statement of this kind does not imply, however, that any feelings of a common "identity" or common political interests and affiliations exist between the "Western Bantu" of Kenya and their neighbors in Uganda. Even in

1) The "Bantu of North-Kavirondo" has formerly been the most common name for these peoples, which is also the title of the most comprehensive anthropological study of this group so far: Wagner, Günther, The Bantu of North-Kavirondo, 2 vols., London: Oxford University Press, 1949 and 1956. This name, however, apparently coined by Swahili traders, has no meaning in any of the Luyia dialects.

2) The correct designations, in their own language, are: Omuluyia or Muluyia (sing.) and Abaluyia (pl.) for the people, Luluyia for the language, and Buluyia for the country. The term "Abaluyia" literally means "those of the same tribe". Different spellings of this word (e. g. Luhyia, Luya etc.) are also in use. As was the case with the other peoples, here again we employ the spelling which has become most commonly accepted in recent years.

3) Cf. table "Comparative data..." above.

pre-colonial times contacts between these groups were rather limited. The colonial power drew a largely arbitrary borderline between them, but subsequent events, in particular the contrasting political developments in their respective countries after independence, have set them apart even further. A secession of some of these groups in one direction or another seems therefore highly unlikely. In any case, President Amin's claims in February 1976 for a change of the borderline in Uganda's favor met with strong resistance.⁴⁾ The alternative he could offer was, indeed, not very attractive.

The "Luyia" are not as homogeneous a group as, for example, the Kikuyu or Kamba. On the other hand, their "sub-tribes" (often called "ehili", pl. "edzihili") have more in common than the different groups of the "Kalenjin" and a feeling of common identity has started to develop among them in the last few decades. The largest of the eighteen sub-groups living in Kenya are the Bukusu (230,000)⁵⁾ who live on the southern slopes of Mount Elgon in the north of Luyia country, the Maragoli (120,000), Bunyori (96,000), Kisa (55,000) and Marama (48,000) who live in the southernmost part of the area, the Wanga (80,000) who inhabit the center, and the Kabras (74,000), Isukha (73,000), Tiriki (56,000) and Idakho (52,000) who reside in the eastern regions of the territory. The other groups are all smaller

4) Cf., e. g., The Weekly Review, February 23, 1976, pp. 3 ff. and some of the following editions.

5) These figures are taken from the listings by location of the 1969 census and give an approximate order of magnitude for each group. They do not include those who have migrated to other parts of Kenya, so that the total number for each group is still somewhat higher.

and have between 20,000 and 45,000 members each. In addition there are three Luyia sub-tribes who live across the border in Uganda, the Bagisu, Banyuli and Bagwere, together with a part of the Samia who live on both sides of the border. Altogether these related groups in Uganda have about 500,000 members today.

The traditional area of Luyia settlement lies between the southern slopes of Mount Elgon and the easternmost part of Lake Victoria (north of the "Kavirondo Gulf", today: "Winam Gulf"). It reaches from the Nandi Escarpment in the east to the Malaba and Sio Rivers in the west along a large section of the Uganda border. In the south there is no clear natural border dividing the Luyia and their southern neighbors, the Luo, who inhabit the shores of Lake Victoria as well as an area reaching between ten and sixty kilometers inland. Most of the territory lies at an altitude of between 1,200 and 1,800 m (4,000 to 6,000 ft.) and slowly descends from north to south and from east to west. The whole forms an undulating plain with only a few more conspicuous elevations. A remarkable feature of the area are the sometimes huge granite boulders which are scattered over the countryside. The whole territory is cut by many permanent streams and rivers which eventually all flow into Lake Victoria. The surface consists mainly of the very fertile red lateritised volcanic soil and the somewhat less fertile red, pink, or gray soils formed on granite. Rainfalls are sufficient (more than 1,000 mm. in most areas) and regular. Although the rainy seasons are not marked as clearly as in other parts of Kenya, the main periods of rainfall are between March and June and between October and December. Thus the area is well suited for almost all kinds of food and industrial crops (except those requiring a higher altitude like

pyrethrum); for many of them two harvests per year are possible.⁶⁾ In contrast to most other areas of Kenya mining also played a certain role for a short period. In the 1930s gold deposits were discovered near Kakamega and a miniature "gold-rush" set in at that time. The mine was, however, soon exhausted and all other findings of ores and minerals in this region have so far proved to be completely uneconomical.

Administratively, the whole of Luyia country (except for a tiny section in the Siaya district of neighboring Nyanza Province) is today part of Kenya's "Western Province" which was formed from the "Elgon Nyanza" and "North Nyanza" districts after independence. The area is divided into the three districts of Bungoma, Busia, and Kakamega with the city of Kakamega as provincial capital. Not all of Western Province is, however, inhabited by Luyia groups. Luo (about 6,000) and the "Southern Nilotic" Teso (62,000) also live in Busia District, and in Bungoma District near Mount Elgon some smaller Kalenjin groups (about 32,000 people altogether) have settled.

The total Luyia population is growing at an average rate of 3,6 % p. a., but in some of the rural areas this figure is as high as 4,0 % which is among the highest in the world and near the "biological maximum". This extremely high rate of growth has led to a very unfavorable age-distribution. More than 55 % of the population is less than 16 years old, representing the highest proportion

6) Cf. Republic of Kenya, Regional Physical Development Plan, Nyanza Province (which also includes an assessment of Western Province), Nairobi: Government Printer, 1970, pp. I - 1 ff..

of this age group for any part of Kenya.⁷⁾ In the total home area of 8,200 sq.km. the population density is 161 persons per sq.km.. In some parts, such as in North Maragoli in Kakamega District, the most crowded location, it reaches 545 persons per sq.km.. This is one of the highest rates for any rural area in the world and can only be compared, for example, to some parts of Bangla Desh. The rate of urbanization of 0,80 %, on the other hand, is the lowest for all of Kenya's provinces so that practically all people have to earn their living from agriculture. There are only 0,63 ha. of arable land per person in this territory which represents one of the lowest figures in Kenya. 42 % of all farms have less than two hectares, many of them consist of just one acre or less. Since the growth of the population is continuing almost unabatedly so far, it is clear that the "maximum land-holding capacity" will very soon be reached, in some areas the population is already well beyond this level.

Not surprisingly, therefore, Luyia country is also the area with the highest rate of out-migration in Kenya and 20 % of all Luyia today live outside their region of origin. The main thrust of this migration is directed toward the big city centers of Nairobi and Mombasa, but the chances of useful employment there are very limited in the long run. Even if some Luyia were given a chance to participate in some of the (quite limited!) settlement programs in Rift Valley Province or on the Tana River, migration alone is obviously no solution to the problems of the area.⁸⁾ In former times in situations of extreme overcrowding (or

7) Cf. ibid., pp. I - 10 ff..

8) For all these figures see table "Comparative data..."

under external pressure) people could move to other less inhabited areas and, indeed, the history of most African peoples tells of many migrations. But since international borderlines have been "frozen" by the colonial powers and interior areas of settlement have been quite clearly demarcated, no such outlet seems to be possible on a large scale. Thus most of the traditional sparsely populated Maasai grazing grounds, for example, which in some parts are also of high agricultural potential, have been preserved so far; the rights of the Maasai in the high-potential land in the immediate vicinity of Kisii district, another most highly populated area in Kenya, are still respected by the Kenyan government.

The historical origins of the Luyia people are largely lost in the African past, but some recent efforts have at least retrieved some valuable information concerning their more immediate history as well as a good deal of their probable migratory movements in the last few hundred years. Thus it seems clear today, that the "Luyia" are by no means an ethnically homogeneous group with a common origin and a corporate history. One of the major reconstructions, which is mostly based on the genealogies of the different clans of up to fifteen generations (i. e. about 400 years), sums up its findings in the following way:

"The southern half of Buluyia appears to have been peopled from four major sources. First, there is the category of the aboriginal inhabitants of Bantu origin who consisted of numerous quasi-sovereign communities. Then, early in the 16th century, immigrants of Kalenjin origin came into the country from the east and north-east of Mount Elgon, settled on that mountain, and eventually dispersed, leaving only a few remnants there. Some of them later wandered on to new settlements and gradually became Bantuised. By the beginning of the 18th century, more immigrants of Bantu origin had already arrived

from... modern southern Busoga, parts of southern Buganda, Bunyoli, Samia and Bugishu, a few of them would appear to have migrated from western Uganda (Ankole and Bunyoro and the adjoining part of the Congo Republic) at some earlier time. Finally, there is a group of immigrants whose Maasai (or Nandi) ancestors moved in, about the same time, either from the east or southeast, and became Bantuised."⁹⁾

The northern section was populated in a more direct migration from what is today eastern Uganda, when between about eleven and fifteen generations ago a major split occurred between the Bagishu, who stayed behind, and the Bukusu who moved into the area south of Mount Elgon.¹⁰⁾ But even then some amalgamation occurred with peoples already living in the area (like the Sirikwa or Dorobo) and incoming Kalenjin groups. This process of migration and amalgamation in northern Buluyia seems to have been completed only about four to six generations ago, between 1730 and 1840.¹¹⁾ Apart from this more recent history, most of the Abaluyia people claim originally to have come from "Misri" ("Egypt").¹²⁾ In light of our present knowledge it seems highly improbable that this term refers to the modern country of this name. It is more likely, that the traditional area of settlement of some of the Luyia people was situated somewhere in the present-day Sudan or Ethiopia.¹³⁾ The mythology of these peoples reaches even further back in time. Although there

9) Were, Gideon S., A History of the Abaluyia of Western Kenya, c. 1500 - 1930, Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1967, p. 79.

10) Cf., e. g., ibid., pp. 41 ff..

11) Cf. ibid., chapter 4, pp. 83 ff..

12) Cf., e. g., ibid., chapter 3; or Wagner, op cit., vol. I., Part I B.

13) For this view cf. also Were, op. cit., pp. 62 f..

is no particular "myth of origin", as is the case for the Kikuyu or Kamba,¹⁴⁾ it is generally believed that all Luyia are the descendants of Mugoma and Malaba (sometimes somewhat different names are also given) who were created by "Wele" (the Supreme Being)¹⁵⁾.

b.) The Economy:

The Luyia are mainly agriculturalists, but they also keep cattle, sheep and goats. They also do some hunting when the opportunity arises, though this has become less frequent nowadays. There is a certain difference in emphasis between the southern and the northern (e. g. Bukusu) groups; the former depend to a much larger degree on agriculture, whereas the latter keep more livestock. Traditionally, the main crops were sorghum, finger-millet, beans, peas, sweet potatoes and bananas. Today maize has become the staple food crop and some cash crops such as sugarcane and, in a few places, cotton and coffee are also grown.¹⁶⁾ In our sample practically all of the agricultural respondents grew some maize, about a third of which was of the "improved" variety. The other main food crops were finger-millet (or "eleusine"), beans and local temporary crops (like yams and cassava), which were cultivated each by about a quarter of the farmers. Sugarcane and coffee, as the main industrial crops, were planted by about one sixth of them. Cultivation is still done mostly

14) See chapters II, 1 and II, 2 above.

15) Cf., e. g., Wagner, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 168 f.; or Osogo, John, The Baluyia, Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1965, p. 8.

16) Cf., e. g., Statistical Abstract 1974, p. 125.

with the traditional hoe, but ox-drawn plows, the services of which can be hired by individual farmers, have become somewhat more common in recent years.

The main constraints on any kind of agricultural development in Luyia country are the very high population density and the corresponding very small average farm sizes, so that almost all land has to be used for mere subsistence. This factor has also led to a reduction in the number of cattle held in the more densely populated areas, since formerly existing communal grazing grounds have largely disappeared. Another factor is that cattle is not needed so much for the payment of bridewealth anymore, since many of these transactions are conducted in cash today. Nevertheless, cattle still are an important asset; milk and, on rare occasions, beef are valuable parts of the diet.

About half of our agricultural respondents kept some local cattle, the majority of them possessed less than 5 heads each, only a few (mainly from the Bukusu area) had more than 10. Those who had more sold small amounts of milk (usually less than 5 liters a day). About a quarter of the farmers possessed some goats and sheep, in most cases the total number was less than 5 per family. Chickens were quite popular. They were kept in small numbers by about 60 % of our agricultural respondents. The possibilities of more developed forms of "garden agriculture" (as practiced for example by many Kikuyu in the vicinity of Nairobi), are limited, even if the agricultural inputs and the know-how were available. The demand for fruits and vegetables from the nearest major urban center, Kisumu, is not very high and can easily be satisfied by deliveries from its more immediate neighborhood. Communications are also relatively poor and although some major all-weather

roads have been constructed in recent years, the necessary feeder roads are still mostly inadequate. The same limited marketing conditions apply, more or less, for dairy products and, because of the high cost, there are hardly any grade cattle in the area.¹⁷⁾

The situation is so extreme in some parts of Luyia country that the only "cash crop" available is the production of gravel from the granite boulders which can be found in many places. This is done, after the bigger boulders have been split up by the heat of a fire, by men sitting along the side of the road who crash the stones with big hammers until they have the size needed for road building or other construction work. Their product is then collected about once a week by a lorry from a construction company or a dealer in building materials. The average daily earnings of these men amount to about Kshs. 3.-- (about DM 1.-- or U.S. \$ 0.40). - One of the very few really lucrative occupations is the (legally prohibited!) production of "chang'aa", a traditional distilled liquor made of maize, bananas or sugarcane. This is mostly done by "expert" women in the secrecy of their huts and is rarely, if ever, detected by the government officials. There is a ready market for this product both in the immediate neighborhood, where some people spend their last penny on a drink of this kind, and in Kisumu or even Nairobi. (The "exports" to the latter destination are, however, frequently disturbed by police controls.) Both because of the hazardous nature of this product which involves grave risks of accidental poisoning through impurities or methyl alcohol, and, even if these could be controlled and eliminated, because of

17) Cf. also Regional Physical Development Plan, Nyanza Province, loc. cit..

more general considerations of public health, an encouragement of this production could hardly be seen as a solution to the problems of poverty and unemployment in the area.

One of the few brighter spots in this generally bleak picture has been the establishment of a sugar factory in Mumias in the center of Luyia country, which to a large extent obtains its cane from small-scale farmers in the vicinity. These generally have better incomes and are able to accumulate a surplus. But given the continuing high rate of population growth and the limited land area, even attempts of this kind may prove to be futile in the long run.

In terms of their level of agricultural "modernization" the Luyia occupy an intermediate position among Kenya's ethnic groups. In our sample about one fifth of the farmers had taken part in a course at a farmers' training center, one third had received advice from the agricultural extension service, and about one fifth had received a loan for agricultural improvements. Cattle-dips are generally available and they were used by all of our respondents who possessed some cattle. Almost 80 % of the farmers in our sample reported that they are planning some improvements on their shamba in the near future. This figure is comparable to that of the Kamba or Kalenjin, and it is almost as high as that of the Kikuyu. Most of these improvements referred to the planting of new or better crops. About two thirds of these respondents also stated that they were thinking of buying more land or grade cattle sometime. How realistic such plans are, remains to be seen, however.¹⁸⁾ Approximately 50 % of

18) Some other economic attitudes are also discussed in a comparative manner in Part III, chapter 3 below.

our agricultural respondents reported an average family income of less than Kshs. 100,-- per month, slightly more than 20 % had between Kshs. 100,-- and 200,--, about 30 % had incomes somewhat above this level.

Although there still is a considerable potential for a general increase in agricultural production (e. g. less than half of the maize planted so far is of the "improved" variety and more effective methods of cultivation, the use of fertilizer, etc., could give better yields), only a few are able and willing to pay for the required inputs. On the whole, therefore, a general pattern of "involuntary growths"¹⁹⁾ seems to prevail, where the increase in production is eaten up by the greater number of mouths to be fed and an almost Bangla Desh-like situation of extreme over-crowding and increasing poverty begins to emerge. The only alternative then, particularly for the young people, is "to hit the tarmac" (which is the local expression for the search for jobs elsewhere), but, as has been pointed out above, employment prospects in the towns or the chances of opening up new areas for agricultural settlement are not very bright either.

The majority of the rural Luyia population lives, as do most other agricultural peoples in Kenya, in single homesteads which are scattered across the countryside. In former times there were in some areas fortified villages surrounded by wooden walls and ditches (e. g. among the Bukusu) which protected the inhabitants during raids from neighbors. These were destroyed when, after "punitive expeditions" by the colonial power in the 1890s, the area

19) Cf., e. g., Hunter, Guy, Modernizing Peasant Societies, London: Oxford University Press, 1969.

was finally "pacified". An attempt to settle the Luyia in a more compact manner was made in the 1920s by Christian missions which encouraged the people to form so-called "mission-lines" with their homesteads, i. e. to resettle and to exchange their land in such a way that the individual houses formed two parallel rows on either side of the road, resembling some European types of villages. After a while, however, this program met with considerable resistance by some of those who had not been Christianized and who saw no reason why they should move from their traditional sites. In the 1930s, therefore, this idea was gradually abandoned and, on the whole, the program did not have a lasting impact on the pattern of settlement in the area.

The traditional system of land tenure among the Luyia in a number of aspects is similar to that of other Kenyan agricultural ethnic groups, but also shows some characteristic deviations parallel to some of the differences in the social structure and kinship system. The basic land-holding unit of the Luyia is the extended family consisting of the grandparents, the married sons and their families, and unmarried children. Traditionally they all built their houses on the same piece of property, but each elementary family cultivated its own field (Maragoli: "omulimi", pl.: "emilimi", the equivalent for the Swahili "shamba"). Rights of ownership were established either by inheriting a piece of the grandfather's land ("omulimi gwa guga"), by being apportioned a plot by one's father ("omulimi gwa dada"), or by cultivating a portion of virgin bushland ("oluangereka"). In addition to these plots owned by individual families, there used to be some sections which were under the control of the clan head ("eligutu"). A part of this land served as a communal grazing ground for all members of the

clan. Another part was traditionally held in reserve and in times of need could be allotted by the eligutu to individual clansmen whose property this land became after they had first cultivated it. Apart from the actual land owners ("omwene"), there were also tenants ("omumenya", pl.: "abamenya") in some areas who, not being members of the resident clan of the region, could only establish occupation rights on the land of an omwene. After some initial contributions to certain ceremonies on omumenya did not have to pay any rent or dues, and for most practical purposes his tenure was as secure after some years as that of an omwene.²⁰⁾

Land could be inherited only by male descendants, the eldest son getting the "ancestral land" ("omulimi gwa guga"), with the other sons inheriting equal parts from their father. Even sons who had left to work elsewhere retained their inalienable rights in a share of their father's property; neither by absence nor by letting the land revert to bush could they lose their claim. If a man died before his sons were grown, one of his brothers acted as a trustee until the sons came of age. If a man had no direct male descendants, his property was inherited by his brothers or their sons. The laws of inheritance, which are to a large extent still adhered to today, are responsible, together with the overall increase in population, for the extreme fragmentation of plots which has occurred in the last decades. In our sample almost three quarters of those respondents who gave a specific answer to our question in this respect stated that their property would be inherited by their sons, the rest said "by all children".

20) Cf. Wagner, op. cit., vol. II, pp. 75 ff..

Today all "land reserves" of the clans have been used up and, except for small fringes along the rivers or some completely inaccessible or rocky parts, there is no uncultivated bushland in Luyia country. The communal grazing grounds of the clans have largely disappeared. In the course of the general land reforms of the 1950s in Kenya, 95,6 % of all land has now been registered under individual title-deeds. This is the highest percentage, after that of the Kikuyu, for any small-scale farming area in Kenya. The average size of a holding in the total registered area is 2,5 ha, which is the same as for the Luo and somewhat more than in Kikuyu country, but considerably less than in Ukambani or among the Kalenjin. For Kakamega district alone this figure is only 1,5 ha which is, together with Kisii, the lowest for all of Kenya. The distribution of farm sizes shows that three quarters of all farms have less than 5 ha (42 % even less than 2 ha), 19 % comprise between 5 and 10 ha, and about 6 % have more than that. These last figures are somewhat "inflated" by the generally larger farms in Bungoma District. For Kakamega District alone, for example, the number of farms of more than 10 ha is only 1,8 % of the total, which, after the Kikuyu, is the lowest figure for all of the small-scale farming areas. Only 14,4 % of the total area is used for "pure" cash crops which is just about half the figure for the Kikuyu and the lowest for any agricultural people in Kenya.²¹⁾ The social differentiation among the rural Luyia is thus less pronounced than in most other parts of Kenya, but it is more an "equality in misery" than a positive indicator of a more "balanced" development.

21) For all these figures cf. table "Comparative data...".

The traditional division of labor among the Luyia is in many aspects quite similar to that of the other agricultural peoples. Within the family the duties of the members of each sex are clearly defined. The heavier burden here again lies on the wife who has to clean the house and the cattle section, fetch water, collect firewood, cook and look after the children. The greater part of the planting, weeding and harvesting is also done by her. The husband, on the other hand, has certain duties in the construction of the house, looks after the cattle and other livestock, and is responsible for all kinds of transactions concerning the transfer of livestock in kinship relations, which in former times were often quite time-consuming. In addition, apparently somewhat more than among the other peoples, he also helps out in the agricultural work.²²⁾ Today many husbands are absent and are seeking employment in the large-scale farming area (as far as it is still existing) and in the major urban centers (mostly Nairobi and Mombasa). In our Nairobi sample slightly more than half of our Luyia respondents reported, for example, that they also possessed a shamba or a share of one in their home area, which was the highest figure for any ethnic group. If they find a job, they provide their families at home with cash (a large proportion of which is used for school fees and similar expenses), and occasionally they receive some agricultural produce in return. This was the case for about one third of our respondents. Since the distances involved are usually much longer than, for example, for the Kikuyu or Kamba, contacts between the rural and the urban part of the family are much less

22) Cf. Wagner, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 41 f..

frequent. Thus widespread absentee farming is an effect, but also a contributing factor to the still rather low-level of agricultural development in the area.

Traditionally there were very few specialized occupations among the Luyia, the only major exceptions being the blacksmiths (who all belonged to the Abasamia clan), the medicine-men and rain-makers. For almost all other purposes the family was a self-sufficient unit. Thus the amount of goods traded between the different families, clans and sub-tribes traditionally has been very low. This has changed somewhat since the beginning of this century, and clothes, household goods, soap, spices and similar items are bought today in the local market centers and "dukas" (shops), but the purchasing power on the whole is still very low. 1,3 % of the total population in the home area is employed in non-agricultural occupations today, which is the lowest figure for all of the groups considered here. 0,20 % are self-employed in non-agricultural occupations in the modern sector.²³⁾

c.) Social and Political Structures:

The traditional social and political organization of the Luyia people shows many similarities to that of the other Bantu groups in Kenya, since it is also based mainly on a system of clans and age-sets. There are considerable differences, however, even among some of the Luyia sub-tribes themselves. The basic unit of Luyia society is the elementary family which consists of husband, wife or wives, and their unmarried children. These live

23) Cf. table "Comparative data...".

together in a common homestead ("litala") which, in areas where attacks by neighboring groups or wild animals could be expected, are surrounded by a thorny hedge. If a man has several wives, the huts of the wives are usually arranged in a circular order. The homesteads in most parts of Buluyia are scattered across the countryside. However, larger fortified villages ("tsingoba"), surrounded by a wide ditch and a wall and which comprised approximately up to five hundred people, could traditionally also be found among some peoples, such as the Bukusu, whose settlements were frequently raided by neighboring Nandi or Maasai groups in the east or the Teso in the west.

Apart from the individual family the most important social unit of the Luyia people is the clan ("oluhia", pl.: "edzimbia"). This is a territorial exogamous group which traces its descent patrilineally from a common famous ancestor who has given it his name. The genealogies of the clan, which are still remembered today by some elders, generally reach back between ten and twelve generations. The number of clans varies between the different Luyia sub-tribes²⁴⁾ and is not fixed by tradition or mythology (as, e. g., among the Kikuyu) and can change in the course of time by the splitting up of one clan into smaller sub-groups. Altogether today there are probably more than 700 clans among the Abaluyia. Each clan has a totem (as, e. g., among the Kamba, but unlike Kikuyu and Mijikenda clans) with which certain rituals and characteristic taboos and avoidances are connected and by which people used to swear, for example in ordeals, to prove their honesty.

24) Wagner counted more than 60 among the Bukusu, but only 9 among the Idhako, cf. Wagner, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 58 ff... The Bukusu are the only sub-group among whom clans and lineages did not constitute a territorial unit. For this point cf. de Wolf, Jan J., Differentiation and Integration in Western Kenya, The Hague: Mouton, 1977, p. 129.

In between the individual family and the clan there are a number of sub-groups or lineages (Maragoli: "anyumba"; "indzu" in other dialects, meaning "house", or "ekilivwa" which literally means "gate"). These comprise the direct patrilineal descendants of about three to four generations, all members of which are aware of the kind and degree of their mutual relationship. In former times the ekilivwa was also a residential unit living within a common enclosure (among the northern Luyia groups until well after the establishment of the British administration), but today the lineages are dispersed within the larger territory of the clan. Altogether there are several thousand lineages among the Luyia with their number varying over the course of time.²⁵⁾

In a vertical sense, traditional Luyia society was divided by a system of age-grades and age-sets, resembling to a certain extent that of the other Bantu peoples in Kenya. As was already described in the preceding chapters, the different stages in a person's life were set apart by certain "rites de passage" in these societies. For the Abaluyia the most significant among them in some groups was circumcision, performed when young men ("abasinde") were initiated into the first stage of adulthood ("abashebe"). Circumcision has not been, however, a universal feature among all Luyia sub-groups and in some parts of the country (more to the west and south) the custom of knocking out four (or sometimes six) lower incisors prevailed (also practiced by some Nilotic groups such as the Luo.²⁶⁾ The rationalization which is often given for the

25) Wagner lists 45 lineages for the 9 clans of the Idakho who in 1932 numbered 6.837 persons, which thus means an average of 762 per clan and of 152 per lineage.

26) See the next chapter of this part below.

latter practice is, that in cases of locked jaw (especially as a result of tetanus, apparently fairly common in former times) persons could still be fed by means of a pipe inserted through the gap between the teeth. Circumcision apparently was adopted from the neighboring Southern Nilotic peoples some centuries ago, but only for boys. Girls were never operated upon as among the Kikuyu, Maasai, etc.. Traditionally the average age of circumcision for a young man was about 18 - 20 years, i. e. when a boy had reached full physical and mental maturity, and not at the time of puberty, as, e. g., among the Kikuyu.

Circumcision ceremonies used to take place every three to four years on the average, at a time set by the elders of all clans belonging to the same sub-tribe, usually after the main harvest in August. Although, except among the Tiriki, there were no official meetings of representatives of all clans for this purpose, an informal understanding was always reached, so that all clans of the same group performed the circumcisions at the same time and at the same intervals. All those who were circumcized together then formed an age-set (Maragoli: "elikula", pl. "amakula"; Bukusu: "luvaga", pl. "tjimbaga") which became known by its individual name. The names chosen among most of the Luyia groups referred to particular events of this period (such as a famine, a war, a particular meteorological event, etc.) and thus established a chronological order, as was the case among the Kikuyu. Among the Tiriki, on the other hand, the names for the age-sets formed a cycle of twelve periods which repeated itself indefinitely (as, e. g., among the Giriama). The Bukusu, alone among Luyia people, also grouped six "tjimbaga" into a "sisingilo", which thus constituted a system resembling that of the "generation-sets" of some of the other Kenyan ethnic groups.

On the whole, this system seems to have had little functional significance for the Bukusu and apparently had been borrowed from one of the neighboring peoples. The last common circumcision for all clans took place in 1911 among the Maragoli, but among the Tiriki the system was still intact in the 1930s.²⁷⁾ Today, if the operation is still performed at all, it is usually done in hospitals on an individual basis and has lost most of its social significance. Whereas practically all the respondents in our rural Luyia sample were able to give the name of their clan, only about half of them stated that they belonged to a particular age-set.

The traditional political organization of the Luyia peoples was in many ways as diffuse as that of most other Kenyan groups, but in some aspects additional hierarchical and centralized elements can be identified. The most immediate level of day-to-day decision-making in Luyia society used to be that of the "clan". Being also a territorial unit (unlike, for example, its Kikuyu and Kamba counterparts) it can be said to have been the basic element of traditional political life, although its cohesion and internal structures were exclusively based on kinship ties. Accordingly, the internal pattern of decision-making within the clan was based on a hierarchical system of family relations. The highest authority in this structure was vested in the "head" of the clan, who was usually its most senior and most respected elder (Maragoli: "omukulundu munene", i. e. "the great elder"; Bukusu: "omugasa munene", "the

27) Wagner, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 334 ff.. Some of the special features of the Tiriki are also discussed, for example, in Sangree, Walter H., "The Bantu Tiriki of Western Kenya", in: Gibbs, James L. (ed.), Peoples of Africa, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965, pp. 41 - 79; or Sangree, Walter H., Age, Prayer and Politics in Tiriki, Kenya, London: Oxford University Press, 1966.

great arbitrator"; Wanga: "eligutu linene", "the great clan elder"; "eligutu" also means the supporting post of a hut). The clan-head was not formally selected or installed by any particular procedure, but he often was the first-born son of a particularly respected and wealthy family within the clan. His "birth-rights" alone, however, were not sufficient to qualify him as a leader and he also had to prove himself as a courageous warrior in younger years and as a wise councillor and arbiter when he became older. He had to serve, for example, as an "omuseni" who comforted the next of kin at the funeral of a deceased person and watched over the just distribution of his property. On the whole, seniority was thus the most important aspect in acquiring a position of leadership. Not only the generally accepted experience and wisdom of an old person, but also the fact that he would soon join the spirit world of the ancestors from where, if displeased, he could haunt the living, added particular weight to his authority.²⁸⁾ A clan leader usually did not act in any authoritarian manner, however, and was assisted in his decisions by a council ("eshiina") of other leading elders ("abakhulundu") who met in the "oluhia", the public meeting place of a clan. In addition, open "barazas" where everyone could come and listen and where all adult men could speak were not infrequent.²⁹⁾

As an exogamous unit, however, a clan could, by definition, never become a self-sufficient social and political entity.

28) Cf. Wagner, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 76 ff., see also his contribution "The Political Organization of the Bantu of Kavirondo" in: Fortes, M. and Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (eds.), African Political Systems, London: Oxford University Press, first edition 1940, pp. 197 ff..

29) Cf., e. g., Osogo, op. cit., pp. 63 ff.

It therefore depended on good relations with neighboring clans with which intermarriage was practiced. These inter-clan relationships among most Luyia peoples did not, however, lead to the establishment of more formal political structures beyond the level of the clan. The most important features of inter-clan relations within a "sub-tribe" were their common descent from a remote ancestor and the uniformity of certain regular rituals and ceremonies. These included in particular the circumcision ceremonies, which took place among all clans of a "tribe" at the same time and in the same way. These ceremonies also established a certain feeling of solidarity among those who belonged to the same "age-sets" which were created in this way. For most practical purposes, however, such as the organization of warfare or the administration of justice, no permanent political institutions existed at the tribal level. In some areas some clans and their leaders were somewhat more dominant than others and more lasting alliances existed between a dominant and some of the more subordinate groups.

Between the different Luyia "sub-tribes" relationships were even more restrained. Since all of them were more or less self-sufficient units, there was very little trade between them (a major exception being iron hoes made by the Samia) and intermarriage was also not very frequent. Each sub-group identified some of the others as "friendly", in most cases due to a perceived common descent from a famous ancestor in the past. These were not raided for cattle, girls or food, as used to be the case with the others with whom they lived in an almost permanent state of war. Thus the Bukusu, for example, maintained peaceful relations with the Gishu in the west and the Kabras in the east, but were deadly enemies of

most of the other neighboring groups. In the same way relatively good relations existed between the Wanga and Marama, the Tachoni and the Nyala, the Maragoli and the Idakho, etc.. But even hostilities between the different sub-groups never extended to the whole tribe as such and were always confined to the particular clan which was affected by attacks from one of its neighbors.³⁰⁾

The most striking exception to this pattern of rather diffuse tribal "government" in Luyia country was the establishment of the "Kingdom" of Wanga which resembled in some ways the traditional kingdoms in neighboring Uganda.³¹⁾ Its origins go back about 11 - 14 generations, i. e. to some time near the beginning of the 17th century, when, according to oral tradition, Wanga, a representative of a leading clan of the Tiriki ("Abalukhoba"), and some of his people settled in the area near the present-day town of Mumias. After some time they succeeded in submitting the local Abamuima clan to their overrule, and thus founded the new dynasty of the "Abashitsetse". Wanga established a hereditary monarchy based on male primogeniture with himself as "King" ("Nabongo"). His successors had varying fortunes, but at the time when the first Europeans arrived in this area they found the only centralized polity on the territory of the present state of Kenya. Most

30) Cf., e. g., Wagner, in: Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., pp. 224 ff., or Were, op. cit., pp. 131 ff..

31) Cf., e. g., Mair, Lucy, Primitive Government, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1962; or Fallers, Lloyd A., Bantu Bureaucracy, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965.

instrumental for the fortunes of this monarchy was the employment of a group of Uasin Gishu Maasai as warriors at the court of the Nabongo and, at a later stage, the purchase of firearms from caravans of Arab and Swahili traders. The "Kingdom of Wanga" comprised twelve major clans, which were all off-shoots of the original Abashitsetse, and 18 others which had immigrated at a later time and had submitted themselves to the rule of the Nabongo.

The Wanga were thus the only Luyia sub-tribe which was united under a single political leader. At the time of the arrival of the British they probably numbered about 20,000 people (1932 census: 26,187). The last king was Mumia, who welcomed the British and at whose court they established their first provincial headquarters in 1894. In the same year the whole of "Kavirondo" (the fictitious name which was first used for what today are "Nyanza" and "Western" Provinces) initially became a part of the British Protectorate over Uganda.³²⁾ In 1902 the area was transferred to the British "East African Protectorate", the present-day Kenya. In recognition of his services for the colonial power Mumia was made "Paramount Chief" of the Luyia peoples in 1909, following the concept of "indirect rule" employed in other parts of the British Empire. He managed to install Wanga "chiefs" as administrative heads of all other Luyia sub-tribes, but these, having no traditional basis for their power and being resented by many of their subjects, were gradually replaced by headmen of the respective local clans. The office of "Paramount Chief" was also abolished when Mumia retired in 1926.³³⁾

32) President Amin based his claim for this territory on this fact, see footnote 4 of this chapter.

33) For this period cf. also Were, op. cit., chapter 7, pp. 155 ff..

In modern times the cultural and social interests of the Luyia peoples are to a certain extent represented by the "Abaluyia Association". This is a "tribal welfare organization" on the lines of the "New Akamba Union" or the "Mijikenda Union", for example. On the whole, however, the membership and the activities of this association are rather limited. The main instrument for most Luyia for an articulation of more directly political aims in the period immediately preceding and following Kenya's independence was the "Kenya African Democratic Union" (KADU), which had a strong following in this area. Since the merger with KANU in 1964, no separate official political organization with any sizeable following has come into existence, and the support for the "Kenya Peoples' Union" (KPU) between 1966 and 1969 remained very limited, too.

d.) Some Significant Cultural Aspects:

Although, as we have seen, the Luyia peoples consisted of socially and politically fragmented groups in former times, they nevertheless share many common cultural features. There were no considerable differences in their traditional system of education, for example, and the socializing structures resemble in many aspects that of the other peoples in Kenya.³⁴⁾ The methods of education also seem to fall in line with those of most of the other groups, both in the parents' and the present generations. If anything, the way children were punished seems to have been somewhat less severe among the Luyia than, in particular, among the Mijikenda and Maasai. As far as modern, formal edu-

34) See also the respective sections on the Kikuyu and Kamba above.

cation is concerned, the Luyia have, after the Kikuyu, the highest rate of "minimal literacy" in Kenya (43 % of the adult rural population) and the second highest rate of secondary school enrollment.³⁵⁾ This is all the more remarkable, since, as has been pointed out above, the general standard of living is poor and the Luyia home districts offer very few possibilities for the gainful employment of all those who leave school.

Even for the parents' generation the percentage of those who have received some kind of formal education, comparable only to that of the Kikuyu, is rather high. In our sample more than a quarter of the fathers and almost 10 % of the mothers of our respondents had had some schooling, which is probably a reflection of the high degree of Christianization in the area. The amount of school fees paid by our respondents is also quite remarkable, particularly in view of the relatively low incomes. More than 40 % of our respondents who had children in school stated that they were paying more than Kshs. 400,-- per year, which, again together with the Kikuyu, is the highest figure for any of the ethnic groups considered here.

The traditional religion of the Luyia people has many things in common with those of the other Bantu groups. At the apex of their religious belief system stands the "Supreme Being" who is most often called "Wele" or "Were", but sometimes also "Nyasai" (e. g. in Maragoli, similar to the term employed by the neighboring Luo), "Asai" (resembling the term "Asis" of some of the Kalenjin peoples), or "Emungu" (not unlike the "Mulungu" or "Mungu" of the

35) Cf. table "Comparative data...".

36) Cf., e. g., Vagstad, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 157 ff..

Kamba and some coastal peoples). Wele is the creator of man and the world and the moving force behind everything happening. He resides in the sky ("yigulu", literally: "above"), but he is also of an ubiquitous nature. His help and protection is invoked at numerous occasions and sacrifices are offered to him during the most important private and public ceremonies, such as at funerals, initiation ceremonies, or common rituals to secure good harvests. On the whole, however, Wele is not a personal god in the sense of being the moral arbiter of individual and collective behavior. Among the Bukusu a further distinction is made between "Wele Omuwanga" (the "white god") who is the benevolent creator and his somewhat "junior" evil counterpart, "Wele Gumali", the "black god", who, together with other evil spirits, troubles people and brings them illness. If the analogy is not carried too far, "Wele Gumali" can perhaps be compared to the Christian and Judaic notion of "Satan", who is also considered to be the source of all evil.³⁶⁾

At a more immediate level, the spirits of the ancestors (Maragoli: "ekigingi"; Bukusu: "musambwa", pl.: "emisambwa") dominate the religious thoughts and practices of the Luyia as they do among the other Bantu groups in Kenya. When a person dies the "heart" ("omwoyo"), thought to be the center of feeling and thinking and of one's self-consciousness, and the "shadow" (Maragili: "ekilili"; Bukusu: "sisinini"), which can be conceived of as one's physical energy and driving force, leave the body ("ombili") and form an immaterial being which still retains all the qualities and the personality of the deceased. One of the main functions of a solemn funeral is to placate the spirit

36) Cf., e. g., Wagner, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 167 ff..

and to reunite the family and the community at large, because suspicions of sorcery and evil magic after a person's death are always prevalent. For some months after a funeral the "ekigingi" still receives a share of the food and drinks at the major daily meals. At the end of this period the spirit is thought to "cool off" slowly and to take his residence now in the spirit land which is thought to lie "under the earth" ("hasi"). The "ekigingi" still receives sacrifices at major occasions, such as at various initiation ceremonies or when the family has been overcome by a particular illness or misfortune. These sacrifices are performed by a clan-elder or, at the most important occasions, by the chief sacrificial priest of the clan ("omusalisi munene"). The omusalisi must be a member of the oldest lineage, but the office as such is not hereditary and he is chosen solely on personal grounds, in particular for his unblemished character and the confidence the clansmen place in him.

At an even later stage, when the memories of the dead person have begun to dwindle, the initially "personal" spirit of the deceased becomes more and more anonymous and he then joins the general spirit world where no personal links exist anymore between the dead and the living.³⁷⁾

On the whole, the attitudes of the living toward the spirits of the deceased remain rather ambiguous. On the one hand, they are, at least in the beginning, still part of the family and thus share the daily joys and sorrows. On the other hand, the spirits are feared because of their supernatural powers and the grudge they may still harbor against some of the persons they knew during their lifetime. In particular the spirits of quarrelsome persons

37) Cf. ibid., pp. 159 ff. and pp. 277 ff..

or suspected sorcerers are greatly feared, because they still retain their former qualities. These evil-minded spirits ("visieno") are thought to become the helpers of the "black god" who brings nothing but misfortune and sickness.

As we have also seen with the other ethnic groups discussed so far, there is no clear dividing line between the "religious" and "transcendental" spheres and the work of magic powers in everyday life. Thus in many instances some kind of promotive or preventive magic is applied both by ordinary tribesmen and certain specialists. Certain observances, for example concerning the planting of crops or the preparation of food, or blessings or curses uttered at certain occasions or concerning certain persons are very frequent. In a somewhat different category fall the rites which become necessary if a person has contracted "ritual impurity" ("luswa") by not paying attention to certain taboos or by some accident of nature, for example if an infant cuts its upper teeth before the lower ones. In these cases the persons concerned must undergo a number of purification rites by which the "luswa" is removed.³⁸⁾

Among the specialists practicing different kinds of magic three major categories can be distinguished: those who practice mostly good magic for puritive or protective purposes ("ombila", pl. "avavila"), the practitioners of evil magic ("omulogi", pl. "avalogi") and the "rain-makers" ("omugimba", pl. "avagimba"). The avavila (often translated as "medicine-men", sometimes "witch doctors")

38) Cf. ibid., pp. 106 ff..

are recognized experts in their field who acquire their knowledge in an extended apprenticeship either from their fathers or, for a fee, from an unrelated well-known ombila. In a variety of ways the avavila use herbs and roots to cure their patients or to prepare amulets and similar items to protect them from harm by others. They receive considerable payment for their services and are therefore usually wealthy and respected persons. Not all the magic employed by avavila is of the beneficial kind, however, and a number of them are feared for their potentially lethal powers.

Of a totally evil nature are the avalogi ("witches"). They perform their magic in secrecy, usually at night, and nobody ever openly admits doing so. In contrast to the learned knowledge of an ombila, an omulogi must possess an inherited predisposition for the practice of his powers. Thus members of certain clans, e. g. the Vakitwika among the Bukusu, are particularly feared for the evil forces they can wield and it is believed that in many instances the powers of an omulogi are transmitted from father to son, both by inheritance and explicit teaching. The fact of being an omulogi can "break forth" against the will of the person himself and this trait, whether imaginary or real, can thus be compared to being "possessed" by an evil power. If a suspected omulogi was detected and convicted, often by an ordeal, he was publicly put to death.³⁹⁾

39) Cf., ibid., pp. 111 ff..

A third "specialist" in the field of magic is the "rain-maker" (omugimba). This is somewhat paradoxical since this part of the country is generally well-watered and has abundant rainfall, unlike the eastern part of Ukambani, for example, where "services" of this kind would be much more needed. On the other hand, the fact that there is sufficient rainfall anyhow makes, of course, the task of these experts much easier. The secrecy of rain-making, unlike the knowledge of the much more common avavila, is strictly guarded by the heads of certain families (the most famous among the Luyia is one in Bunyore) who pass on their knowledge to one of their sons only when their death is imminent. The services of an omugimba are sought usually once a year at the end of the major dry season, i. e. in the month of December. His clientele is not restricted to members of his own sub-tribe; he receives tributes from many parts of Luyia country as well. All rain-maker families have become quite wealthy in the course of time and the omugimba of Bunyore, for example, once was said to have "so many wives that he cannot count them".⁴⁰⁾

Today 94 % of all Luyia are members of Christian churches which is by far the highest percentage for any ethnic group in Kenya.⁴¹⁾ This "Christianization" does not mean, however, that all traditional customs and beliefs in the realm of religion and magic have been abandoned. Thus many avavila are still at work and witchcraft is still greatly feared and suspected in many instances. It can probably be said that together with the Kamba and some coast peoples,

40) Quoted in ibid., p. 152.

41) Cf. table "Comparative data...".

the Luyia are among those groups in Kenya who are still most afraid of sorcery and witchcraft. "Rain-making" has also survived to the present day, although the public collection of tributes for the omugimba has been prohibited by the colonial power in 1927 and stopped since then. A considerable number of private offerings are still made, however.

Luyia country and the rest of western Kenya also seem to be particularly susceptible for the activities of a variety of foreign missions, including some of the weirdest sects. In addition, a large number of "African Independent Churches" have sprung up in recent years and of the total of 156 listed in the official "Kenya Churches Handbook" at least 28 have predominantly Luyia membership (this is the third largest number after the Luo and Kikuyu), whereas there are hardly any among the Kalenjin and Mijikenda and none among the Maasai.⁴²⁾ The origins of many of these churches are rather obscure and in many instances they center around some rather petty theological or ceremonial issues or certain personalities. Only a few of them have more than a few hundred adult members. One of these churches was reportedly founded when a woman saw the "Virgin Mary" in one of her dreams. When she gave birth to a son some time later she called him "Jesus" and spread the story of "His Second Coming". "Jesus" proved to be quite successful and gathered a considerable group of followers. Today he drives a big car and, in contrast to his "predecessor", obviously enjoys the material benefits of his position.

42) Ibid.

42) Cf. Kenya Churches Handbook, loc. cit., pp. 184 ff.

As far as some of the other significant cultural features of the Luyia people are concerned, many of them are again contained in the oral literature. A number of proverbs, for example, stress the values of cooperation and family solidarity which we have also found in most of the other groups. It seems to be characteristic however, that many of the features expressed in the sources we have at hand are balanced by counter-statements and that an attitude of caution and even suspicion generally seems to prevail. Thus, although material wealth is obviously desirable for many people, its attraction is down-graded, for example, by sayings like "olia eshititi orafwimba inda" ("it is no use eating too much if it is going to cause you stomach ache"⁴³) or "oukhumechera akhwaya khumoni" ("anyone who gives food to you as a favor gets a chance to control you"⁴⁴). This ties in with some other observations that a kind of "levelling attitude" can often be found among the Luyia and that anyone who is getting too rich too quickly is often suspected of employing witchcraft. In some cases, we were told, even the houses of some successful economic "innovators" were burned down by envious or suspicious fellow tribesmen. A somewhat related attitude also seems to be expressed in the proverb "ing'u yeweng'u yikhulia yakhulekerera"⁴⁵ (literally: "the hyena from nearer home will eat and leave at least a part of you", which means that it is better to accept the evil you understand than the good which you do not).

43) Osogo, op. cit., p. 7.

44) Ibid..

45) Ibid., p. 8.

One more feature which seems to be remarkable and which is in relatively strong contrast to many of the other Kenyan peoples (e. g. the Kikuyu, Kamba or Maasai) is the "code of ethics" concerning the accepted norms of sexual behavior. Premarital sexual intercourse traditionally was not allowed and high value was placed on a bride's virginity. Extramarital relations, at least of women, were strongly sanctioned and on the whole a rather "Puritan" set of morals seems to have prevailed.⁴⁶⁾ Still today a girl who has had the misfortune of becoming pregnant before marriage finds herself in a rather miserable position which occasionally leads to desperate attempts of abortion or even suicide.

The stereotypes which are widely held in Kenya confirm this general picture to a certain degree. The Luyia are generally regarded as friendly and rather peaceful, and are said to have strong feelings of kinship concerning their clans and sub-tribes. They are not considered to act in a tribalistic manner at the national level, however, as it is thought to be the case with the Kikuyus. The Luyia are often feared for witchcraft and the potentially lethal powers (e. g. also poisonous snakes) they may employ. Economically they are not very outstanding, but they are well-known for their skill in their favorite sport, soccer. The occasional practice of sodomy is also associated with the general image of the Luyia. As far as this actually occurs, it is perhaps related to the relatively strict sexual morals of the Luyia which we have already mentioned, although traditionally such acts were

46) Cf., e. g., also Lukalo, R. Sarah M., "The Maragoli of Western Kenya", in: Molnos, Angela (ed.), op. cit., vol. III, pp. 134 ff..

condemned and were thought to cause a person to fall into "luswa" (ritual impurity).

In concluding this section, we can state that the Luyia today combine two significant aspects which make them particularly noteworthy in view of their potential as a future political conflict group in Kenya. On the one hand, due to the very high population density and the lack of non-agricultural employment opportunities in their home area, their general standard of living is very poor, a large part of them seem to be enmeshed in a pattern of "involutionary growth", if not outright and increasing "underdevelopment". On the other hand, the level of formal education among them is rather high, which makes them all the more aware of their present plight. Not surprisingly, therefore, the percentage of those in our sample who stated that they were "somewhat" or "very dissatisfied" with their present way of life was the highest for any of the ethnic groups we are discussing here. What this means in terms of their potential for conflict at the inter-ethnic and overall national level will, we hope, become somewhat clearer in the subsequent parts of this study.

CHAPTER 5: THE LUO:¹⁾

a.) General Background:

In contrast to all other ethnic groups considered so far, the Luo belong to the "Nilotic" family of peoples, more specifically, the "Western Nilotic" group of languages.²⁾ This term originally referred to ethnic groups living in the Upper Nile Valley which shared a number of common

- 1) The proper designation in their own language is Joluo (sing: Jaluo) for the people and Dholuo for the language.
- 2) Among linguists there has been a considerable controversy about the proper use of this term and the corresponding notion of "Nilo-Hamitic" which is used, e. g., for the Kalenjin peoples, the Maasai etc.. Tucker and Bryan maintain the usefulness of this distinction (cf. Tucker, Archibald N. and Bryan, Margaret A., Linguistic Analysis: The Non-Bantu Languages of North-Eastern Africa, London: Oxford University Press, 1966), whereas Greenberg regards both "Nilotic" and "Nilo-Hamitic" as a common "Nilotic" sub-group of the "Eastern-Sudanic" category in his classification of African languages (cf. Greenberg, Joseph H., "The Languages of Africa", in: International Journal of American Linguistics, Part II, 29 (I), 1963). In recent years Greenberg's usage, who further distinguishes between "Western Nilotic" (e. g. the Luo), "Southern Nilotic" (e. g. the Kalenjin), and "Eastern Nilotic" (e. g. the Maasai) sub-groups, seems to have become the more accepted one. For this point cf., e. g., also, Heine, Bernd, "Sprachen und Sprachprobleme in Kenia", in: Leifer, Walter (ed.), Kenia, Tübingen: Erdmann-Verlag, 1977, pp. 251 - 267.

physical, linguistic and cultural characteristics.³⁾ The Luo are subdivided into more than thirty sub-tribes ("oganda", pl. "ogendini" or, chiefly referring to the common territory held by this group, "piny"). The majority of these sub-tribes have between 20,000 and 100,000 members each. The differences among these groups are not as great, however, as, for example, among the Luyia and, although there has never been any common political organization for all of them, a sense of a common identity has existed for quite some time.

The Luo area of settlement is extended all around what today is called the "Winam" (formerly: "Kavirondo") Gulf, the easternmost part of Lake Victoria. In the north it consists of the hilly highlands adjacent to Luyia country. In the east it comprises the vast and partly swampy plains stretching to the elevations of the Tinderet Forest which are bordered by the Nyando Escarpment and the Nandi Hills in the north and the highlands of Kericho District in the southeast. In the south Luo country reaches the Tanzanian Border and is again generally hilly in character. The altitude of this area lies between the level of Lake Victoria (1,133 m) and 1,200 m (4,000 ft.) of the plains, the so-called "Lake Shore Savannah Zone" and between 1,200 and 1,800 m for most of the rest. A few elevations such as the Gwasi Hills in the south reach altitudes of more than 2,200 m.

3) For a more comprehensive discussion of these groups cf., e. g., Butt, Audrey, The Nilotes of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and Uganda, London: International African Institute, 1952, which is part IV of the section on East Central Africa of the Ethnographic Survey of Africa edited by Daryll Forde. The most comprehensive Bibliography on the Kenya Luo is Carole DuPré's The Luo of Kenya - An Annotated Bibliography, ICR Studies 3, Washington, D. C.: Institute for Cross-Cultural Research, 1968.

Bordering the equator, the climate is generally warm. Most of the territory has a sufficient average rainfall of between 750 and 1,000 mm in the lakeshore zone and above 1,000 mm in most of the rest of the territory. Most rains come in the form of thunderstorms, however, causing a rather irregular geographical distribution and considerable annual differences for a particular area. The main rainy seasons are from March to June and from October to December. The area is drained by many permanent streams and rivers which eventually all flow into Lake Victoria. Some parts, such as the plains south of Kisumu and the westernmost section of Siaya District, are quite swampy, however, and occasional floods in the lower parts also hamper agricultural development. Proper drainage and regulated irrigation in these areas, which have already been started in some parts, could reduce this problem in the future. The soil mainly consists of the moderately fertile red, pink or gray granite in most of the hilly parts of the territory and the fertile but difficult to work "Black Cotton Soil" in the plains. A few parts of the territory such as the Gwasi Hills and the Olambwe Valley in the south and Uyoma, Asembo and Sakwa locations in Siaya District are still affected by tsetse fly infestation, which makes them unsuitable for the keeping of livestock and unfavorable for human settlement. As recently as the first decade of this century a great part of the lakeshore population was decimated by a major outbreak of the sleeping sickness transmitted by this insect. Of the total land area of 10,330 sq.km., 10,050sq.km. (i. e. 97,3 %) are classified as belonging to the highest category.⁴⁾ however,

4) Cf., e. g., Republic of Kenya, Physical Regional Development Plan - Nyanza Province, Nairobi, 1970.

in view of the above-mentioned difficulties, the total agricultural potential of Luo country is somewhat lower than many parts of the Luyia area or the neighboring very fertile Kericho and Kisii Districts, but still much higher than, for example, most parts of Ukambani or the Coast Province.

In administrative terms almost all of Luo country lies within the boundaries of present day "Nyanza Province" with Kisumu town as its capital. It consists of the three districts of Siaya in the north, Kisumu in the east and South Nyanza ("Homa Bay") in the south. The fourth district in Nyanza Province, Kisii, is almost entirely inhabited by the Bantu-speaking group of this name. A small section of the Bantu-speaking Kuria people also lives in the south-eastern part of South Nyanza. Before 1967 Siaya and Kisumu Districts together formed the District of "Central Nyanza". In colonial times it was called "Central Kavirondo" and formed part of the larger Kavirondo Province, which also included the present-day "Western Province".

The total Luo population numbered 1,52 million people in 1969 which makes them, after the Kikuyu, the second largest ethnic group in Kenya. 1,32 million (i. e. 87 %) of them lived in the traditional home area in Nyanza, the rest has moved temporarily at least to Kenya's major urban centers and some parts of the large-scale farming zone in Rift Valley Province. The average rate of population growth between 1962 and 1969 was 3,5 % which is in the same high order of magnitude as that of most of the other agricultural peoples in Kenya. The population density in the home area is very high and has presently reached about 140 persons per sq. km., a figure second only to that for the Luyia. This high density leaves only 0,76 ha. of high potential agricultural land per person which is about the same as for the other densely populated areas in Kenya, but much less than, for example, for

9) Ogot, Bethwell A., *History of the Southern Luo*, vol. 1.
Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1967.

the Kalenjin. The rate of urbanization of 2,61 %, however, is higher than in Luyia country and, together with the Kikuyu and Mijikenda, is among the highest for Kenya's agricultural peoples.⁵⁾

The origins of the Luo people are, as is the case with most of the other groups considered here, still quite obscure. Legend has it, that Podho (or Apodtho) was created by Jok (a divine being) and settled at Ramogi Hill, a place in northern Uganda from where one of his sons, who was also called Ramogi, came to Nyanza and settled at a place in Kadimo in the westernmost part of present day Siaya District, which again was called Ramogi Hill. From there, it is believed, all Luo living in Kenya originated.⁶⁾

In more concrete historical terms the actual origin and the pattern of migration of the Luo people have been somewhat more complicated. A first major attempt to establish their origin and early migrations going back to about the year 1000 A. D. has been made by Father Crazzolaro.⁷⁾ A number of his hypotheses, however, are of a rather speculative nature and have been disputed by others.⁸⁾ On somewhat safer ground is Ogot's reconstruction of the period after about A. D. 1500, which is based on oral traditions and lineage genealogies.⁹⁾ According to this study the cradle of Kenya's present day Luo population was probably situated

5) See table "Comparative data..." above.

6) Cf., e. g., Hobley, C. W., "Anthropological Studies in Kavirondo and Nandi", Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, vol. XXXIII, (1903), pp. 324 - 359.

7) Cf. Crazzolaro, J. Pasquale, The Lwoo, 3 vols., Verona: Museum Combonianum, 1950.

8) Cf., e. g., Okot p' Bitek, Religion of the Central Luo, Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1971.

9) Ogot, Bethwell A., History of the Southern Luo, vol. I, Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1967.

somewhere in what today is the southern part of the Sudan. Very little is known about this period, however, and it is clear that only about between 15 and 16 generations ago (i. e. around A. D. 1500) the first group of Luo arrived in the westernmost part of modern Nyanza Province. Being a people of nomadic and semi-nomadic pastoralists at this time they gradually moved into this area, apparently without any major wars or resistance by other groups. It seems clear today that this immigration did not take place in a single big movement, but that different Luo lineages arrived separately and at different times. Altogether, Ogot distinguishes four big waves of immigrants who arrived in Nyanza between about A. D. 1500 and 1700. After the area of the present day Siaya District had first been occupied, some groups split off again and moved further south (some of them apparently by crossing the Winam Gulf by boat) into the present districts of Kisumu and South Nyanza. The last settlers there seem to have arrived only about three to four generations ago, i. e. towards the middle of the last century. These people mingled in part with some of the earlier residents in the area; in a process of gradual adaptation and amalgamation the present population emerged. In the course of time the Luo also became sedentary and took up an agricultural way of life, partly because further movements were blocked by agricultural Bantu people in the north (Luyia) and southeast (Kisii and Kuria) and by the fierce Nandi, Kipsigis and Maasai groups in the northeast and east. The process of further migration and expansion was finally frozen when the territory came under British administration in 1895 and became part of the "East African Protectorate" in 1902. The newly-built railroad which reached the port of Kisumu on Lake Victoria in the same year then permanently linked Luo country to the rest of Kenya of which it is an integral part today. A section of the land lying between the railroad

and the Nyando Excarpment in the Kano Plains became a part of the "alienated" areas in colonial times, and still today most of it is used for large-scale sugar plantations and sugar factories, the majority of which are owned by Asians.

b.) The Economy:

Originally all "Nilotic" peoples pursued a predominantly pastoral way of life; the Nuer and Dinka, for example, still do so to a large extent.¹⁰⁾ Only in more recent time have some of them settled and become agriculturalists. To this latter group belong the Luo, who, after they had completed their migration into their present area of settlement, turned more and more to agricultural production. Among the reasons for this change are the limitations of space, the increase in the population epidemics of rinderpest which wiped out a great number of cattle during the last century, and certain factors of cultural adaptation and assimilation. They still keep, wherever possible, large numbers of cattle, sheep and goats. A number of Luo group living along the shores of Lake Victoria or near larger rivers and streams have become skilled fishermen, and fish today is a nutritious and well-liked part of the Luo diet. Many of them are also fond of hunting, although nowadays there is not very much game left in their area of settlement.

Even though most Luo today are dependent on agriculture for their subsistence, many of them still regard it as more of a necessity than as a means of improving their living conditions. The enthusiasm for agricultural modernization, so remarkable among the Kikuyu, the Kisii and a number of

10) Cf., e. g., Evans-Pritchard, E. E., The Nuer, London: Clarendon Press, 1941.

other peoples in Kenya has largely been lacking among the Luo; consequently, the level of agricultural development is generally still quite low. Cultivation is still mostly done by using the traditional hoe, although ox-drawn plows can be hired by individual farmers and have lately become somewhat more common. Only about a third of all the crops planted can be considered, generally speaking, to be potential cash crops. This represents the lowest figure for any of the agricultural peoples considered here.¹¹⁾ Only about 6 % of all the maize grown in the area is of the improved variety (Kisii: 45 %¹²⁾). In addition to maize the main crops are sorghum, finger millet, beans, peas, and cassava practically all of which are used exclusively for subsistence. As industrial crops, cotton and sugarcane were introduced by the colonial administration. In recent years an attempt has been made to grow coffee in suitable areas although the total amount remains negligible and the potential for this product is rather limited. In our sample almost all farmers grew maize as the main staple food crop, only one of them planted the hybrid type. Two thirds also cultivated millet or finger millet, one third other local crops such as cassava. Sugar was the main cash crop, which was grown by a quarter of our agricultural respondents, coffee and cotton were planted by a few of them.

Of the total farmland only about one fourth is devoted to cultivation, the rest to grazing and other uses. This marks a contrast to Kikuyu country, for example, where the pro-

11) See table "Comparative data...".

12) Cf. Republic of Kenya, Statistical Abstract 1974, loc. cit., p. 125.

portions of cultivated and uncultivated land are about equal.¹³⁾ Practically all of the cattle kept in Luo country is of the traditional variety of which the numbers (e. g. for transactions of bridewealth) often are still of greater importance than its quality. The incidence of disease and the mortality rate are also high. Its contribution to production in the form of milk or meat is thus only marginal. The introduction of improved breeds or European-type grade-cattle has failed so far, because the necessary infrastructure (e. g. cattle-dips, etc. for disease control), properly prepared (e. g. paddocked) grazing grounds, but also the required knowledge, skill and capital still are lacking.¹⁴⁾ Sheep, goats and chickens, kept in large numbers, are used more directly as a contribution to the local diet. About one third of our agricultural respondents had some local cattle, the greatest part of them less than 5 heads each, none of them possessed any grade cattle. Very few of the farmers sold milk even in small quantities. Approximately one fifth of them had some goats or sheep, chickens were kept by about half of them.

The pattern of settlement resembles that of most of the agricultural peoples in Kenya. The Luo homesteads ("dala" or "pacho") which comprise an elementary family (husband, wife or wives and unmarried children) are scattered across

13) Cf. ibid., pp. 124 ff..

14) A good assessment of the problems and prospects of agricultural development in Luo country can be found in de Wilde, John C., Agricultural Development in Tropical Africa, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1967, vol. II, pp. 121 ff.. The earlier period is well covered in Fearn, Hugh, An African Economy: A Study of the Economic Development of the Nyanza Province of Kenya, 1903 - 1953, London: Oxford University Press, 1961.

the countryside. Traditionally the dala was surrounded by a thick hedge, usually of euphorbia trees ("bondo"), as a protection against wild animals and other intruders. The basic landholding unit in Luo society is the "jakakwaro" which is the smallest lineage segment owning a contiguous piece of land. This term originally refers to those who have descended from a common grandfather, but in its most common use it is often extended to comprise kinship relations reaching back a greater number of generations as well. Within the territory of the jakakwaro the land usually has been fragmented into often tiny pieces which belong to the different elementary families in this group. On the average each elementary family today cultivates about three different parcels which are often dispersed over a wide area. Some families even own ten or more scattered pieces of land.¹⁵⁾ The largest lineage group which occupies a compact block of land ("gweng", pl. "gwenge") and which comprises several jakakwaro is the "dhoot", a term which is often translated as "clan", but which, more strictly speaking, refers to the "maximal lineage" as the smallest exogamous group in Luo society.¹⁶⁾ Within the "gweng" strangers ("jidak", pl. "jodak"), i. e. people who are not members of the same dhoot, can be granted cultivation rights and are practically on equal terms with the "jogweng" ("the people of the land"; or "wuon lowo", "owner of the land"). Legally however, they cannot become owners themselves. In addition to the individually cultivated plots there are communal grazing grounds ("lek") within each

15) Cf., e. g., de Wilde, op. cit., p. 131.

16) See also section c of this chapter below.

gweng'. In former times the territory of each subtribe ("piny") was separated from the neighboring one by a strip of unused land ("thim").¹⁷⁾ Land and cattle were traditionally inherited by a man's sons in approximately equal parts or, in the absence of sons, by his brothers or their sons. In our sample about half of those respondents who had already made up their mind named their sons as their potential heirs, the majority of them specifying the eldest son. The others referred to their children in general or some other close family members.

When, in accordance with the "Swynnerton-Plan", the program of land consolidation and registration was extended to Luo country in the 1950s, it met, for a number of reasons, with strong resistance by the population. First of all, it was generally felt, that these "punitive measures" which were taken by the colonial administration in Kikuyu country in the wake of the "Mau Mau" revolt should not be applied to the Luo as well. Secondly, many Luo argued that the fragmented pattern of landholding was also a safeguard against unreliable local weather conditions, such as thunderstorms, floods or droughts, the risks of which traditionally were spread more evenly over a wider area. The variations in soil and topography also allowed for different crops in places which were particularly suitable for them. Thirdly, those who only had "jidak" rights in land feared to be displaced entirely and also the group of "absentee" farmers or family members who had found employment elsewhere were afraid that they would lose their traditional rights of inheritance once the plots had been registered. In addition,

17) Cf., e. g., Wilson, Gordon, Luo Customary Law, Nairobi: Government Printer, 1956.

there were a number of administrative misconceptions (e. g. about certain aspects of the traditional landholding pattern) and inefficiencies of the local staff, so that initially not much progress was made.¹⁸⁾ After independence some of these attitudes slowly began to change when the potential of agriculture as a means of improving one's living conditions was realized by a small but growing number of individuals. But only in the early 1970s did the impact of this program really begin to be felt and about 50 % of the total area has now come under registration.¹⁹⁾

In our sample slightly less than half of the farmers possessed a title for their land. Of those who did not yet have one, more than two thirds stated that they would like to get one. It seems, therefore, that the issue of land registration in Luo country, the resistance to which was seen by many observers as the main impediment for agricultural development in the area,²⁰⁾ has lost much of its significance today.

The average farm size in the area is 2,5 ha, which is the same as in Luyia country and only slightly more than among the Kikuyu, but considerably less than among the Kamba or Kalenjin. More than 50 % of all farms have less than 2 ha each, approximately 35 % comprise between 2 and 10 ha, and about 14 % are extended over a larger area. This last percentage is the highest for any of the ethnic groups

18) Cf., e. g., Sytek, William L., "A History of Land Consolidation in Central Nyanza, 1956 - 1962", Conference Papers, East African Institute of Social Research, Makerere University College, Kampala, 1966.

19) See table "Comparative data...".

20) Cf., e. g., also Whisson, Michael, Change and Challenge - A Study of the Social and Economic Changes among the Kenya Luo, Nairobi: National Christian Council of Churches, 1964, pp. 96 ff..

considered here. This shows that there is, at least in some parts of the territory, still some room for expansion, but also that a social differentiation along economic lines becomes increasingly evident. Among our cash crop growing agricultural respondents incomes for a family were less than Kshs. 100,-- for about 45 % of them, between Kshs. 100,-- and 200,-- for another fourth, somewhat more for the rest.

Parallel to the gradual acceptance of the landreform program other agricultural innovations have been adopted by some individuals or family groups. At least in the more fertile and better-watered parts of South Nyanza and Siaya Districts a distinctive improvement can be observed today, and coffee and some other cash crops are successfully being grown. Other factors in recent agricultural development were the establishment of a sugar factory and an outgrowers scheme at Chemelil in Kisumu District. It was initially plagued, however, by a number of technical, organizational and financial problems. Rice paddies were developed in some pilot irrigation projects near Ahero in the Kano Plains. Another major sugar project was launched in South Nyanza District in 1976. The growing of cotton has again been encouraged in recent years. Although the success of these programs has been quite limited so far, they at least show a means of tapping some of the as yet largely unused potential for development.

Among the agricultural respondents in our sample, about one fifth had taken part in a farmers' course and one quarter had received some extension advice. These rates place them, together with the Luyia, in an intermediate position. They are considerably higher than those for the Mijikenda or Kamba, for example, but lower than the ones for the Kalenjin and, in particular, the Kikuyu. Very few

of our Luo respondents had, however, obtained a loan for purposes of agricultural development. The existence and use of cattle dips, too, was the lowest for any of the cattle-keeping peoples considered here. About half of the respondents said that they were planning some improvements on their farm, which, together with that of the Mijikenda, was the lowest figure for any of our agricultural groups. The percentage of those who stated that they were thinking of buying some more land or grade cattle was, again together with the Mijikenda, the lowest in our survey.

Together with the more "pastoralist" tradition and the ecological conditions of the area, another main factor responsible for the relatively low degree of a more commercialized type of farming in Luo country in the past was the relatively low level of prices which prevailed for some of the major potential cash crops, such as mainly cotton and sugarcane. This must be compared to what could be earned by selling traditional food crops such as maize or by working as a migrant laborer on the large-scale farms of Rift Valley Province or in Nairobi. As the respective statistics, going back at least to the early 1940s, clearly show, the returns per acre of cotton were far below what could be earned by the planting of maize or even of other traditional food crops.²¹⁾ This situation has continued, more or less unchanged, until the early 1970s. Only in very recent years have some efforts been made to adjust the relative price levels and to increase the production of cash crops, which constitute valuable raw materials for potential secondary industries in the area as well.

21) Cf., e. g., Fearn, op. cit., in particular tables 18 and 19, pp. 197 f..

One interesting approach to agricultural modernization in Luo country has been the introduction of group-farming schemes in some areas. All of these schemes, although varying a great deal, are characterized by a pooling of land and by the common organization of some of the main agricultural operations such as plowing, planting, weeding, harvesting. A number of these schemes have been quite successful, which led one observer to the conclusion that "in a traditional society it is often easier to introduce new methods through group action than to have them pioneered by individuals who may thereby become the objects of envy and censure by others".²²⁾ On the other hand, similar schemes in Luo country and elsewhere have failed because of a lack of cooperation and mutual trust among the members, an increasing sense of individuality, and a desire for private gains.²³⁾ It remains to be seen, therefore, whether some forms of organization can be found which prove to be more universally applicable and which are more than a transitory measure to induce some desired changes.

The division of labor in traditional Luo society was largely based on sex and age, more or less in the same way as we have described it for the Luyia or some of the other peoples. There used to be very little specialization of economic roles, one of the major exceptions again being the working of iron which was done by certain blacksmiths' families. Some crafts such as the weaving of baskets or the making of wooden stools and implements were also carried out on a family basis. Along the lakeshore, fishing has become an important occupation and is done today by some full-time fishermen operating canoes or even larger boats. The fish,

22) De Wilde, op. cit., p. 141.

23) Cf., e. g., Fearn, op. cit. or Whisson, op. cit..

which many Luo are very fond of, is then sold in dried form in the local markets. Altogether the amount of goods traded has traditionally been quite low and is still rather low today, due to the limited purchasing power of the majority of the population. But many women are engaged at least in the selling of some self-produced foodstuffs, pottery or baskets, to supplement their income.²⁴⁾ In the home area today 2,3 % are employed in non-agricultural occupations, which is, after the Kikuyu, the second highest figure in Kenya. 0,28 % of the population are self-employed in the non-agricultural modern sector which is also a very high percentage.²⁵⁾

Nevertheless, given the continuing high rate of population growth and the lack of more widespread agricultural modernization so far, the number of those who had to seek employment outside Nyanza Province has been very high. Together with the neighboring Luyia the Luo constitute the largest group of people who are engaged in "long-distance migration" to Kenya's major urban centers, in particular Nairobi and Mombasa.²⁶⁾ Unlike Kikuyu, Kamba or Mijikenda workers, whose home area is close to one of these centers, the long-distance migrants cannot return to their families more often than once a year on the average, and even then it is only for rather short periods of time. On the other hand, due to the poor housing conditions in town and the low

24) Cf., e. g., Ominde, Simeon H., The Luo Girl - From Infancy to Marriage, London: Macmillan, 1952, p. 55.

25) See table "Comparative data...".

26) Cf. also Ominde, S. H., Land and Population Movements in Kenya, London: Heinemann, 1968. For a discussion of social problems caused by long distance migration cf. also Whisson, op. cit., pp. 75 ff..

wages paid to these mostly unskilled workers, it has hardly been possible for them to take their families along. These split families, where the male partner usually stays in town for his most productive years (most of them are in the 20 to 45 years age group), while his dependents continue to live on the farm, have created many economic and social problems both in the cities and the rural areas. This situation has become even worse by the relative decline of Kisumu as a center of economic activity. First the completion of the railway line to Uganda via Eldoret, which now bypassed its port, and then after independence also due to the gradual exodus of non-citizen Asians, who had largely dominated the commercial and industrial activities of the town, complicated this problem. Unless this general tendency can be reversed by the development of labor-intensive agro-based industries (such as textile or leather processing factories), an expansion of fishing and related processing facilities, and, perhaps, some greater use of the tourist potential of the Lake Victoria area, the prospects for "development", rather than a continuing "underdevelopment" in Nyanza and in Western Kenya as a whole, seem to be rather bleak.

In the modern occupations many Luo have shown a strong preference for white collar jobs in the public service and para-statal organizations. This is in certain contrast to "modern" Kikuyu, for example, many of whom are interested in starting their own private businesses. Thus the Luo community is strongly represented in the East African Railways Corporation and certain branches of government such as the health administration, and educational institutions. At the University of Nairobi a certain preponderance of Luo scholars can be noted. This is partially due to factors lying in the colonial past, such as the relatively late

start which was given to many Kikuyu in this field because of their involvement with "Mau Mau", the patronage enjoyed by the Luo at this important stage,²⁷⁾ but also to a genuine strong interest and hard work of many Luo students in the academic field. Unlike members of some of the other ethnic groups, however, many of those who are successful in modern occupations outside their home area tend to neglect their links "to the land" back home and not much investment is channeled from these sources into the agricultural development of Luo country. Whereas the Kikuyu are known, for example, to build modern houses or to improve their family homes on their shamba as soon as they can afford it, many more successful Luo prefer to spend their money on better living conditions in town and do not seem to care very much about improving their family quarters at home.

c.) Social and Political Structures:

Traditional Luo society shares a number of features with the other "stateless societies" in Kenya, but is the only one of the peoples discussed here which does not have an explicit age-grade and fixed age-set system and is thus vertically even less structured than the other groups. In a horizontal direction Luo society is divided by a system of kinship ties which extends from the elementary family as the smallest unit (comprising all "jokanyiego", i. e., all descendants of a common father) to the "maximal lineage" ("dhoot", pl. "dhouidi) which is the smallest exogamous group.

27) The "air lift" of Kenyan students to the United States in the late 1950s and early 1960s, which was financed by American funds and which was mainly organized by Tom Mboya on the Kenyan side, was an important factor in this regard.

Between the family and the dhoot there is a network of highly differentiated and segmented kinship structures ("lineages", "libamba", pl. "libembini") which can be traced back genealogically through the paternal line to a single common ancestor whose name the dhoot carries. This genealogical structure in most cases comprises between eight and twelve generations which also determine its present size. Within this lineage system each segment stands in a clearly defined horizontal and vertical relationship to all the others, and all members of a dhoot are aware of the kind and degree of these kinship ties.

If a "maximal lineage" is extended over a large number of generations and has greatly increased in size, feuds may develop between two or more of its sub-lineages of the next lower degree. Often these feuds can no longer be reconciled, and they then lead to a splitting of the group into two or more new and independent dhoudi. This fact also explains, together with those separations which have been caused by migrations in the past, why there is no fixed number of dhoudi or even "tribes" among the Luo. These two characteristics (the continuous genealogical structure and the dynamics of their development over time) also distinguish a "maximal lineage" from a "clan" as it exists, for example, in Kikuyu society.²⁸⁾ The dhoudi are also non-totemic in contrast to the "clans" of some other societies. In our sample almost all of our rural Luo respondents were able to indicate the name of their "dhoot". Each dhoot is also a territorial unit ("gweng'", pl.

28) For this point cf., e. g., Southall, Aidan W., "Lineage Formation Among the Luo", Memorandum XXVI, International African Institute, London: Oxford University Press, 1952.

"gwenge") within which the most important economic, judicial, political and ritual functions are regulated.

A large gweng' may also coincide with the area of a "tribe" ("piny"). If a piny is made up of several gwenge, one dhoot is usually the dominant (not necessarily the largest) one in the area which often gives its name to the whole piny. A tribe can be defined to be the largest social unit among the Luo peoples. Here relations exist which are still regulated by "lawful" procedures. If, for example, a person is killed, a tribe is the largest unit in which at least an attempt is made to settle the affair through the arbitration of elders and the payment of compensation between the lineages concerned ("cut", "blood money"). If homicide has been committed by persons from outside one's own piny, these persons are regarded as "enemies" ("wasigu") and no attempts of peaceful settlement and payment of compensation are initiated. If, on the other hand, the slain person was a close kinsman of the culprit, a payment of compensation does not make sense, since the lineages are jointly responsible for the payment. In these cases the deed is regarded as a "sin" causing ritual uncleanness which has to be removed by sacrifices (usually of an ox) and other rituals.²⁹⁾

As in all societies, age affects the structure of Luo society, but these age differentiations are not as clearly set apart by fixed "rites de passage" as in the other groups discussed. Thus no clearcut system of age-grades with explicitly defined social duties for each grade exists among the Luo. Different stages in a person's life-cycle are predominantly a matter concerning the individual

29) Cf. also Evans-Pritchard, E. E., "Luo Tribes and Clans", in: Rhodes-Livingstone Journal, 7, 1949, pp. 24 - 40.

himself and his immediate family, but not the society or polity at large. The most important stages in a person's life are again his entrance into adulthood, marriage, and becoming an elder ("jadong", pl. "jodong"), but the ceremonies and rituals connected with some of these stages are only family, and in this sense "private", affairs. The custom of removing the six lower incisors, for example, before a boy or girl reaches puberty (sometime between the ages of ten and twelve years) cannot be equated to the social significance of circumcision which was traditionally practiced by most of the other peoples in Kenya. Both male circumcision and female clitoridectomy are unknown among the Luo, the removal of the lower incisors has largely been stopped today. In the same way no corporate "age-sets" which constitute a permanent group of co-equals and perform clearly defined social tasks are known in Luo society. The traditional economic differentiation among the Luo, which also found its expression in the number of wives a man could "afford", was about the same as in the other agricultural groups in Kenya. Today some stronger social stratification based on economic factors is beginning to emerge, but due to the still relatively low level of agricultural development in the area this tendency is less pronounced than in most other parts of Kenya. The number of "progressive cash crop farmers", for example, is still rather low and as yet no truly "landless" rural proletariat has been formed.

The authority structure in traditional Luo society was rather diffuse and no specialized political roles existed, at least none affecting the Luo people as a whole. Political decision-making, in a wider sense of the word, was closely linked to the existing kinship structures where authority was determined within the framework of family and lineage.

34) Cf., e. g., Frank Wedderburn, "The Suar of the Southern Sudan", 1952, p. 112.

At the lowest level the owner of the homestead ("wuon dala") was in charge of all family affairs. He was usually succeeded by his eldest son, but if this son was found to be unsuitable for this position the father appointed another son or another close agnatic relative as his successor. The same combination of principles (primogeniture, personal qualifications, and appointment by one's predecessor) prevailed as criteria for the selection of leaders for the larger lineage segments of Luo society.³⁰⁾ Among different maximal lineages within a piny, one lineage often was dominant (the term "aristocratic" is used by Evans-Pritchard in a similar context³¹⁾) and in these cases membership in the "aristocracy" could become an additional criterion for leadership. At this level, however, leadership was rather diffuse and, it seems, often nonexistent. There is some controversy today about the degree of political centralization and the existence of specialized leadership roles in traditional Luo society,³²⁾ but it seems to be clear that at least towards the end of the 19th century centralized forms of government had developed in some piny while still largely absent in others.³³⁾ It is likely that the development of centralized political structures, unknown in the still predominantly pastoral Nilotic groups,³⁴⁾ was con-

30) Cf., e. g., Southall, op. cit., pp. 24 f..

31) Cf., e. g., his "The Nuer of the Southern Sudan", in: Fortes M. and Evans-Pritchard, E. E., African Political Systems, London: Oxford University Press, 1940, pp. 272 ff..

32) Cf., e. g., the conflicting statements by Evans-Pritchard in his "Luo Tribes and Clans", loc. cit. and Ogot, Bethwell A. in: British Administration in the Central Nyanza District of Kenya, 1900 - 60, Journal of African History, 4 (2), 1963, pp. 249 - 273.

33) Cf., e. g., the statement by Michael Whisson quoted in DuPré, op. cit., p. 42.

34) Cf., e. g., Evans-Pritchard, "The Nuer of the Southern Sudan", loc. cit.

comitant to a certain degree with the more sedentary and agricultural way of life adopted by the Luo in more recent times. Nevertheless, both diffuse and more centralized political systems could be found in neighboring Luo sub-tribes (e. g. Gem and Sakwa) before the imposition of colonial rule without great apparent differences in their mode of production.

In the more diffused forms of political organization there was no acknowledged political leader or group of leaders which exercised any authority affecting the whole tribe. At the level of the "maximal lineage" there was a group of elders ("jodong gweng'") who each represented their different lineage segments and who were mostly consulted in disputes concerning land and other judicial affairs. This group did not, however, as far as we know, form a permanent corporate "council" of any sort; different members of the "jodong gweng'" were consulted in small numbers and on an ad hoc basis in most cases. Where a more central form of leadership had developed, it was exercised by an influential and wealthy man ("ruoth", pl. "ruodhi"), whose office in some cases had become hereditary (for example in Gem, but not in neighboring Asembo,³⁵⁾ so that he could more properly be called a "chief". In some instances a ruoth was a "jabilo" ("prophet", "magician"³⁶⁾), too, who thus combined both secular and mystical functions. The imposition of colonial rule brought an end to these different patterns of traditional political authority and, following the concept of "indirect rule", chiefs and sub-chiefs were appointed in all locations and sub-locations of Luo country.

35) Cf. Whisson in DuPré, loc. cit..

36) See section d of this chapter below.

Even if there had been traditional "ruodhi" before, they now derived their authority purely from the colonial power to which they now owed their loyalty.

In more recent times the social and cultural interests of the Luo community have been represented by the "Luo Union", which was founded in the early 1950s and which has become one of the most active "tribal welfare associations" in Kenya.³⁷⁾ Even though a "political" orientation, in a narrower sense of the word, is usually denied by the leaders of these groups, there can be no doubt that they fulfill some latent political functions as well. An explicit political party, which was mostly confined to the Luo area, was the "Kenya Peoples' Union" (KPU), which was formed after Oginga Odinga resigned from the vice-presidency of the government in 1966.³⁸⁾ The ban of KPU in 1969 has led to a relative isolation and underrepresentation of the Luo community in Kenyan politics, which even today has not been fully overcome.

d.) Some Significant Cultural Aspects:

Luo culture used to be transmitted by the traditional socializing agents, which by and large do not seem to have been very different from those of the other peoples we have described so far. If there are any characteristic differences in some of the more specific customs, as in

37) An excerpt of its constitution outlining its aims can, for example, be found in Gertzel, Cherry; Goldschmidt, Maure and Rothchild, Donald (eds.), Government and Politics in Kenya, Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1969, pp. 35 f..

38) See also Part I, chapter 2 d above.

feeding and weaning procedures, toilet training, etc.,³⁹⁾ these must be left to the specialists and cannot be dealt with here. In general, the pattern of education seems to have been rather strict. Severe physical punishments, for example, such as "beating", "whipping", were frequently reported in our sample for the parents' generation, but this more or less falls in line with most of the other groups in consideration here. Today about 30 % of all adult Luo possess "minimal literacy", which places them in an intermediate position among the groups considered here. 53,5 % of the relevant age groups attended primary schools in 1969, and 6,2 % were enrolled in secondary schools,⁴⁰⁾ which again are about average values. In our sample about 14 % of the fathers and 8 % of the mothers of our respondents had already had some kind of formal education. These are about average values for all of Kenya. The strong desire for some kind of higher learning and the strong intellectual interests expressed by many Luo seem to have been hampered considerably in the past by the high fees which had (and in part still have!) to be paid. Many Luo could not afford these fees because of the relatively low level of economic development in the area and the lack of cash incomes. This became apparent to a certain extent when school fees were waived for the first four years of primary school on the occasion of the "ten great years of Uhuru" celebrations in December 1973; primary school enrollment increased noticeably. (It was the greatest increase in all of Kenya.)⁴¹⁾

39) For some information on this aspect cf., e. g., Ominde's valuable little study "The Luo Girl", loc. cit.

40) See table "Comparative data...".

41) Cf. Statistical Abstract 1974, loc. cit., p. 201.

Traditional Luo religion seems to have been an amalgamation of some features adopted from neighboring Bantu (in particular Luyia) groups and elements which were characteristic for some of the other "Nilotic" peoples. Thus, for example, the Luo traditionally believed in the existence of a "Supreme Being" ("Nyasae" or "Nyasi") who is the creator of man and the universe. This is in contrast to the religion of the related Nilotic Alur and Acholi groups who did not have a concept of a central deity, and who worshipped "chiefdom deities" ("Jok") instead. These, in turn, were unknown among the Luo.⁴²⁾ More immediately relevant, however, were the ancestral spirits ("jok") who were worshipped at special shrines by each lineage. In addition to these personal ancestral spirits there were "free jok" (or "juok", pl. "juogi") who were associated with certain diseases, accidents and disasters and who had to be placated or to be exercised from a person who was possessed by one of them. Some spirits also took the form of troublesome ghosts ("jaciën", pl. "jociendi") who were the spirits of killed persons haunting their kinsmen and those responsible for their death.⁴³⁾

42) Cf., e. g., p'Bitek, op. cit..

43) Cf., e. g., Evans-Pritchard, E. E., "Ghostly Vengeance Among the Luo of Kenya", Man 50 (133), 1950, pp. 86 ff..

According to Ogot the different manifestations of divine and spiritual powers can also be interpreted to be the result of a single "life-force" ("jok") which is present in varying degrees in all living beings and even inanimate objects, cf. Ggot, Bethwell A., "The Concept of Jok", African Studies, XX, 2, 1961, pp. 123 - 130. Ogot does not attempt, however, to explain some of the important differences which seem to exist in this respect between the different Nilotic groups, some of which are discussed, for example, in p'Bitek's study, cf. p'Bitek, op. cit..

In this sphere of religion and magic there were again a number of specialized roles. Most prominent among these specialists in traditional Luo society was the "jabilo" (pl. "jobilo", usually translated as "magician", or "prophet") who practiced beneficial magic and who also served, at times, as a more general spiritual leader for his people. In some Luo subtribes this office traditionally was combined with the functions of a "ruoth" ("influential person", "chief"). Somewhat more specific were the tasks of an "ajuoga" ("diviner") who identified the particular jok who had caused an illness and prescribed the appropriate remedies, e. g., in the form of sacrifices. The office of "rainmaker" (won koth") was also known in Luo society. However, services of a rainmaker from the neighboring Luyia peoples were more in demand, particularly services of the rainmaker from Bunyore who was the most famous and experienced. Evil forces were associated with persons practicing sorcery or witchcraft ("jajuok", pl. "jojuok"). Following Evans-Pritchard's distinction,⁴⁴⁾ witches in this sense were persons who were possessed by some force against their own will and who acted, e. g., as "night dancers" or who cast an "evil eye" on others. Sorcerers, on the other hand, were aware of their powers and applied them with evil intent, normally involving the use of certain objects such as "charms" or actual poison. Both witches and sorcerers operated in utmost secrecy and if one of them (imaginary or real) was discovered he or she faced very severe sanctions and was often killed.

44) Cf. Evans-Pritchard, E. E., Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic Among the Azande, Oxford 1937; see also Middleton, John and Winters, E. (eds.), Witchcraft and Sorcery in East Africa, London, 1963.

Today about 90 % of all Luo are members of Christian churches. The continued importance of some traditional rites and beliefs and, in particular, also the institution of polygyny has led, however, to a proliferation of syncretistic sects. The Luo seem to be particularly receptive for cults and organizations of this kind and more than one third of all "African Independent Churches" in Kenya have their origins in Luo country.⁴⁵⁾ On the other hand, the proliferation of sects and the competition among them can also lead to a certain cynicism about the activities of these churches and the more immediate motives which may lie behind the dealings of their founders and leaders.⁴⁶⁾

One other custom of the Luo which is related to the sphere of religion and which has continuing social (and economic!) consequences is the conducting of very large funerals to which all relatives and friends of the deceased are invited. Many of these guests must travel long distances and stay and eat at the home of the deceased often for a number of days. As a result these funerals are a severe drain on the resources of a family; not rarely a good deal of the legacy of the dead person (e. g. in the form of food and livestock) is consumed in this way.

45) Cf. Kenya Churches Handbook, loc. cit., pp. 184 ff., see also Welbourn, Frederick B. and Ogot, Bethwell A., A Place to Feel at Home: A Study of Two Independent Churches in Western Kenya, London: Oxford University Press, 1966.

46) This was, for example, observed by Whisson, cf., e. g., idem, op. cit., p. 129.

It is difficult to give an assessment of some other more dominant attitudes in traditional Luo culture, because the ethnographic material at hand is extremely scant in this regard. A recourse to traditional Luo folklore, at least for some illustrative purposes, is not possible, because only very little has been recorded so far⁴⁷⁾ and a great deal may be lost forever. The Luo combine a number of features which are characteristic for other Nilotic peoples with a still more pastoral mode of life and some aspects of settled agriculturalists. They seem to have lost some of the "truculent, brave, turbulent and aggressive" character which has been ascribed to some other Nilotic peoples,⁴⁸⁾ but self-reliance, pride, and a sense of personal achievement still appear to be highly valued. This does not seem to interfere, however, with their feeling of family solidarity and lineage affiliation. Towards strangers they are, after initial suspicion has receded, generally hospitable and friendly. Most seem to be fond of music and other forms of entertainment and merrymaking. Many of them exhibit a great seriousness, interest in intellectual matters, and a sense of responsibility. Their economic interests do not seem to be as strong as those of the Kikuyu, for example, and many apparently prefer a secure position as an employee or civil servant to the insecurity of a businessman's career.

Some of these attitudes are also reflected in the stereotypes which exist about the Luo in contemporary Kenyan society. The Luo are generally considered to be peaceful, friendly and not as suspicious as members of some of the

47) There is only one entry of this kind, for example, in DuPré's quite comprehensive bibliography, DuPré, op. cit., p. 101.

48) Cf., e. g., Butt, op. cit., p. 41.

other ethnic groups. Their intellectual capacity, their talents as musicians and their skills in soccer are widely acknowledged. Many of them are industrious in school and strive for educational achievements. They are said to be fond of bright colors and smart Western-style clothes, and are often said to show off in order to impress others. What sets them apart from most of the other groups in Kenya is a lack of (particularly male) circumcision which is still highly valued, for example, by the Kikuyu, Kamba, Kalenjin or Maasai. For this reason they are often ridiculed by others and considered cowards. They do not mix very freely with others and are said to be somewhat "tribalistic" and to stick to themselves.

If we attempt to sum up some of the features of the Luo people which we have described so far, we must say that the picture which emerges is a rather "mixed" one. On the one hand, a considerable group of Luo have been quite successful in modern non-agricultural occupations and a significant number of them are today members of Kenya's "intellectual elite". On the other hand, the level of economic development in their home area has remained rather low so far, and the continuing population growth in an already rather crowded territory will pose even more severe problems in the future. The fact that the Luo are the only Western "Nilotic" people in Kenya, and are set apart from the Bantu or Eastern Nilotic groups by some very important traditions and social customs (such as the lack of circumcision and low rates of intermarriage with other groups), has also contributed to their rather special role in Kenya's society. The relative political isolation in recent years, following the ban of KPU and the detention of its most prominent leaders, has aggravated this situation even further.

CHAPTER 6: THE KALENJIN

a) General Background:

The name "Kalenjin" (literally: "I tell you") is an artificial creation dating from the period during and immediately following World War II. At this time a series of broadcasts and a students' magazine of this name were established. It was later used in a consciously political manner and became synonymous with what formerly was known as "the Nandi-speaking peoples". The groups referred to today under the name of Kalenjin belong to the "Southern Nilotic (formerly sometimes also referred to as "Nilo-Hamitic" or "Para-Nilotic" group of languages).²⁾ Although the basis for this classification is again primarily linguistic, these groups share a considerable number of common economic, social and cultural features as well.³⁾

We shall confine ourselves here to the formerly so-called "Nandi-speaking" group⁴⁾ consisting of eight principal sections which are presented here in the order of descending magnitude:⁵⁾ the Kipsigis⁶⁾ (470,000 members at the time

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- 1) For a short description of the genesis of this term cf., e. g., also Kipkorir, Benjamin E., The Marakwet of Kenya, Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1973, pp. 70 ff..
 - 2) For the use of these terms see chapter II, 5, footnote 2 above.
 - 3) Cf., e. g., Huntingford, G.W.B., "The Nilo-Hamites: General Introduction", in: idem, The Northern Nilo-Hamites, Ethnographic Survey of Africa, East Central Africa, Part VI, London: International African Institute, 1953, pp. 9-21.
 - 4) This term was used synonymously with the present term of "Kalenjin" during colonial
 - 5) Cf., Republic of Kenya, Population Census 1969, vol. I, p. 69; the "Terik" are not listed separately by the census and the figure for Nyangori location of Western Province has been used here as an indication for the order of magnitude of this group, cf. *ibid.*, p. 68.
 - 6) Kipsigis (sing: Kipsigisin) is the correct (and their own!) designation for this people. In colonial times they were often referred to as "Lumbwa", a corruption of a Maa-sai nickname for this group.

of the last census in 1969), the Nandi ⁷⁾ (260,000), the Tugen ⁸⁾ (130,000), the Keyo ⁹⁾ (110,000), the Pokot ¹⁰⁾ (90,000), the Marakwet ¹¹⁾ (80,000), the Sabaot ¹²⁾ (40,000), and the Terik ¹³⁾ (20,000). In former times most of these groups were further subdivided into a number of geographical and political units with all of them showing a division by clans and age-sets. ¹⁴⁾ These formerly independent subgroups of the Kalenjin can also be placed into two larger categories the "Pokot" (comprising the Pokot and Ma-

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- 7) The Nandi (sing: Nandiin) have accepted this name since the end of the last century. Before that time they called themselves Chemwal (sing: Chemwalin).
 - 8) The Tugen (sing: Tugenin) have also become known as Kamasia, which is derived from their Maasai name "Il Kamasia".
 - 9) Keyo (sing: Keyin) is the proper name for this group. From the Maasai version "Il Keyio" the modern geographical and administrative designation of "Elgeyo" has been derived.
 - 10) The Pokot (sing: Pocon) also have been known by the term "Suk" which again is derived from the corresponding designation of the Maasai "Il Suk".
 - 11) The term "Marakwet" (sing: Marakwetin) is a corruption of "Markweta" which originally referred to only one subgroup of the people who (together with the other subgroups of the Almo, Cherang'any, Endo and Kiptani) are known under this name today. It is not quite clear whether these subgroups should be considered as distinct ethnic units or merely as geographical divisions designating variations in dialect and customs among some of them, since their clans and age-sets are also common to all subgroups. At any rate, in the absence of any other common designation, the term "Marakwet" as a pars pro toto has come into use to refer to all of these groups.
 - 12) The term Sabaot (sing: Sabaotin) is also an artificial creation of fairly recent times. It comprises the four principal groups of the Bok, Bongom, Sabiny (or "Sebei") and Kony who live on the Kenyan side of the Mt. Elgon area. (The name of this mountain was derived from the Maasai name for the last mentioned group, "Il Kony".) Some parts of these groups (as is the case with the Sebei) and apparently two other smaller subgroups (Mbai and Kipsorai), live across the border in Uganda. We have no further information on them.
 - 13) The Terik (sing: Terikin) are sometimes also called Nyangori which has become the name of their present administrative location.
 - 14) See section c of this chapter below.

rakwet) and the "Nandi" division (including the other groups). Each forms a separate linguistic and to a certain extent cultural unit within which the dialects of the different groups are mutually understandable. Between groups of the "Nandi" and "Pokot" subdivisions, dialects, although linguistically closely related, cannot be understood as easily without further training and experience. The Pokot subdivision also shows a number of cultural features (for instance in dress and weapons), which indicate a greater affinity with other groups of the Southern Nilotic peoples, such as the neighboring Karamojeng and Turkana.¹⁵⁾ In former times the relations between all these groups were characterized by relatively little trade and other social interactions, but a rather permanent state of traditional warfare, in particular with regard to the cattle possessed by each group. The relations between the Kipsigis and the Nandi represented a major exception in this respect. These groups never raided each other, there was a somewhat higher degree of intermarriage between them, and other clan and age-set relations were existent as well. In contrast to the Maasai,¹⁶⁾ cattle raids never occurred between subgroups of the same people.

In addition to the "Kalenjin" proper there are the "Dorobo" (altogether today about 20,000), a people of hunters and gatherers who live in the vast forests covering the escarpments and elevations west of the Rift Valley. This group today speaks a "Nandi" language and possesses a number of other cultural features which relate them to the Kalenjin. In many other aspects, however, the Dorobo are clearly set

15) Cf., e. g., Huntingford, G.W.B., The Southern Nilo-Hamites, Ethnographic Survey of Africa, East Central Africa, Part VIII, London: International African Institute, 1953, pp. 12 ff..

16) See next chapter below.

apart from all of the other peoples in Kenya. They probably belong to a stock of early inhabitants of the area which only in more recent centuries has adopted the language and part of the culture of later immigrants. ¹⁷⁾

The Kalenjin peoples are scattered over a wide area with great variations in the ecological conditions. ¹⁸⁾ The Kipsigis inhabit the hilly highlands west of the large forest of the Man Escarpment, a part of the western flank of the great Rift Valley. In the southwest this territory borders on the great plains of Narok District which are inhabited by the Maasai. In the south the Bantu-speaking group of the Kisii, who live under comparable ecological conditions, are the neighbors of the Kipsigis, and in the west the area is adjacent to Luo country which extends, at a lower level, along the shores of Lake Victoria. In the north the home area of the Kipsigis is separated from the territory of the related Nandi by the Nyando Valley and the Nyando Escarpment. During the colonial period a small belt of land "scheduled" for European farming was also situated in this region between the Nandi and Kipsigis territories. The altitude of Kipsigis country lies between 1500 and 2100 (5,000 to 7,000 ft.), and the temperatures are moderate to warm. It has abundant rainfall (more than 1,750 mm on the average) and is well-drained by permanent rivers and streams which all flow into Lake Victoria. The usual two main rainy seasons of the "long" rains in the spring and the "short" rains in the fall merge in this area and in the adjacent Nandi territory into an almost continuous period of rather regular rainfalls from

17) There is, as yet, very little information on this group, the most comprehensive account is still Huntingford's description in: *The Southern Nilo-Hamites*, loc. cit., pp. 54-70.

18) For an assessment of the economic potential of this area cf., e. g., Republic of Kenya, Regional Physical Development Plan, Rift Valley Province, Nairobi, 1970.

about March to September. The soils are generally of volcanic origin and have weathered into very rich friable loams ("latosolic soil"). Almost all of the area is thus of very high agricultural potential and is ideal for the growing of tea.

The Nandi live in the region north of the Kipsigis which is bordered by the high elevations and forests of the Elgeyo Escarpment in the east and the Nandi Escarpment in the west. In the north it reaches the open highlands formerly inhabited by the Uasin Gishu Maasai. These highlands became part of the area scheduled for European farming in colonial times. Nandi country is quite similar in topography and climate to the territory of the Kipsigis, although it receives slightly lower amounts of rainfall (between 1,250 and 1500 mm).

In stark contrast to these agriculturally well-endowed areas of Kalenjin settlement are the hot and arid plains in the lowlands of the lower Rift Valley. They are inhabited by the Tugen and parts of the Keyo, Marakwet and Pokot peoples. Most of this territory lies at an altitude of 600 to 900 m (2,000 to 3,000 ft.) and experiences rainfalls well below the required minimum for successful agricultural production (annual averages are between 500 and 750 mm, in some parts even less). There is no external drainage for these areas and the local streams and rivers, most of which are only temporary, empty into a chain of lakes inside the great Rift Valley (such as Lakes Baringo and Hannington, and, further south, Nakura, Elmenteita, Naivasha and Magadi). The soils are also generally shallow and stony ("lithosols"), the surface is strewn with lava boulders and is in some parts covered with massive lava beds. The vegetation in large parts consists only of hard scrub and thornbrush, and in many places, there is hardly any grass left at all. On the

whole, the area is thus suitable only for rather extensive cattle-ranching or browsing by sheep and goats. The only exceptions are the more elevated sections along the escarpments on both sides of the Rift Valley and the area of the Amasya and Tugen, Hills east of the Kerio Valley which receive higher amounts of rainfall.

The Keyo and Marakwet inhabit a small strip of land between the fertile highlands-described above and the arid plains along the Elgayo Escarpment, and thus share both kinds of environment. Those members of these groups who live in the plains pursue still a largely pastoral way of life, while those who inhabit the highlands or some narrow ledges along the very steep escarpment (the difference in altitude between the bottom and top amounts to 1,200 m and more) are agriculturalists. The latter enjoy quite favorable climatic conditions and good soils for the growing of maize, wheat, vegetables and a considerable number of other cashcrops. In some parts along the escarpment are traditional systems of artificial irrigation which have been maintained successfully up to the present day. The Pokot live north of this territory in an area which is also well-watered and fertile in its' western (higher) parts and rather dry in the east, extending into semi-desert towards Turkana country in the north.

The Terik inhabit a small pocket of land between the surrounding Luyia country and the Nandi highlands from which they are separated by a belt of thick forests. Today they have become successful agriculturalists, too, under conditions largely resembling those of the neighboring Luyia peoples. The Sabaot, finally, have withdrawn to the higher parts of the slopes of Mt. Elgen north of Luyia country from where they are still in contact with related groups across the Ugandan border.

Except for the territories of the Torik and Sabaot, which today are part of Kenya's "Western Province", all Kalenjin live in "Rift Valley Province". The areas of traditional settlement of the different groups have been respected, to a large extent, by the present administrative divisions. The districts of "Kericho" (Kipsigis), "Nandi" (Nandi), "Elgeyo-Marakwet" (Keyo and Marakwet), "Baringo" (Tugen) and "West Pokot" (Pokot) are still predominantly inhabited by these groups. In between and adjacent to these areas which were made "tribal reserves" during colonial times were the vast "White Highlands" which comprised the districts of Trans Nzoia, Uasin Gishu, Nakuru and Laikipia. In addition, there were smaller blocks of European-occupied farmland in Kericho District. The labor force for these farms was mainly recruited from the neighboring Luyia, Luo, Kalenjin and Kikuyu (mainly in the east) peoples, but included some Turkana and some other members of smaller groups, as well. Today some parts of these "scheduled areas" have been resettled by African small scale farmers, many of whom were former laborers of European farms.

The Kalenjin peoples numbered altogether about 1,19 million in 1969, of which slightly more than one million (i.e. about 90 %) still lived in their traditional homelands. They thus have, after the Maasai, the lowest rate of out-migration. Only 0.5 % of them have come to live in the big cities of Nairobi and Mombasa, which is the lowest figure for all the peoples considered in this study. This is, to a certain extent, due to the still relatively low population density (42 persons per km²), compared, for example, with that of the Kikuyo (128), Luo (140), and Luyia (161). It is also of the relatively favorable ratio of high potential agricultural land equivalents per person (1,10 ha) which is the highest figure for all the groups presented here. Only the

Maasai rate higher but they are predominantly pastoral. The rate of population growth (3.5 %), on the other hand, is almost as high as those of the other rapidly growing peoples in Kenya. This growth is distributed rather unevenly, however, among the different groups. Whereas the pastoralist parts of the population, for example, still show rather low fertility and high mortality rates, the increase of population is much more rapid among the agriculturalists. The rate of urbanization of 1.9 % is below that of the Mijikonda, Kikuyu or Luo, but above that of the Kamba, Maasai or Luyia.¹⁹⁾

The origins of the Kalenjin peoples are as obscure as those of most of the other Kenyan ethnic groups. Some authors place their area of origin somewhere in the north of the modern state of Kenya, in the vicinity of Lake Rudolf or in the southern parts of Ethiopia.²⁰⁾ From there, they probably migrated into the area of Mt. Elgon which became a second center of dispersal from which they moved into their present areas of settlement. The chronology of these movements is still greatly disputed, however, and while some writers date the coming of the Kalenjin from their place of origin somewhere around the 16th century,²¹⁾ a much longer perspective is taken by others who consider the Kalenjin to have been residents of the northern part of Kenya for several thousand years.²²⁾ In any case, it seems to be clear that the Kalenjin have been living around Mt. Elgon and in large parts of

19) For all these figures see table "Comparative data...".

20) Cf., e. g., Huntingford, G.W.B., "The Peopling of the Interior of East Africa by its Modern Inhabitant", in: Oliver, Roland and Mathew, Gervase, History of East Africa, Vol. I, loc. cit., pp. 58-93.

21) For this point cf., e. g., also Were, Gideon, A History of the Abaluyia of Western Kenya, loc. cit., pp. 47 ff.

22) Cf., e. g., Sutton, J.E.G., Western Kenya Highlands, (forthcoming) chapter 2, quoted in: Kipkorir, op. cit., p. 76.

their present areas of settlement before some of the other peoples (such as the Lao and Luyia) moved into their area. On the other hand, it seems to be equally probable that the forest people of the Dorobo belong to an even earlier stock. Apart from these actual historical events there exists among the Kalenjin peoples the legend of "Misri" ("Egypt") as their place of origin. This was also the case for the Luyia.²³⁾

b) The Economy:

All Kalenjin peoples traditionally have been pastoralists and the "cattle-complex" is still largely dominant in their culture.²⁴⁾ Today, however, some groups have become, partially or entirely, settled agriculturalists. Their mode of production is nowadays determined by the ecological conditions in their area of residence rather than by cultural preferences. Thus all the Kipsigis, Nandi, Torik and Sabaot and those parts of the Keyo, Marakwet, Tugen and Pokot peoples who live under agriculturally favorable conditions (mostly in the higher elevations along the Elgeyo Escarpment, and in the Charangani and Tugen Hills) are cultivators, while most of those who live in the arid territories of the Kerio Valley and other parts of the northern Rift Valley and the plains north of this area pursue a pastoral way of life. Members of the same ethnic group and sometimes even of the same larger family can thus be found living in close proximity to each other, but under entirely different economic conditions, some being settled agriculturalists and the others semi-nomadic pastoralists. In addition, hunting is common among all groups, although there is relatively little game left in the most densely populated areas; honey

23) Cf., e. g., Were, op. cit.

24) See also section c of this chapter below.

and some wild roots and herbs are also part of the diet. The total number of "pure" pastoralists among all the Kalenjin groups can be estimated to be about 100,000 persons.²⁵⁾ The majority of about one million persons are agriculturalists; the rest consists of about 100,000 persons including family members who have non-agricultural occupations, both within and outside their home area.²⁶⁾

The most important traditional crops are millst, finger millst, beans, peas and cassava. Today maize, both in its unimproved and improved varieties (the latter in particular among the Nandi, Kipsigis and Keyo), has become the dominant staple crop. Tea and, in small amounts, sugar cane and coffee are still the most important industrial crops grown by the Nandi and Kipsigis; English potatoes, wheat, pyrethrum and some vegetables have become successful cash crops for those Keyo who have settled on the plains above the escarpment in recent decades. In our sample, which comprised only agriculturalists from this group,²⁷⁾ almost all farmers grew some maize, a great part of which was of the "hybrid" variant. Finger millet and beans, but also some wheat, were the other main food crops. In addition to maize and wheat, other main cash earners for our respondents were vegetables, sunflowers and pyrethrum. The tea-growing areas of the Kipsigis and Nandi were not included in our sample.

So far very little of the agricultural produce of the Marakwet, Pokot or Tugen finds its way to markets outside the area. Most of it is still grown for subsistence, and communications and marketing conditions are still quite poor.²⁸⁾

25) This estimate has been derived from population figures for the locations concerned.

26) See table "Comparative data...".

27) For further specifications and qualifications concerning this sample see also our "Methodological Appendix" below.

28) Cf., e. g., de Wilde, John C., op. cit., vol. II, pp. 157 ff..

Even the traditional irrigation schemes which can be found among the Marakwet or the newly-established ones, e.g. at Perkerra in Baringo District, yield relatively little (chilies and onions are an exception) which can be profitably sold on outside markets. Cultivation in large parts is still done with the traditional iron hoe and other small implements. In those areas (e.g. among the Kipsigis, Nandi and parts of the Keyo) where the growing of cash crops has successfully been introduced on a large scale, the contracting of tractors for plowing has become quite common.

But even most of those Kalenjin who have become settled agriculturalists keep quite a considerable number of cattle, sheep and goats, averaging about ten to fifteen "livestock units" per family.²⁹⁾ Traditionally a part of the cattle of a single owner was often distributed among several friends and relatives. This was the so-called "kaptic"-System.³⁰⁾

It was used minimize the risk that all cattle be captured in a single raid or that all be afflicted at once by disease. In these cases the caretakers were entitled to keep the milk of the cows, but had no claim to the calves. The cattle could be recalled by the owner at will at any given time. Among the Nandi, Kipsigis and part of the Keyo the keeping of grade-cattle has been introduced successfully in recent years, and the selling of milk has become another important source of cash for these peoples. Almost all of our agricultural Kalenjin respondents kept some cattle, about a third of which was of the "grade" variety in the small-scale farming areas. The herds usually numbered less than 5 heads of grade cattle and up to 20 heads of local cattle. About one third of these respondents sold an average of up to 10 li-

29) 5 sheep or goats' are counted as one "unit" of livestock in this case, cf., e. g., also de Wilde, op. cit., p. 180.

30) Cf., e. g. Huntingford, The Southern Nilo-Hamites, loc. cit., pp. 20 ff..

ters of milk per day. About a quarter of them kept some goats, a few had some sheep. Chickens were raised by about a third of them, two of our respondents even sold them on a large scale basis to nearby urban centers like Eldoret.

The "purely" pastoral families often have twenty to thirty "units" or more of livestock, but almost all grazing areas today are greatly overstocked. Serious problems of soil erosion and the emergence of vast parts of land which are only covered by thick thornbrush and which do not have any grass at all anymore plague the area today. So far remedies such as bush-clearing, compulsory dastocking, or controlled grazing schemes, have been found to be practicable. Thus, in spite of the relatively low overall population density in these parts, most of this area must be considered, ecologically, to be greatly overpopulated today in terms of people and livestock.

All agricultural Kalenjin live in individual family homesteads scattered across the countryside. In former times a chain of lookout-posts, which in some areas were permanently manned, served as a warning system to protect the members of one's own group against raids by others, in particular by the Maasai. Those who still are "pure" pastoralists move around with their cattle in constant search for new grazing grounds. In this way they lead a largely nomadic life without establishing permanent homes. The area of movement for these peoples is defined by custom; traditional tribal "boundaries" are usually respected.

In the same way as grazing grounds traditionally "belong" to all members of one ethnic group, for a long time the ownership of land was also communal among those Kalenjin who had taken up an agricultural way of life. Land as such was no particular asset and everyone could move freely and settle anywhere he liked within the territory of his tribe. Only by

cultivating a piece of land or by doing some other work on a piece of common property (e.g. by felling a tree) would a particular part of the communal stock be considered to be one's personal possession. Under the prevailing system of shifting cultivation, land was only a temporary possession and anyone could claim and use it after it had become fallow again. Thus, unlike a system of land tenure based on lineages, clans or some territorial groupings,³¹⁾ there was no subtribal landholding unit in traditional Kalenjin society. In more recent times a movement of "spontaneous enclosures" has taken place. It started among some groups (e.g. the Kipsigis and Nandi) in the 1940 before any such measures were officially advocated by the government in the wake of the Swynnerton-Plan in the 1950 s and was practically completed among most of the agricultural Kalenjin in the early 1960 s. During this period many people had rather suddenly become aware of the fact that land was no longer a "free" good, the abundant supply of which would be ensured for all times.

At a somewhat later stage, large parts of the territory inhabited by the Kalenjin were also included in the official program of land consolidation and registration. Between 80 % and 90 % of all land in the districts of Nandi and Kericho (Kipsigis) and more than 50 % of the area in Elgeyo-Marakwet, but only about 20 % in West Pokot and 10 % in Baringo have been registered up until now.³²⁾ The average size of the holdings of 18.4 ha in those parts which have already been included in this program is much larger than in all other small scale farming areas in Kenya. Even if allowance is made for the poorer potential of some parts of this territory, it is still quite evident that the agricultural Ka-

31) Cf., e. g., the "gwenge" of the Luo or the "githaka" of the Kikuyu, see chapters II, I and II, 5 above.

32) Republic of Kenya, Economic Survey 1974, p. 78.

lenjin have the largest amount of land available in proportion to their numbers and that they experience the least population pressure of the agricultural peoples in Kenya so far. The distribution of farm sizes reflects this generally more favorable situation. Only about one-fifth of the farmers in the relatively "best developed" and most densely populated districts of Kericho and Nandi possessed less than 2 ha, as compared to almost two-thirds among the Kikuyu and almost half of the Luyia or Luo. The vast majority (approximately 75 % altogether) are in the category of "middle farmers" who have between 2 ha and 10 ha each. Only a small minority (3.4 %), on the other hand, belongs to the group of relatively big farmers (which perhaps justifies their designation as "kulaks"),³³⁾ who possess more than 10 ha of agricultural land.

The level of "modernization" is also fairly high among the agricultural Kalenjin. In our sample (which seems to reflect at least the economic situation among the Kipsigis, Nandi and Keyo) between 30 % and 40 % of the respondents had attended a course at a farmers' training center or had received some advice from the agricultural extension service. Almost a quarter of them had obtained a loan at some time for purposes of agricultural development; approximately the same percentage were members of a farmer's association or cooperative. All these figures are the highest, after the Kikuyu, for all the peoples in our sample. Practically all of our livestock-owning respondents dipped their cattle regularly, a third of those who owned grade cattle applied artificial insemination. About 80 % of the farmers said that they were planning some improvements in the near future, the majority

33) See also our discussion of this terminology and the different aspects of rural stratification in Part I above.

referring to crops, about 20 % also to livestock. 90 % reported that they were thinking of acquiring more land, about 80 % stated that they were contemplating the purchase of grade cattle. ³⁴⁾ These last two figures are the highest for any of the groups in our sample. About 40 % of our respondents had cash incomes of less than Kshs. 100.- per month, a quarter earned between Kshs. 100.- and 200.-, the rest of almost one third had incomes between Kshs. 200.- and 800.-.

As far as land rights are concerned, the areas of traditional artificial irrigation in some parts of Elgeyo-Marakwet District and West Pokot constitute a special case. Here, certain sections of particular clans own the land and the intricate system of irrigation, and are responsible for its maintenance. The main work of clearing the furrows which lead the water in a widespread network from the top of the escarpment to the bottom of Kerio Valley requires the labor of all adult men in the community. This work and the just distribution of water to the different fields are closely supervised by a council of elders. ³⁵⁾ Anyone who does not show up to carry out the communal labor at the assigned time can be fined the payment of a goat. The cultivated plots in this case are allocated by the "kok" ("council") and belong to the head of the family. Each piece is called "barap ka" ("land belonging to one homestead"). The head of the family may then subdivide this land among his sons. ³⁶⁾

In traditional Kalenjin society, with the exception of the artificially irrigated land just mentioned, the only proper-

34) For a further comparative assessment of perception of the economic future see also Part III, chapter 3 below.

35) See also the discussion of the political structures of the Kalenjin in section c of this chapter below.

36) For this system of traditional irrigation and land tenure, which is unique in Kenya, cf., e. g., Kipkorir, op. cit., pp. 26 ff..

ty worth inheriting was livestock. There are some variations in the laws of inheritance among the different groups of the Kalenjin, and even, to a certain extent, within them. As a rule, however, property is always inherited along paternal lines. In general, a man, if he is polygynous, divides his property equally among the "houses" of his wives, who in turn distribute it equally among their sons. If there are no direct male descendants, a man's heirs are his closest male agnates, a woman's her brother's sons.³⁷⁾ Today land, of course, has also become an inheritable asset, which apparently is now inherited following more or less the same rule which applies for other private property. In our sample almost 80 % of our respondents said that their property would eventually be inherited by "all children". Only a few specified their sons or the eldest son. This is by far the highest percentage of those in our sample who did not make a spontaneous difference according to the sex of their children. (The second highest groups were the Kikuyu and Mijikenda with about 50 % each.)

The division of labor among the Kalenjin is largely based on the same principles of age and sex which are applied in the other ethnic groups described so far. The responsibility for cattle, for example, lies with the men, although the actual herding is usually done by boys between the ages of about seven and thirteen. The milking of the cows, on the other hand, is in some groups done by women. It is remarkable, however, that the division of agricultural duties on the whole seems to be somewhat more balanced among the Kalenjin than among most of the other groups. Thus both men and women share the work of preparing a field for cultivation, see-

37) Cf., e. g. Huntingford, The Southern Nilo-Hamites, loc. cit., Kipkorir, op. cit., pp. 30 f.; or Snell, G.S., Nandi Customary Law, Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1954.

ding, weeding, harvesting, etc., all of which used to be considered women's duties among many of the other peoples. There were very few specialized occupations in traditional Kalenjin society. In addition to some of the ritual experts,³⁸⁾ only iron-working and in some groups also pot-making were carried out by specialists, who in some cases (e. g. the potters among the Kipsigis) used to be members of a particular clan.³⁹⁾ Today 1.5 % of all persons in their home area are employed in non-agricultural occupations. This is about the average for most of the other agricultural groups in Kenya, but considerably-less, for example, than for the Kikuyu or Luo. Only 0.08 % of the Kalenjin in the home area are self-employed in non-agricultural occupations. This is a rather low figure. Together with the very small number of Kalenjin who have moved to the major urban centers outside their home area, it reflects the still relatively low degree of involvement of the Kalenjin in the national non-agricultural economy.⁴⁰⁾

c) Social and Political Structures:

In many respects the Kalenjin societies are structured more or less according to the same principles of stratification as they exist in the other Kenyan peoples. Certain aspects are expressed and combined in peculiar ways which give them a unique character. The widest social divisions among the Kalenjin in a horizontal direction are the "clans" (Nandi: "oret", pl. "ortinuek"). They are patrilineal descent groups, but unlike the "maximal lineages" ("dhoot") of the Luo for example, the members of an "oret" usually are not able to state their exact mutual relationship. On the avera-

38) See section d of this chapter below.

39) Cf., e. g., Huntingford, *The Southern Nilo-Hamites*, loc. cit., pp. 23, 42 etc.

40) See table "Comparative data...".

ge these kinship structures can be recalled for only about three to five generations. In most cases the oret itself is not an exogamous unit (as, e.g., the clans of the Luyia or Kamba), but is further subdivided into up to four totem groups ("tiond ap oret"), the members of which cannot intermarry. The number of clans varies from subgroup to subgroup (e.g. 17 among the Nandi, 14 among the Kipsigis, 13 among the Marakwet), with many variations in their sizes and subdivisions.⁴¹⁾ Clans are not geographical units, however (as they are, e.g., among the Luyia or Luo), and their members are dispersed all over the tribal area of settlement. Many of the clan names and totems can be found in several Kalenjin subgroups. In addition to its principal name, each clan is usually also known by one or several "nicknames". In our sample all Kalenjin were able to give the name of their clan.

In a geographical sense the smallest unit in Kalenjin society is the "hamlet"⁴²⁾ (Kipsigis: "temet", pl. "temenik"), a loose cluster of homesteads. Several temenik are grouped into a "village" (Nandi: "koret" pl. "korotinuek"),⁴³⁾ which may consist of any number of homesteads,

41) The information on these variations, particularly for the smaller or more remote subgroups, is still rather scanty in the available literature. For this reason we shall mainly refer to the two largest and better researched groups of the Kipsigis and Nandi below. But even for the Kipsigis it is not quite clear what actually constitutes a "clan" or one of its subdivisions. Thus Manners reports, for example, that he found more than 60 exogamous totemic clans ("orotinuek") among them, cf., e.g., Manners, Robert A., "The Kipsigis of Kenya: Culture Change in a 'Model' East African Tribe", in: Steward, Julian H. (ed.), Contemporary Change in Traditional Societies, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1967, vol. I, pp. 245 ff..

42) This term is used, for example, by Evans-Pritchard in his introduction to Peristiany, J.G., The Social Institutions of the Kipsigis, London: George Routledge and Sons Ltd., 1939.

43) Huntingford translates this term as "parish" cf., e.g., his The Southern Nilo-Hamites, loc. cit., p. 32.

usually between fifteen and sixty. Although these "villages" are not compact units of settlement and are not set apart by any clearly visible dividing lines, their boundaries are well-known by all people in the area. In some cases they are marked by in trees, stones, or the like. Several "korotinuek" then form a larger unit (Nandi: "pororiet", pl. "pororosiek"),⁴⁴⁾ which has distinct judicial, military and more general political functions. There are fifteen altogether in Nandi country. The largest territorial division finally is the "province" ("emet", pl. "emotinuek") of which there are, for example, four among the Kipsigis and five among the Nandi.⁴⁵⁾ These "provinces" only designate certain regions within the tribal territory and are not of any other social or political significance.

Vertically, the Kalenjin societies are stratified by a system of age-grades and age-sets which, together with that of the Maasai, are among the strictest systems of this kind in Kenya. Three main age-grades are distinguished: boy (Nandi: "ng'etet"), warrior ("murennet"), and elder ("poi-yot").⁴⁶⁾ The passing from one grade to the next is marked by particular ceremonies. Of these, the circumcision of boys ("tum", after which they become warriors) and the clitoridectomy of girls (which makes them eligible for marriage) are by far the most striking and important. Formerly the time of circumcision was between the ages of about 20

44) There is no special term for this unit among the Kipsigis, Peristiany simply speaks of "the group", Evans-Pritchard calls it a "shire", cf. Evans-Pritchard in Peristiany, *op. cit.*, p. XX.

45) The sixth traditional Nandi "emet" was made a part of the "scheduled areas" in 1907.

46) Only the terms for the male age-grades are given here. They are, together with the system of age-sets which is also mainly based on males, of the greatest significance for the structure of Kalenjin society.

to 30 years for males and about 16 to 20 years for girls. Today most boys are initiated between the age of 14 and 18 and girls soon after they have reached puberty.⁴⁷⁾ The removal of two lower incisors at about the age of puberty is also practiced among the Kalenjin, but in contrast to the circumcision ceremonies there is no special social significance attached to this custom.

Each boy in Kalenjin society is also born into a certain age-set ("ipinda", pl. "ipinuet") of peers. Together they pass through different stages of life, each stage marked by particular ceremonies. In all, there are seven age-sets⁴⁸⁾ forming a recurring cycle. Their names and order are: 1. Kaplelach (in 1970 small boys among the Nandi), 2. Kipkoimet, 3. Sawe, 4. Chumo (or Juma), 5. Maina, 6. Nyongi, 7. Kimnyigei.⁴⁹⁾ The time of initiation is not coordinated, however, among the different Kalenjin groups, and it not rarely happens that a boy who is anxious to be initiated runs away from his own group to join another where an initiation ceremony is to be held soon. Among the Pokot, circumcision, performed at about the time of puberty, and the actual initiation into adulthood ("sapana"), occurring se-

47) The custom of clitoridectomy is somewhat on the decline among more "modern" Kalenjin, but it is still practiced much more often here than among the other groups discussed so far and who also have this custom.

48) Kipkorir mentions eight age-sets (cf. *idem*, *op. cit.*, p. 9), but the names and the order of the other seven correspond to those given by our other sources.

49) The name of the eight among the Marakwet, which also exists among the Keyo and Pokot, is "Korongoro" which comes between Kipkoimet and Sawe.

veral years later, are two separate events. ⁵⁰⁾ Initiation ceremonies into one set take place during three to four years and are then "closed" for a period of between about seven and eleven years. Among the Nandi, the interperiodical intervals are marked by the flowering of a particular bush, an event which occurs only at these regular intervals. This temporal accuracy is also used in the historical dating of particular periods. An age-set covers a period between about twelve and fifteen years. A boy can only be initiated into the set next to but one below that of his father or into a later, but not earlier one, since if he (and correspondingly his sisters) belonged to the one immediately following his father's, a marriage to a member of the father's age-set would be regarded as incestuous. ⁵¹⁾ This gap of one set between the one of the father and that of his children thus also serves to mark the period of a "generation" of approximately thirty years. All of our Kalenjin respondents were able to indicate the name of their age-set.

The traditional political organization of the Kalenjin peoples resembles that of many of the other "acephalous" societies discussed so far. However, a strong emphasis on particular forms of military organization and the adoption of a "laibon", a hereditary ritual expert, by the Nandi and, for a short period, by the Kipsigis add some new ele-

50) Cf., e. g., Huntingford, The Southern Nilo-Hamites, loc. cit., pp. 84 ff.. It is likely that the "sapana" ceremony has been adopted by the Pokot from one of the neighboring Central Nilo-Hamitic groups, possibly the Karamojong, at a rather late stage. Peristiany dates the adoption of this procedure at about the year 1870. Cf. his "The age-set system of the Pastoral Pokot", in: Africa, 1951, XXI, pp. 188-206, 279-302.

51) For this point cf., e. g., also Kipkorir, op. cit., p. 50.

ments which show some of the similarities between the Kalenjin and the Maasai.⁵²⁾ The basic political decision making unit with mostly judicial functions was a council of elders (Nandi: "kokuet") at the level of the "village" ("koret"). It was presided over by a leader ("poiyyot ap kokuet") who had acquired this position through his personality, social standing and proven ability, and who had acted for some time as an assistant to his predecessor. The leadership of the "poiyyot ap kokuet" was confined, however, to his role as a chairman of the meetings and the general respect he enjoyed for his wisdom, but he could not make any decisions by himself without the approval of the others. The rulings of the kokuet were generally accepted by the accused, because the sanctions of public disapproval were felt to be quite strong, and the curse of the poiyyot for disobedience was greatly feared. A council at the next higher level of the "pororiet" could convene in matters affecting several koret and in questions of war, circumcision or matters concerning the annual production cycle and other major social events. It was composed of the leaders of the village council and also two special warleaders ("kiptaie-nik", sing. "kiptaiyat") and was presided over by two elders (called "kiruokik", i.e. "councillors", among the Nandi).

Beyond this level there was no traditionally recognized, more general, authority among the Kalenjin peoples, except for military organizations among some groups and the very special role of the "orkoiyyot" among the Nandi. Thus among the Kipsigis, for example, a system of four military "regiments" ("poriet") traditionally existed, into which each man was born and with which he fought when he reached the grade of warrior. These regiments did not necessarily coin-

52) See next chapter below.

cide with the other territorial divisions among the Kipsigis, whereas among the Nandi they seem to have been based on the unit of the porriet. It is reported that among the Kipsigis these four regiments who used to fight in pairs were united after a major defeat had been suffered at the hands of the Kisii sometime during the last century. ⁵³⁾

Of a very special nature was the "orkoiyot" of the Nandi ⁵⁴⁾ who not only represented a foreign institution adopted from the neighboring Maasai but who actually was of Maasai origin. He was incorporated into the Nandi pattern of social and religious organization when the Il Wuasin Kishu branch of the Maasai was practically wiped out following internecine warfare towards the middle of the last century. The "laibon" family of the Il Wuasin Kishu then took refuge in Nandi country. They acted as diviners, rain-makers, and raid consultants, and their powers as ritual experts were duly recognized. They thus continued to perform the same functions among the Nandi as in their own original society. The orkoiyot enjoyed a number of important economic privileges: His fields were cultivated by others, his wives had servile help, and he received numerous gifts at different occasions. In general however he was greatly feared and even hated by others. The orkoiyot's influential position, (based purely on his ritual powers and not to be confused with that of a "chief"), also used to give the Nandi a considerable measure of unity. This unity made them the most important military force in this

53) Cf., e. g., Evans-Pritchard in Peristiany, *The Social Institutions ...*, loc. cit., pp. XXIV f..

54) For a comprehensive discussion of the historical origin and the functions of the "orkoiyot" among the Nandi cf. also Huntingford, G.B.W., The Nandi of Kenya - Tribal Control in a Pastoral Society, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1953, pp. 38 ff.. See also his Nandi Work and Culture, London: H.M.S.O., 1950 and some of his numerous articles.

part of Kenya, especially after their fiercest enemies in the area, the Il Wuasin Kishu, had been decimated. The Nandi were thus able to offer the strongest resistance to colonial rule towards the end of the last century, and it cost the British several large scale "punitive expeditions" before the Nandi finally could be subdued in 1905. When the orkoiyot Parserion attempted an uprising in 1923, he was deported by the colonial administration; his office has since ceased to exist. A brother of the Nandi orkoiyot (with whom he had had a quarrel) settled among the Kipsigis in 1895 and began to perform some of the functions of an orkoiyot there. In 1914 he was deported by the colonial administration and the exercising of such an office among the Kipsigis was thus only of very short duration.

Today the areas of Kalenjin settlement have been incorporated into the nationwide system of political organization and administration in Kenya. The social structure of the Kalenjin people is also increasingly influenced by the factors of modern economic differentiation and, as among the other groups discussed here, a pattern of "class-stratification" is gradually emerging.⁵⁵⁾ The most striking difference in living conditions, even within the same subgroups, is between those who have become agriculturalists and those who are still largely pastoral. Whereas the latter, due to serious overstocking and overpopulation in some of the arid parts of Kalenjin territory, live under rather poor circumstances, and are, during periods of prolonged drought, not rarely on the brink of starvation, the former in many cases have become "progressive" farmers who achieve relatively satisfactory and increasing incomes. More than 50 % of the cultivated area in Kalenjin country is today devoted to cash crops (15 %, if only the "pure" cash crops are taken

55) See also Part I above.

into consideration). These figures represent an average position in Kenya. They are somewhat below those for the Kikuyu and Kamba, for example, particularly as far as the "pure" cash crops are concerned, but they are considerably above those for the Luo.⁵⁶⁾ The variations between the different Kalenjin groups are, however, even greater and whereas, for example, many of the Kipsigis and considerable numbers of the Nandi and Keyo have become "progressive" farmers, the vast majority of the Tugen, Marakwet and Pokot agriculturalists are still mostly subsistence-oriented.

Modern developments also brought about the founding of the "Kalenjin Political Association" in 1960. Together with the "Coast African Political Union", the "Maasai United Front" and some Abaluyia groups this organization became the backbone of the "Kenya African Democratic Union" (KADU), the chief opponent of KANU, which found its strongest support among the Kikuyu, Luo and Kamba. KADU brought together an alliance of groups, some of whom, like the Kalenjin and Maasai, had been traditional "archenemies". The main reason for this new political partnership was the common fear that politics in post-independence Kenya could become dominated by the Kikuyu and Luo, the leading groups in the independence movement. In particular, many Kalenjin and Maasai were afraid that independence would bring the opportunity for a great number of Kikuyu and Luo to move from their overcrowded home areas into the fertile farming regions of the "White Highlands" in Rift Valley Province, which in former times had been the domain of the pastoralist groups. Mainly for this reason KADU strongly supported a federal constitution for independent Kenya which could block such moves directed by a central government and which gave

56) See table "Comparative data ...".

strong powers to the regions ("majimbo").⁵⁷⁾ With the assistance of the United Kingdom the "gradual approach" of buying out the European settlers was adopted by the new Kenyan government after independence and took some of the explosive force out of this issue. When KADU merged with KANU in 1964, at least some of its leading politicians were accommodated within the new central power structure, and the federal elements of Kenya's political system were slowly dismantled.⁵⁸⁾ As far as the land question is concerned, however, that what was originally feared by many Maasai and Kalenjin has actually happened, although in a more gradual and camouflaged way. Great parts of the former White Highlands are today in the hands of the more dominant groups. The Kikuyu play a large role here, both as participants in official settlement schemes, e.g. in Nyandarua district, and as private individual or collective buyers of large farms in the districts of Laikipia, Nakuru, Uasin Gishu or Trans Nzoia.

No separate common political organization has arisen in the meantime among the Kalenjin, and even the activities of "para-political tribal welfare associations have been rather restricted. For the time being differences between the various Kalenjin groups and within these groups as well (e.g. local and religious tension among the Nandi) seem to be of greater importance than the representation of common interests towards others.

57) For a brief assessment of how these developments were seen at this time by many Kalenjin cf. also Manners, loc. cit., pp. 323 ff..

58) See also Part I, chapter 2 d above.

d) Some Significant Cultural Aspects:

On the whole, the traditional pattern of education among the Kalenjin seems to be little different from that of other peoples in Kenya. Both boys and girls learn their later roles in life relatively early (compared, e.g., with European societies), at first in playful imitation and then, as soon as they are able to, by actually taking over certain responsibilities of their own. Thus from the age of about seven, girls become "nurses" for their younger siblings whom they carry around and care for in many ways, and boys are made responsible for the herding of livestock. This rather informal "learning-by-doing" following the examples of somewhat older children is supplemented by more formal kinds of instruction, often contained in folktales, songs or proverbs as told by parents or grandparents in the evening. The most important stages in a person's life, such as the initiation into adulthood, are accompanied by special instructions. In the case of the "seclusion" after circumcision this can take several months of teaching by specially selected and experienced persons.

In our sample both the methods of punishment of our respondents and their parents seem to fall in line, more or less, with those of the Kamba or Luyia, and are clearly somewhat less severe than those of the Maasai for example. Today about 26 % of all adult Kalenjin possess a "minimal literacy", which is, after the Maasai and Mijikenda, the third lowest percentage of the peoples considered here. 43 % of the children of the corresponding age-group attend primary school, 4.2 % are enrolled in secondary schools. These figures are, again after the Maasai and Mijikenda, the third lowest for all the groups we are presenting in this study.⁵⁹⁾ This relatively low level of formal education is,

59) See table "Comparative data ...".

however, explained to a certain extent by the remoteness of and lack of easy communication with some of these groups. Thus primary school enrollment is about 50 % among the Kipsigis and Nandi, but only 33 % among the Keyo or Tugen and as low as 16 % among the Pokot.⁶⁰⁾ In our sample about 10 % of the fathers and 5 % of the mothers of our Kalenjin respondents had had some formal schooling. This places them at about the same level as the Kamba or Luo and below that of the Kikuyu or Luyia, but quite clearly above that of the Mijikenda or Maasai.

The traditional religion of the Kalenjin peoples shows a number of parallels to that of the other groups described so far, but also some special features, and, on the whole, it seems, a somewhat lesser emphasis on "mystical" in contrast to common day-to-day "empirical" experiences. The Kalenjin have a concept of a "Supreme Being", mostly called "Asis" (Nandi: "the sun"), but also "Cheptail" (Marakwet: "the one who shines"), or "Tororut" (Pokot: "the sky"). The use of these terms which refer to celestial objects should not lead the observer to the erroneous conclusion,⁶¹⁾ that the Kalenjin peoples practice some kind of sun worship. It is quite clear in the minds of these peoples that the "sun" and the "sky" are only manifestations (and very powerful ones) of Asis, but not "God" himself.⁶²⁾ Asis is the driving force behind everything, the omniscient arbiter and the guarantor of right. The deity is not conceived of in any particular anthropomorphic way. Asis advice and help is

60) See our "District Development Index" below.

61) Cf., e. g., a similar interpretation for the religious beliefs of the neighboring Luo and Luyia by Reverend N. Stam in his: "The Religious Conceptions of the Kavirondo", Anthropos 5 (2, 3), 1910, pp. 359-362.

62) For this point cf., e. g., also Kipkorir, op. cit., pp. 14 ff..

invoked at important social occasions such as the time of "kapkorosit", traditionally the great annual festival among the Kipsigis.⁶³⁾ The power of the deity is also strongly felt when the name is used in a curse by an elder or in the strong oath of "muma" which is employed as a kind of ordeal by the council of elders in very serious cases. One of Asis' most important agents is "Ilat" (literally: "thunder") whose power can be felt when lightning strikes, but who also resides in deep pools and waterfalls.⁶⁴⁾

At a more personal level, as is the case with the other peoples discussed so far, the ancestral spirits (Nandi: "oiik", sing. "oiindet"; Marakwet: "oi", sing. "oin") dominate the religious beliefs of the Kalenjin. They act as intermediaries between man and God and communicate in dreams with their descendants. They receive regular gifts of food and drink and share the daily lives of their relatives in many ways. In general, they are considered to be friendly and helpful, just as any other member of the family. There are some evil spirits, however, (Nandi: "chemosit", pl. "chemosisiek") against whom some protection is necessary. Thus every traditional Nandi or Kipsigis hut, for example, has a short stick ("kimonjokut") at the top of the roof which is thought to prevent evil spirits from entering the hut. In the western parts of Nandi country, separate small "spirit huts" ("kot am musambwanik") can also be found within the compound where the gifts of food and milk or beer are placed and which are also believed to prevent the evil spirits from entering the real huts of the people li-

63) Cf., e. g., Orchardson, op. cit., pp. 20 ff..

64) Cf., e. g. Kipkorir, op. cit., p. 14; or Huntingford, The Nandi ..., loc. cit., pp. 133 ff..

ving there. ⁶⁵⁾ When a person dies his body is laid out in the bush for the hyenas to eat. Only very old and toothless people or little babies are buried in shallow graves and enter the world of the spirits directly. The spirit of the dead person then enters the hyena which carries it to the "spirit land" ("koret ap oiik") which is believed to be situated underground. The hyena and the snake, which can also be a temporary carrier of spirits, thus occupy a special place in the cosmology of the Kalenjin. Snakes, for example, which have entered a hut are never killed but rather lured away with some milk or food.

Among the specialized roles in the field of religion and magic, the position of the "orkoiyot" of the Nandi who is responsible for divination ("ngorset"), rainmaking ("uisiet"), and advice in warfare, is the most outstanding. This institution was, however, essentially a "foreign" one ⁶⁶⁾ and was, except for a brief spell of a rival of the Nandi orkoiyot among the Kipsigis, unknown to the other Kalenjin groups. Other diviners exist, however, in all groups and their tasks cover a wide range of curative and protective medicine as well as the detection of crimes and witchcraft. The terms used for these people vary according to their particular field of specialization, but, for example, the "kipsakeiyot" among the Nandi or the "chepsogeiyot" of the Marakwet apparently belong to one of the most common categories. A condition of ritual uncleanness (Kipsigis:

65) Accounts of the religious beliefs of the Nandi and Kipsigis can be found, for example, in Huntingford, *The Nandi...*, *loc. cit.*, chapter 7, pp. 122 ff., and Orchardson, *op. cit.*, chapter 2, pp. 20 ff.. A brief discussion of the Pokot is contained in Schneider, H.K., "Pokot Folk tales, Humor, and Values", in: *Journal of the Folklore Institute*, 1967, pp. 265-318.

66) See section c of this chapter above.

"ngwanindo"), such as the birth of twins or other conditions of ritual uncleanness, such as the killing of a fellow tribesman or conception by a girl before initiation, can be removed by certain sacrifices in some instances and does not require the help of a diviner for the removal.

In addition there are other specialists (e.g. the "chepke-richin" of the Marakwet) in the fields of curative medicine, the treatment of wounds, fractures and other surgery, who do not resort to divination or magic but treat their patients to the best of their skill and knowledge, often using proven herbs and parts of other plants as a "medicine". On the other hand, there are specialists, too, whose powers are entirely of an evil nature, practicing witchcraft and sorcery (Nandi: "ponisiet"). Whereas the former can again be interpreted to be an involuntary power as, e.g., the "evil eye" (Kipsigis: "subisiet"; Marakwet: "bich cho tinye konyen", "people with eyes") which may be particularly harmful to young children, the latter clearly is done with evil intent. In former times a detected sorcerer (Nandi: "ponindet") was put to death.⁶⁷⁾ Today still more than 50 % of all Kalenjin profess their traditional beliefs. This is, after the Maasai, by far the highest percentage of all the groups presented here, although there is a great deal of variation between the different Kalenjin peoples in this respect as well.

If we attempt to describe now some of the characteristic cultural features of the Kalenjin peoples, we must, first of all, say a few words about what has come to be called

67) The roles of different specialists are also described, for example, in Kipkorir, op. cit., chapter II, pp. 12 ff..

the "cattle-complex" of pastoralist peoples in Africa. 68) This term refers to the dominant role cattle play in the culture of these peoples, a role, which by far exceeds its purely economic value and extends into practically all spheres of social and in some ways even religious life. A first indication of the central importance of cattle for these peoples is given by the extremely rich vocabulary which exists to describe all aspects of life relating to cattle, their different types, sizes, shades of color, shape of horns, etc.. Seligman and Evans-Pritchard speak of a certain "identification" of man and cattle in some of these societies, where, e.g. young males, after they have been initiated into adulthood, take up names used for oxen and are equated in many ways with the characteristics of their favorite animals. 69) Cattle are the constant preoccupation, particularly of males, even in their thoughts and dreams and each man composes, for example, his "favorite steer" song, which he sings in public dances and hums while

68) For a discussion of this concept in regard to some other African peoples cf., e. g., Evans-Pritchard, E.E., "The Sacrificial Role of Cattle among the Nuer", reprinted in: Ottenberg, Simon and Phoebe (eds.), Cultures and Societies of Africa, New York: Random House, 1960, pp. 388-406. In relation to the Pokot see also Edgerton, Robert B., The Individual in Cultural Adaptation, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971, in particular pp. 116 ff.. Manners qualifies the importance of the "cattle-complex" somewhat, at least for the agriculturally more successful groups. He reports that cattle are rather freely bought and sold among the Kipsigis today and that their utilitarian and commercial value rather than a particular "cultural" attachment is the most important factor determining the attitudes of these people towards their livestock, cf., idem, loc. cit. pp. 232 ff..

69) Cf., e. g. Evans-Pritchard, "The Sacrificial Role...", loc. cit.

performing his daily work and which becomes more and more elaborate in the course of time. Even those members of pastoralist societies who nowadays have abandoned the traditional way of living and have gone to town often report that among the things they miss most is the warmth and emotional security provided by the proximity of their cattle when they ruminate at night and make all their other familiar noises. ⁷⁰⁾

Although most Kalenjin today have become settled agriculturalists, this "cattle-complex" still plays an important role in many aspects of their lives. In this respect they are in a somewhat intermediate position between other former pastoralists, e.g. the Luo, who have been settled for somewhat longer period of time and other peoples in Kenya who are still almost purely pastoral, such as the Maa-sai. ⁷¹⁾ But also between the different Kalenjin groups there is beginning to be a good deal of variation in this respect. Whereas among the agriculturally successful groups like the Kipsigis, Nandi and parts of the Keyo, the ownership of land has become an important economic (and social!) asset, among the still predominantly pastoral groups like the Tugen and Pokot, cattle is still the overriding concern in all their activities. Those who were forced by circumstances to take up agriculture are often regarded as "poor brethren" and are despised as cowards because they supposedly lacked the courage to go on raids to get at least some cattle in this way.

Cattle are considered by some of these peoples to be given by God as their exclusive property. The constant raiding

70) Cf., e. g., ole Kulet, Henry R., Is it possible?, Nairobi: Longman, 1971.

71) For a short description of some important aspects of the culture of this people and a somewhat fuller discussion of some significant features of pastoralism see also the next chapter below.

and traditional warfare can also be explained in this light apart from the economic and "sportive" aspects and the importance for the overall social organization. For the Kipsigis, for example, the scope of their "legitimate" raiding of cattle also clearly defined their network of other social relations. This was expressed in sayings like "mokechor toogap pik" ("one does not steal cattle from people", i.e. Kipsigis) or "kevaru toogap punik" ("one raids cattle from enemies").⁷²⁾ In this connection extraordinary bravery and the ability to endure pain is sometimes shown by many members of these groups. In some respects the value of individual achievement, particularly in warfare, seems to be more strongly emphasized among pastoralists than among many of their traditionally agricultural neighbors. On the other hand, this does not impair, strong feelings of solidarity within one's own family or wider social group. This might be illustrated in the phrase "ngosamisit muria kwa ko", literally: "if a rat stinks, it goes home; if a man is ill, he goes to his relations to be attended to and cared for", for which the English equivalent of "blood is thicker than water" is given.⁷³⁾ Another example would be "ngi' omechi poton kelok", literally: "let us put our trembling legs together in one place, and we shall obtain support one from the other", which is also rendered by the English expression "unity is strength".⁷⁴⁾

Another striking characteristic of many Kalenjin is the dignity and quietness of their demeanor and the restraint they show under almost all circumstances. Outbursts of temper and emotion are strongly frowned upon and the maxime of "sisinge sikwasta nerekek" (Kipsigis for "be silent

72) Quoted in Orchardson, op. cit., p. 41.

73) Quoted in Hollis, A.C., The Nandi - Their Language and Folklore, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1909, p. 132.

74) ibid., p. 131.

until your anger has abated")⁷⁵⁾ and "makimwoe kiikut" (Nandi for "think twice before you speak")⁷⁶⁾ are generally adhered to. Kalenjin conduct is governed by strict rules regarding "tegisto", the respect towards others, in particular toward one's father, mother, father's and mother's brothers, but also towards all elders in general. "Talosiet", politeness and kindness towards others, is highly valued.⁷⁷⁾ One should never become ungrateful either for help one has received ("mokeyume sondii, e moen ketil", "One does not shelter under a leafy canopy, only to cut it down when it has stopped raining").⁷⁸⁾ Selfishness or "stinginess" ("ngoknotet") is one of the most despised attitudes. Kalenjin relations towards others are also characterized by a great sense of hospitality. Strangers who pass by always used to be fed and housed, even if it meant little or no food for members of one's own family for that night.

In general, a sense of modesty and equality seems to prevail and is evident in sayings like "makimondo karna ma", literally: "do not despise a piece of iron in the fire, for it will not be burnt, but when red hot it will be beaten into shape and may possibly become a formidable weapon",⁷⁹⁾ and "memene chekimene Cheptol", "do not be puffed up like the people of Cheptol". The latter saying refers to the people of Cheptol who once were so certain of their success in a cattle raid that they slaughtered and ate up all their animals beforehand but were then beaten and

75) Orchardson, op. cit., p. 37.

76) Hollis, op. cit., p. 128.

77) Orchardson, op. cit., p. 42.

78) ibid., p. 38.

79) Hollis, op. cit., p. 127.

forced to return home empty-handed.⁸⁰⁾ The role of women, on the other hand, is in many instances socially inferior to that of men. This attitude is expressed in proverbs such as "maki'unjin e koroko" ("a man does not slave for a woman"), implying that it is a woman's duty to wait on her husband and her husband's guests.⁸¹⁾

Some of these characteristics are also reflected in the stereotypes other Kenyans have about the Kalenjin. The Kalenjin are generally considered to be a rather quiet and serious people who have relatively little contact with others outside their community and who prefer to stick to themselves. They show a relatively high degree of mutual trust and support of each other, but can be suspicious towards "strangers". They are known to be hard-working and enduring, a fact which is perhaps best demonstrated by Kenya's famous long distance runners like Kipchoge Keino Ben Jipcho and others, almost all of whom are Kalenjin. On the other hand, many of the Kalenjin are regarded to be still rather "backward" and naive in their dealings with the "modern" world. However, the practice of witchcraft and other superstitious beliefs are less prevalent among them than, for example, among the Kamba or Luyia.

In conclusion, it seems fair to say that "the Kalenjin" are still a rather heterogeneous group. In part it consists of still largely traditional, predominantly pastoralist peoples, who live in rather remote areas and who have been left relatively untouched by the colonizing and missionizing activities of the past. Even today these groups are only partially integrated into the economic, educational and other infrastructural system of modern Kenya. On the

80) ibid., p. 130.

81) ibid., pp. 128 and 129.

other hand, some "Kalenjin" peoples have become accomplished agriculturalists and are among the most "modern" and prosperous small-scale farmers in Kenya. They occupy an intermediate position in Kenya's modern economic, social, and political life. The fact that there have been sufficient economic opportunities for most of them in their home areas so far has led to a relatively low rate of out-migration and a rather low level of involvement at the center of Kenya's economic and political activities. They have demonstrated, however, that, if their position should be threatened by others, they are willing and able to defend it.

"Ilumbwa" or "Salwavi" or "Wakusai". The other groups

- 1) The correct designations in their own language are "Il Masai" for the people and "Ol Masai" for an individual member of the group (ol and il being the definite masculine article). "Ol Mas" is the name of their language. The spelling of "Masai" varies widely (e. g. Masai, Masal, Masaa etc.), but as in the case of the other ethnic groups presented above, we prefer to employ the term in the form which has become most widely accepted today in Kenya, both by the people themselves and by members of other ethnic groups.
- 2) For this classification see also footnote 2 in chapter II, 5 above.
- 3) This term probably contains an etymological reference to the "ground" ("enkep"), cf., e. g., Jacobs, Alan H., The Traditional Political Organization of the Pastoral Masai, unpublished B. Phil. thesis, Muffield College, Oxford, 1965, pp. 30 ff.
- 4) Cf., e. g., Krapp, Johann L., "Kurze Beschreibung der Masai- und Wakusai-Stämme in östlichen Afrika", Augland, 1857, No. 19-20; Thomson, Joseph, Through Masai Land (1883-1884), London, 1885; Johnston, Sir Harry H., The Kilimanjaro Expedition, London, 1886; von Höhnel, L., Discovery of Lakes Rudolf and Stefanie, 2 vols., London, 1894; Hollis, A.C., The Masai - Their Language and Folklore, first published Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1903, reprinted by Negro Universities Press, Westport/Conn., 1970; or Herker, H., Die Masai - Ethnographische Monographie eines ostafrikanischen Völkervolkes, Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1904.
- 5) This means "farmers" in a literal sense of the word. This term has also been used by the pastoral Masai, in a derogatory sense, to describe some of the Kalenjin peoples, e. g. the Eipsigis.

CHAPTER 7: THE MAASAI ¹⁾

a) General Background:

The Maasai are a part of the "Maa-speaking" group of peoples in East Africa whose language belongs to the "Eastern Nilotic" group of languages. ²⁾ In contrast to some other Maa-speaking groups, the Maasai traditionally pursued a purely pastoral way of life. These groups are known to the Maasai by the common designation of "Iloikop"; ³⁾ some early writers ⁴⁾ sometimes referred to them by the Maasai term "Ilumbwa" ⁵⁾ or "Wakwavi" or "Wakuafi". The other groups

- 1) The correct designations in their own language are "Il Maasai" for the people and "Ol Maasai" for an individual member of the group (ol and il being the definite masculine article). "Ol Maa" is the name of their language. The spelling of "Maasai" varies widely (e. g. Masai, Massai, Maasae etc.), but as in the case of the other ethnic groups presented above, we prefer to employ the term in the form which has become most widely accepted today in Kenya, both by the people themselves and by members of other ethnic groups.
- 2) For this classification see also footnote 2 in chapter II, 5 above.
- 3) This term probably contains an etymological reference to the "ground" ("enkop"), cf., e. g., Jacobs, Alan H., The Traditional Political Organization of the Pastoral Masai, unpublished D. Phil. thesis, Nuffield College, Oxford, 1965, pp. 30 ff..
- 4) Cf., e. g., Krapf, Johann L., "Kurze Beschreibung der Masai- und Wakuafi-Stämme im südöstlichen Afrika", Ausland, 1857, No. 19-20; Thomson, Joseph, Through Masailand (1883-1884), London, 1885; Johnston, Sir Harry H., The Kilimanjaro Expedition, London, 1886; von Höhnel, L., Discovery of Lakes Rudolf and Stefanie, 2 vols., London, 1894; Hollis, A.C., The Masai - Their Language and Folklore, first published Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1905, reprinted by Negro Universities Press, Westport/Conn., 1970; or Merker, M., Die Masai - Ethnographische Monographie eines ostafrikanischen Semitenvolkes, Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1904.
- 5) This means "farmers" in a literal sense of the word. This term has also been used by the pastoral Maasai, in a derogatory sense, to describe some of the Kalenjin peoples, e. g. the Kipsigis.

who live on the fringes of Maasai land include the former "Wasin Kishu" and "Ilaikipiak" ("Laikipia") Maasai, the "Iltiamus" ("Njemps") and "Ilsampur" ("Samburu") in modern Kenya, and the "Iiarusha" ("Arusha") and "Ilbaraguyu" ("Baraguyu") in Tanzania. All of these groups are in part agriculturalists as well; they also fish (as, e.g. the Njemps) or are hunters and gatherers (as those groups who have mixed with or have been absorbed by some of the Dorobo hordes).⁶⁾ For this reason they were despised by the traditional "Il Maasai" proper. Today this distinction has become somewhat blurred since some members of these partly agricultural groups have been absorbed by subtribes of the Il Maasai (in particular remnants of the Wasin Kishu and Ilaikipiak), and some members of the Il Maasai proper have also taken to agriculture.⁷⁾ In our discussion here we are only concerned with those Maasai who live in the present-day districts of Kajiado and Narok (or who have originated from there) and who include the bulk of the traditional Il Maasai living in Kenya. The remaining sections of the Njemps and Samburu and all Maa-speaking groups in present-day Tanzania were thus excluded from this study.

In pre-colonial times the Maasai inhabited a vast stretch of land reaching from the vicinity of Lake Rudolf in the north down to about the latitude of Dar es Salaam in the south. This region was bordered on both sides by the escarpments of the great Rift Valley, and was altogether more than 600 miles (almost 1,000 km) in length and almost 200 miles (approx 300 km) in width at the points of its largest extension. The Maasai were the undisputed rulers in this

6) See also the introduction to chapter II, 6 above and the more general discussion of these groups, e. g. by Huntingford, G.W.B., The Southern Nilo-Hamites, Ethnographic Survey of Africa, East Central Africa, Part VIII, London: International African Institute, 1953.

7) See also section b of this chapter below.

area and were held in fearful respect by all of their neighbors. In the area of present-day Kenya the most important neighbors were the Kisii and Kalenjin in the west and northwest, the Turkana in the north, and the Kikuyu and Kamba in the east. The Maasai constituted an effective block to intruders from the coast; most trading and other caravans circumvented this area on their way to Buganda and other places in the west. The international boundary established by the Anglo-German agreements in the wake of the Berlin Conference of 1885 cut the territory approximately in half, the northern section becoming a part of present-day Kenya and the southern belonging to what was to become "Deutsch-Ostafrika" and later the modern state of Tanzania. The policy of white settlement in Kenya then made the great plateau of the present-day Trans Nzoia and Uasin Gishu Districts in the northeast of Maasai a part of the "scheduled areas". The population living there had been greatly reduced by one of the great wars between "Iloikop" and "Il Maasai" prior to the advent of the British, and their herds had been devastated by rinderpest and prolonged droughts. It is quite clear, however, that the traditional rights of the Iloikop and Maasai in this area were still respected by all their neighbors; in no way was this area a "no-man's land" when the colonial administration declared it open for white settlement. In 1904 the area of present-day Nakuru District was also alienated from its former occupants and the Maasai were grouped into two separate "reserves", one in the northeast, the present-day Laikipia District, and the other south of Lakes Nakuru and Naivasha reaching down to the Anglo-German border. In 1913 the northern "reserve" also became part of the "scheduled areas". What was left of its original inhabitants was moved to the southern reserve. Further infringements on Maasai land rights the occurred

when another section along the Tanzanian border became the Amboseli and Mara "game reserves". Here, however, the Maasai still maintain some grazing rights. The Kenya Maasai lost about half of their original territory in this way, including the most fertile and best-watered parts. 8)

Today most of the Kenya Maasai live in the two administrative districts of Narok and Kajiado which belong to Kenya's Rift Valley Province. This area lies south of Kenya's central and fertile highlands and covers almost 40,000 km². At its largest extensions it is about 150 km (almost 100 miles) deep (in a northsouth direction) and almost 400 km (250 miles) wide (along the Tanzanian border in the south). Most of the area consists of wide open plains interspersed by some mountain formations mostly of volcanic origin. In the west and northwest the steep escarpments of the Rift Valley form a natural boundary, in the east the territory is open towards the lowlands of Coast Province. The average altitudes range between 300 and 900 m (approx 1,000 to 3,000 ft) for most of Kajiado and between 900 and 1,500 m (3,000 to 5,000 ft) for most of Narok District. The average temperatures in this area are moderate to warm with the average daily maxima lying between 22° and 30°C, or about 70° to 85°F. However, one of the hottest points in Kenya, averaging about 35°C, 95°F, around Lake Magadi can be found here. The average rainfalls are rather plentiful with 30 to 40 inches and more (between 760 and 1,015 mm) along the slopes of the escarpments in the west and northwest and between 20 and 30 inches (510 to 760 mm) in most of the rest of Narok District and

8) The ruthlessness of these "movements" is clearly expressed, for example, in Kenneth J. King's account "The Kenya Maasai and the Protest Phenomenon", Journal of African History, III, 1, 1971, and his "A Biography of Molonket Olokorinya ole Sempele, in: idem and Salim, Ahmed I. &eds.) Kenya Historical Biographies, Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1971, pp. 1-18.

the northern section of Kajiado District. In most of the rest of Kajiado ⁹⁾ the average rainfall is less than 20 inches. The main rainy seasons usually are from March to May and from November to December, but not infrequently, particularly in Kajiado District, rains may fail completely. During the resulting droughts the Maasai have often lost large parts of their livestock, as was the case during one of the most devastating droughts in 1960-61 and, most recently, 1974 and 1976. There are very few permanent streams and rivers in this territory and, except for the northeastern and eastern parts, there is no external drainage.

The soils of the area are mostly of volcanic origin. They are quite fertile in the better-watered parts of Maasai country where they have weathered into rich friable loams, but only of intermediate value (brown calcareous loams) in the semi-arid areas of Narok District and of little use (mostly volcanic ash and tufa) in the dry parts of most of Kajiado. ¹⁰⁾ The well-watered parts of Maasai land also have a high agricultural potential (about 24 % of the total area), whereas the zone of intermediate rainfall is only suitable for ranching. The area with very low and irregular rainfalls (i.e. most of Kajiado District) provides rather poor grazing and can support only a very limited number of livestock. Nevertheless, taking everything into consideration, Maasai country has about 6.82 ha of high potential land equivalents per person. ¹¹⁾ This is by far the highest figure for all the groups discussed here and which shows that

9) Cf., e. g., the temperature and rainfall maps in: Republic of Kenya, National Atlas of Kenya, Nairobi: Government Printer, 3rd edition, 1970, pp. 15 and 21.

10) Cf., e. g., Republic of Kenya, Regional Physical Development Plan. Rift Valley Province, Nairobi: Government Printer, 1970, p. 5.

11) See table "Comparative data..."

some of the few remaining still unused reserves of good agricultural land in Kenya, mainly in the northern and western sections of Narok District are situated here. A more productive utilization of these areas would, however, imply a complete switch to an agricultural mode of production by the majority of the Maasai. This does not seem to be very likely in the near future. The natural vegetation of Maasai country consists of highland forests on top of the escarpments and of rich and heavily treed grassland in the areas of good rainfall. The intermediate zone provides open grasslands with scattered trees (Acacia-Themeda), while large parts of the low rainfall area are covered with desert bush and scrub.

The total population of the Maasai presently numbers about 240,000 persons; of these, a little more than 80,000 live in the modern state of Tanzania.¹²⁾ The Kenya Maasai are subdivided into twelve major sections ("subtribes") of which the Purko (about 45,000 members) are the largest. Next in order of magnitude are the Keekonyokie and Loitokitok Kisongo with a little less than 20,000 members each. The groups of the Moitanik, Siria, Loodokilani, Kaputiei, Matapatu and Uasin Gishu number approximately 10,000 persons each. The other groups of the Loita, Damat and Dalalekutuk have about 6,000 or less (a part of the Loita and the bulk of the Kisongo group also live across the border in Tanzania).¹³⁾

12) Cf., Republic of Kenya, Kenya Population Census 1969, vol. I, Nairobi, 1970; and The United Republic of Tanzania, 1967 Population Census, vol. 3, Dar es Salaam, 1971.

13) These figures are based on the listings by location in the Kenya Population Census 1969, loc. cit., table I. They reflect about the same order of magnitude for these groups as is given in Jacobs' thesis, for example, cf., Jacobs, op. cit., figure X, p. 177, which, however, is based on the Kenya Census of 1948 when the total Maasai population was grossly underestimated. (A total of only 60,000 was counted then, cf., e. g., Colony and Protectorate of Kenya, Statistical Abstract 1955, table 17, p. 12, compared with a total figure of 154,000 at the time of the 1962 census.)

95 % of all Maasai still live in their traditional home area. This represents the highest figure for all the ethnic groups considered here. The population density presently amounts to an average of about five persons per km² which is the lowest of the seven peoples discussed here and which reflects their pastoral way of life. The rate of urbanization for their home districts is 1.24 %. This is a rather low figure, particularly if one takes into account the fact that a great number of those who live in the towns of Narok, Ngong or Kajiado are members of other ethnic groups. The population growth of the Maasai remained almost stagnant in the period between the two censuses of 1962 and 1969, showing an average increase of 0.1 % p.a., and marking a stark contrast to the rapid growth rate recorded for the other groups. The still very high mortality rate, particularly for infants, and the relatively low fertility rate are also an indication of some of the hardships involved in a still largely traditional way of life and of the lack of modern hygiene and proper medical care. 14)

As was the case with the other peoples presented here, only very little is known about the origins and the history of the Maasai. It seems probable, that they migrated into their present area of settlement from the north, possibly from a part of northern Kenya near Lake Rudolf or from the adjacent area in the present state of Ethiopia. 15) There has been much speculation about the "Semitic" influences in Maasai culture and their possible relationship with the ancient He-

14) For all these data see table "Comparative data..." above.

15) Cf., e. g., Huntingford, G.W.B., "The Nilo-Hamites: General Introduction", in: idem, The Northern Nilo-Hamites, Ethnographic Survey of Africa, East Central Africa, Part VI. London: International African Institute, 1953, pp. 9 ff..

brews ¹⁶⁾ dating back about 5,000 years or more, but all this has remained purely conjectural and seems to be rather irrelevant under present-day circumstances. The Maasai themselves trace their origin to a legendary "ascent of the escarpment" ¹⁷⁾ which in all likelihood refers to the climbing of the Elgeyo Escarpment from the bottom of the Kerio Valley. This must have taken place well before 1750 A.D., the date after which we have more reliable information on the historical development of the Maasai. This indicates that the Maasai are earlier inhabitants of Kenya than, for example, their neighbors in the west, the Luo and Luyia, and possibly even the Kalenjin. ¹⁸⁾

A major reconstruction of the more recent history of the Maasai, which is based on a chronology derived from the Maasai age-set system, was undertaken by Alan Jacobs, who was able to trace rather convincingly the most important historical happenings since about the end of the 18th century. ¹⁹⁾ Among the most remarkable events during this period were three major wars between groups of Il Maasai and Iloikop. The first took place at the beginning and the two others towards the middle of the 19th century. The Wuasin Kishu and the Ilaikiptiak sections were practically annihilated in the course of these wars. Towards the end of the last century the only known major war between sections of the Il Maasai themselves took place. In this "War of Morijo" two

16) Cf., e. g., Merker, op cit., pp. 1-5 and 290-332; or Luck, C.C., "The Origin of the Masai and Kindred African Tribes", Journal of East Africa and Uganda Natural History Society, No. 26, 1926, pp. 91-187.

17) Cf., e. g., ole Sankan, S.S., The Maasai, Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1973, pp. 67 ff..

18) See also chapters II, 4, 5, and 6 above.

19) Cf. Jacobs, op. cit., chapter II, particularly pp. 48-108.

sons of the famous oloiboni ("ritual leader") Mbatian, Sendeyo and Lenana, engaged in a bitter fight for succession for which they were able to mobilize different sections (mainly Loita and Purko) of the Maasai. Sendeyo, the elder brother, was finally defeated. At about this time "Pax Britannica" was also established and it put an end to any further military engagements in this area.

b) The Economy:

Of all the peoples considered here, the Maasai are the only purely pastoral group. The ecological conditions, at least in the better-watered parts of their area of residence, do not exclude agricultural modes of production. (This is the case, for example, in the very arid parts of northern Kenya where a rather extensive kind of ranching is the only viable form of existence.) It can therefore be said that the pastoralism of the Maasai peoples is, to a great extent, a matter of choice and cultural preference and not a matter of necessity. ²⁰⁾

In the economy, cattle ("in-kishu") play the central role, but large numbers of sheep and goats are also kept as well as some donkeys, for carrying "household implements" when the Maasai move camp in search of new pastures. The cattle usually are of the short-horned "East African Humped Zebu" type but there has been a lot of crossbreeding between the traditional "Grey Maasai" and the northern "Boran Zebu" varieties. The Maasai consider all cattle as given exclusively to them by God ("Enk-ai"); this also serves as a justification for their formerly frequent cattle raids on their neighbors who, in their opinion, are only temporary guardi-

20) For a similar view cf., e. g., ibid., chapter III.

21) Cf., e. g., also Jacobs, op. cit., p. 147.

ans of what justly belongs to them. ²¹⁾ The size of the herds fluctuates greatly over the years because of changing weather conditions and recurrent diseases such as rinderpest and trypanosomiasis. The official censuses which have been conducted are often not very accurate, partly because of the traditional reluctance of the Maasai to state the exact number of their cattle or their children; along with some other East African peoples, they consider this to bring bad luck. The data given by some authors concerning the sizes of family herds, therefore, have to be taken with a grain of salt, but the average in better years seems to lie between 75 and 125 heads of cattle per family. ²²⁾ Some wealthy families own several hundred animals while a very few own even more than a thousand. The number of sheep and goats also varies greatly, not rarely in inverse proportions to the number of cattle held, i.e. wealthy cattle-owning families tend to have fewer sheep and goats while relatively poor families have less cattle and more goats. ²³⁾ In our sample the family herds of about half of our pastoralist Maasai respondents numbered between 50 and 100 heads of local cattle. The other half had more than 100 heads, two families owned even more than 300 cattle. The number of goats varied between 20 and 50 for about half of our respondents, the other half had more than 50, three families had even more than 100. The total number of sheep was somewhat below that of the goats, about two-thirds of our respondents had less than 50 sheep, the other third between 50 and 100.

The Maasai diet consists mainly of milk, blood and meat, all

21) For the widespread legend recounting the original gift by Enk-ai, cf., e. g. Hollis, op. cit., reprinted edition, pp. 266 ff..

22) For a similar estimate cf., e. g. Huntingford, The Southern Nilo-Hamites, loc. cit., pp. 107 ff..

23) Cf., e. g., also Jacobs, op. cit., p. 147.

products of their animals. Blood is taken from the cattle by slitting open the jugular vein in a vertical direction with the help of an arrow; in this way the jugular vein can be closed again after some blood has been collected in a calabash. In contrast, for example, to the Kalenjin peoples or to some other pastoral Nilotic groups, who eat beef only at some ceremonial occasions, the Maasai also slaughter cattle to supplement their regular diet. Traditionally milk and meat could not be consumed by the same person on the same day. Warriors subsist exclusively on these three products, while children, women and older men may also eat agricultural produce like maize and beans, which they may have acquired by bartering livestock or women's handicraft (beads, ornaments, etc.) with the neighboring Bantu peoples. Fish, eggs and poultry are never consumed by traditional Maasai and game is also not eaten. Buffalos and eland antelopes are considered to be related to their cattle and therefore the meat of these animals only is considered fit for Maasai consumption.

The rhythm of daily life and the pattern of settlement are entirely determined by the needs of the livestock. In the wet season the herds are dispersed over large areas where sufficient grass and water can be found in most parts of Maasai land. In the dry season the herds are concentrated near relatively few permanent sources of water. The cattle are then watered every other day, wandering off into different directions in the intervals. This helps to enlarge the grazing grounds and to conserve as much as possible the vegetation near the watering points. Because considerable distances have to be covered in this pattern of rotational grazing in the different seasons, the Maasai move their houses with their cattle, living in temporary camps ("enkang",

pl. "inkangitie")²⁴⁾ for a number of months at a time. Each camp consists of a number of rather low huts, made of wooden poles plastered with mud and cow dung, and arranged in a circular fashion. The whole settlement is surrounded by a thick hedge of thornbrush (usually from euphorbia trees) in order to protect the inhabitants from attacks by enemies (in former times) or predatory animals. A single camp²⁵⁾ may consist of up to ten or more families. Most families have their own gate ("kishomi"). If it is a polygynous family, the houses of the wives are situated to the right and left of the gate in an alternating order according to the time of their marriage, starting with the first house on the right for the first wife. The livestock is kept overnight in the center of the camp. In addition to the family camps there are special villages ("manyata") für the warriors which are similar in form and construction, but which are the exclusive residence of all the members of the warriors' age-grade in one district and some of their mothers and sisters who look after them. These manyatas were located in strategic positions in terms of traditional warfare. The number of huts in a manyata may vary between about 30 and several hundred.

The ownership of land is communal, i.e. within the territory of a subtribe each family is free to let their cattle graze and to put up their camp wherever they choose. The only kind

24) The term "kraal" or "kraal-camp" is used most often by English-speaking authors as a translation of this word, which, however, being of South African origin, has some derogatory connotations as well.

25) The number of families living in the same enkang has been considerably reduced with the decline of traditional warfare and cattle raids. Some of the early travelers reported settlements of sometimes several hundred huts at a time, cf., e. g., von Höhnel, op. cit.

of a more exclusive tenure of land occurs when families temporarily set aside a few acres opposite their respective gates of the camp for the calves of their herds. The area surrounding a manyata ("olokeri") is reserved for the pasture of the warriors' cattle, and trespassing in this case may be punishable by a fine. The permanent sources of water are also communal property, privately dug wells (e.g. in dry riverbeds during the rainless season), however, are used only by the family of the person who dug the well, and by his close relatives, in-laws, clan-mates or "stock-associates".²⁶⁾ Cattle and all other livestock are always owned by individual families and they all carry the brands and special marks of their owners in addition to their clan signs. In a polygynous family the husband allocates most of his cattle to his different wives, who are then responsible for them, but he also keeps a residual part of the herd for himself. When the father dies the cattle allocated to each wife becomes the property of her sons, usually in equal parts. The residual herd of the father is often given to the first son of the first wife, but not rarely an aging father may already have subdivided his herd among all of his sons before his death.²⁷⁾ In our sample about 40 % of our "traditional" respondents specified their eldest son as the heir of their property, about 30 % named all their sons, the rest said "all children".

The traditional division of labor of the Maasai is mainly based on sex and age. Girls and women perform all the household duties, including childcare, the milking of cows, the preparation of meals, etc., but also the moving of the household goods and the construction of huts at new places of

26) For a discussion of these different kinds of social relations see also the next section of this chapter below.

27) For these rules of inheritance cf., e. g., Merker, op. cit., pp. 192 ff.; or Jacobs, op. cit., p. 192.

settlement as well. The herding of the cattle is mostly done by young boys who are supervised by a few elders. The warriors are normally relieved from any duties concerning herd management, except for short periods during the dry season when the watering of large herds of cattle at the few permanent rivers or streams may require some additional help. The only specialized occupation among the Maasai is that of the smiths ("il kumono", sing. "ol kumoni") who live in settlements segregated from the rest of the population and who are, in spite of the great importance of their craft for all Maasai, socially despised; they have a distinctly inferior status.

The Maasai are one of the very few peoples in Kenya who to a large extent still maintain their traditional way of life. Unlike some of the other pastoral groups in northeast Kenya (such as the Turkana, Boran, or Somali), where the almost desert-like environment and the remoteness from the main centers of economic activity were decisive factors contributing to a semi-nomadic way of life, the "conservatism" of the Maasai can neither be attributed exclusively to the ecological conditions of their area nor to a lack of contact with the outside world.²⁸⁾ Their mode of living clearly implies a cultural preference and, although the daily contacts with tourists and other peoples passing through Maasai land and the vicinity of Nairobi have had corrupting effects,

28) The ecological factor has been strongly emphasized, for example, by Gulliver, P.H.; cf., e. g., his analysis of "The conservative commitment in Northern Tanzania: the Arusha and Masai", in: idem (ed.), Tradition and Transition in East Africa-Studies of the Tribal Element in the Modern Era, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969, pp. 223-242. The access to communications as a major factor determining the chances of economic and social development is highlighted, for example, by Soja, Edward W. in his study on The Geography of Modernization in Kenya, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1968.

traditional Maasai society on the whole has remained largely intact. It has also been of relatively little importance whether attempts to initiate significant changes in the lives of the Maasai have been made by the former colonial government, the Christian missions, a largely "capitalist" system as in Kenya after independence, or a "socialist" state as in present-day Tanzania. ²⁹⁾

For a Maasai (and for others as well!) there is no question whether he would rather be a today often idle but socially and emotionally well-"embedded" "ol murrani" roaming in the open countryside, or an unemployed youth (or even a worker or low-level employee) in town confronted with all the hardships of securing a daily livelihood under very adverse circumstances. On the other hand, the catastrophic drought of 1960-61 and the change in the political conditions after independence, which in some has already led cases to an infringement of their traditional rights and a loss of very fertile parts of their land to members of other ethnic groups, has brought about an awareness among at least some of them that their economic and political security may not last forever. In the long run, the choice then lies between becoming an "exotic" reserve which may contribute to Kenya's other tourist attractions, but which remains outside the center of Kenya's economic and political life, or actually bringing the Maasai into the mainstream of the country's overall economic development and political decision-making.

29) One of the characteristic failures in these efforts in the latter country was, for example, the attempt to persuade the Maasai men to give up their traditional dress, ("en joriba", also known as "shuka") a piece of cloth or (in former days) skin wrapped around their shoulders, and to wear European-type trousers instead. More significantly, any effort by the Tanzanian government to induce the Maasai to abandon their traditional "private" ownership of cattle and to integrate them into a more socialist "ujamaa" framework has also met with very little success.

The main impediment for the latter alternative is the fact that, unlike the situation among the agricultural peoples of Kenya where the introduction of piecemeal improvements in production and other aspects of modernization has been possible, such a choice so far has meant an almost complete and very abrupt abandonment of most aspects of Maasai culture. In order to send children to school, for example, it would be necessary, if this were done on a larger scale, to build permanent schools and to establish permanent places of residence for the Maasai. This is a decisive, although in its consequences sometimes doubtful part of the "new life", which largely determines the social position of individuals and groups in the modern "national" framework. This would also enable the Maasai to equip their homes with some of the more useful amenities of modern life such as clean water, electricity, etc.; in the long run, this would probably contribute to a general improvement in the conditions of hygiene and health, including a decrease in the high infant mortality rate and an increase in the average life expectancy. To settle permanently, however, would also mean an abrupt change in the economic basis of their existence. So far, the semi-nomadic way of life has been a matter of necessity. The few permanent sources of water and the extensive grazing areas needed to maintain great numbers of livestock make it impossible to stay in a single place for a longer period of time without seriously risking overgrazing the areas near the permanent water holes with all its ensuing consequences of soil erosion and an eventual complete destruction of the ecological basis of their economy. The situation becomes particularly critical in the dry season, as well as during erratic rain periods in the wet season in large parts of Maasai country. Together with their nomadic existence, important features of their social order and traditional political organization would have to be changed as well. The im-

30) See also section 2 of this chapter below.

position of the "Pax Britannica" and the establishment of a central police force in the modern state of Kenya have made the traditional warrior class of the "il murrān" idle; except for some isolated raids and a few clashes with the police their social function has become superfluous under modern conditions. This tendency would be even more accentuated if the Maasai were to live in modern permanent places of settlement where their lives would be even more controlled and where new social occupations of the young would replace older ones. Similar arguments apply for many other aspects of the traditional social and political organization of the Maasai. Thus the traditional leadership positions of some individuals would have to change considerably; the local council of elders ("engigwana enkutoto") and the age-set system in general would lose many of its functions. ³⁰⁾

Only very few individuals have been willing so far to undergo a complete change in their conditions of living.

Significantly, the one major exception where an innovation has been readily accepted by the Maasai on a larger scale was the introduction of cattle-dips. They quickly became aware of the value of preserving their stock without engendering further-reaching changes in their way of life. Thus two-thirds of our pastoralist respondents reported, for example, that there was a cattle-dip in their area. Some Maasai have also attended mission or government schools and have adapted themselves to modern agricultural modes of production, to individual ranching, or to a life in town. Two of the few instances, for example, where some Maasai have successfully taken up modern market-oriented enterprises, are the wheat and barley schemes in the Narok area and the individual ranches in some parts of Kajiado District. But even in these cases certain tendencies can be observed

30) See also section c of this chapter below.

which, if not checked in time, will make it impossible for all Maasai to eventually attempt a similar change. In the wheat schemes, for example, quite a few non-Maasai middlemen have become involved and threaten to reap most of the profits, thus leaving little to the original owners of the land. Individual ranching, on the other hand, has been confined so far to the areas with good rainfall and grazing conditions; it is highly doubtful whether there will remain a sufficient basis for a pastoral way of life for the rest of the population after the best parts of land have been grabbed by a few individuals. Thus in both cases the success of a few may jeopardize the existence of the population as a whole.

The only apparent alternative so far has been the establishment of "group ranches" on an experimental basis in the Kaputiei section of Kajiado District.³¹⁾ There, groups of about 50 to 100 Maasai have settled on 14 ranches ranging between approximately 25,000 and 100,000 acres, which are legally registered and which have become the common property of each group. On these ranches each family is entitled to build its own permanent home (which has been done incorporating various stages of "modernization"), and to cultivate a small plot (usually between two and five acres) for their own subsistence. The rest of the land is reserved for communal grazing. The overall management of each ranch is conducted by a "chairman", a "vice-chairman", a "treasurer" and their "secretaries", who are all elected by the group. But even in these cases it has become evident, that at least some of the ranches are not large enough to constitute a

31) Cf., e. g., UNDP/FAO Range Management Project, Pre-Investment Survey Report of Ranching Potential, Kaputiei Section, Kajiado District (the "Kaputiei Report"), unpublished manuscript, Nairobi, not dated.

viable economic unit both for dry and wet season grazing, that the groups settled there are not very homogeneous and in most cases they do not represent any traditional social units. This makes the fruitful cooperation of their members rather difficult, and the problem of proper watering, feeding, breeding and marketing of the animals as well as the maintenance of a limited number of stock on improved grazing grounds still remains to be solved. Since a modern infrastructure including permanent water supplies, schools, access to markets, modern means of communication, etc., is still lacking on most of these ranches, it is not surprising that a large number of the residents abandoned them when long droughts (in 1970-71 for instance) endangered their livestock. ³²⁾ In the long run, the distribution of land within each group may also become problematic. Due to changes in the size of the families and, even more significantly, to an increase of their respective herds, the available land for cultivation and grazing may become scarce. Eventually, regulations will have to be imposed limiting both the "private" cultivation plots as well as the amount of livestock allowed for each family. A workable alternative for a more modern economic existence of the Maasai people still has to be found. ³³⁾

Altogether about two thirds of all land in Maasai country has been registered under some form of individual or communal ownership. So far this move has in most cases, however, only been undertaken in order to safeguard what is left of

32) Cf., e. g., Halderman, John M., "An Analysis of Continued Semi-Nomadism on the Kaputiei Maasai Group Ranches: Sociological and Ecological Factors", University of Nairobi, Institute for Development Studies, Discussion Paper No. 152, 1972.

33) For a discussion of this problem cf., e.g., also Jacobs, Alan H., "Maasai pastoralism in historical perspective", in: Monod, Theodore (ed.), Pastoralism in Tropical Africa, London: Oxford University Press, 1975, pp. 406-425.

the territory traditionally belonging to the Maasai from further encroachments by other groups; it has not led to any further economic developments or to a change in their way of life. 70 % of our pastoralist Maasai respondents had little or no cash income, 20 % reported that they earned between Kshs. 100,- and 200,- per month on the average, 10 % had incomes even above this figure. Only about 5 % of all Maasai today can be said to have become "modern" ranchers of agriculturalists. Approximately another five percent are now engaged in non-agricultural occupations, many of them either in some kind of official administrative capacity or, at a lower level, for example, as nightwatchmen in Nairobi, but also as quite successful private businessmen.

c) Social and Political Structures:

The social and political organization of the Maasai combines in its own peculiar way, some of the features we have discussed in the other groups (e.g. a system of clans horizontally and age-sets in vertical stratification). Together with some specific roles of political and ritual leadership, this gives it a unique character among East African peoples. The largest effective social unit of the Maasai has its clearly defined geographical boundaries and is the section or sub-tribe ("olosh").³⁴⁾ There are twelve different sections in Kenya today and 17 in Maasai country altogether. Each olosho is subdivided into smaller geographical units which, depending on its size, may comprise several stages of segmenta-

34) This unit is also, in a somewhat stricter sense of the word, called "tribe" by some authors. Today in Kenya the term "tribe", in a somewhat looser sense, is mostly used to refer to all Maasai as a social unit, a meaning for which we prefer to employ the term "ethnic group", cf. also footnote 18 in Part I, chapter 2 above.

tion. The largest groups (the Purko in Kenya and the Kisongo in Tanzania) are thus divided into regions, which in turn consist of several districts, which, finally, are composed of a number of localities ("enkutoto"). In very small sections (the Damat for example) the only geographical subdivision is the enkutoto. Each of these localities has its proper name and clearly defined boundaries, and constitutes a self-contained ecological unit with sufficiently large wet and dry season grazing grounds, permanent supplies of water, and a practically permanent membership.

Localities of this kind are also the most important political unit in Maasai society. They usually comprise several hundred members (about 600 to 700 on the average), but they may also number up to a thousand or more. The smallest geopolitical group, which is also a residential unit, is the "en Kang" ("kraal-camp"), the temporary home of several families who live together in close neighborhood ("elatia"). About twelve to fourteen en Kang on the average form an enkutoto, but unlike the enkutoto the en Kang does not have a permanent membership; in fact, it is quite common that the different families in an en Kang re-group anew each season depending on their congeniality and changing personal preferences.

The social divisions of the Maasai show a characteristic dualism at many levels which is a dynamic and, at times, even antagonistic force in their interrelationships. However because no group would be "complete" without its counterpart, it also contributes to the overall social integration. This is already reflected in the "gate-post" ("entaloishi") division within a family, where the consecutive wives of a single husband build their houses in an alternating order to the left and the right of their common family gate, thus forming a "right-hand" and a "left-hand" division within the

polygynous family with certain distinct rights and duties for each part. Indeed, this analogy is often evoked when other dualisms in the social structure are explained.

At the most general horizontal level this dualism in Maasai society is expressed by a division into two non-totemic patrilineal moieties (also often called "entaloishi"), the "Loorokiteng" and the "Loodomongi". Each moiety is then subdivided into a number of clans: "olgilata", the term "in-kishomin", sing. "en-kishomi", literally "cattle-gate", referring to the division by descent groups which each use a separate gate in the warrior village; "manyata", is a term also often used. The Loorokiteng moiety originally had only two in-kishomin (Laiser and Lukumai), a third one, the Laitayok, was added at a later stage and it has a somewhat reduced status up to the present day. Loodomongi comprises four clans (Molelian, Makesan, Tarosero and Mamasita).³⁵⁾ Each clan, in turn, consists of sub-clans ("il-gilat", sing. "ol-gilata"), the number of which varies from group to group. It appears that traditionally the clans were exogamous units, but today the subclans have taken over this function, since otherwise the choice for marriage would have become too restricted in view of the fact that a man may not take a clan member of one of his wives as a further co-wife.

35) Since there is some confusion in the literature concerning the clan system of the Maasai and the terminology used by the different authors (cf., e. g., Hollis, op. cit., pp. 260 ff., Merker, op. cit., pp. 16 ff.; Fosbrooke, H.A., "An Administrative Survey of the Masai Social System", Tanganyika Notes and Records, No. 26, 1948, pp. 1-50; or Huntingford, The Southern Nilo-Hamites, loc. cit., pp. 119 f., we mainly follow Jacobs' account at this place (cf. idem, op. cit., pp. 194 ff.), which is the most recent and which seems to be the most accurate. Jacobs is also largely in agreement with the description given by ole Sankan (cf. idem, op. cit., pp. 1-7), except for the fact that Sankan lists only three original clans (leaving out Mamasita) for the Loodomongi moiety.

It is possible to ritually remove this latter restriction by paying an additional heifer as part of the bridewealth.

This social division of the Maasai by descent-groups at different levels is reflected in the way they associate certain colors of cattle with some groups: e.g. the Loodomongi are those of the "red-brown oxen" and the Loorokiteng are identified with the "black cows". All clans and subclans have their distinct cattle-brands and earmarks for their livestock. Thus, when inquiring about clan affiliation and, for example, the possibilities of marriage, a Maasai often asks for the cattle brand or earmark ("olponoto") the other person "belongs" to. The members of these different categories of horizontal social segmentation are dispersed all over Maasai land and do not constitute distinct geographical units linked by common descent (as, e.g., among the Luyia), nor do they form a "segmentary-lineage" system either (e.g., as among the Luo). Indeed, it is characteristic for Maasai society that family members in most cases cannot trace their agnatic descent for more than three generations. This feature stems from a "systematical forgetting" of a person's lineage, ³⁶⁾ brought about and reinforced by the fact that the Maasai regard it as "sinful" or ritually improper to utter the name of a deceased ancestor.

In each settlement ("enkang") members of different moieties, clans and subclans can usually be found, and it is often stated by Maasai that it is preferable not to live with close relatives in the same camp, since quarrels over inheritance and other matters may ensue. "Friendship likes distance" ³⁷⁾ is one of their common sayings. Thus, altogether, the clan system is of a different nature and of relatively

36) For this point cf., e. g., also Jacobs, *The Traditional Political Organization...*, loc. cit., pp. 216 ff..

37) Ole Sankan, op. cit., p. 91.

less importance among the Maasai than among many other African peoples. Nevertheless, all of our respondents were able to indicate their clan membership.³⁸⁾

Instead of clan and family ties, voluntary links between persons who have established a "bond-friendship" ("shoreisho"),³⁹⁾ i.e. who have exchanged a number of cattle (usually heifers) over a period of time, are often of greater importance in the social relationships of a Maasai. This formal bond, which always has to be initiated by the older one of two persons concerned, also constitutes a system of social insurance whereby each partner is obliged to help out the other with some livestock (or, in modern times, money) when needed, or to grant access to a well dug by one of them.

These horizontal social divisions and personal relationships are superimposed by a vertical system of age-sets, which among the Maasai is even somewhat more pronounced than among the Kalenjin for example, and which forms the backbone of their political organization. The basis of this system are the different age-grades a male person pass through during his lifetime. (The different stages in the life of a woman are of comparatively less social importance and females do not form any corporate age-sets, which also excludes them from an active political participation in the affairs of their community.) The most important grades are those of a

38) Unfortunately, however, there was some confusion among our interviewers as to the correct meaning of the term "clan" (Swahili: "ukoo") in Maasai society. We were not able to detect this immediately, the result being that section ("olosho"), clan ("en-kishomi") and subclan membership have been reported intermittently.

39) For this term cf., e. g., Gulliver, P.H., Social Control in an African Society: A Study of the Arusha, the Agricultural Masai of Northern Tanganyika, Boston: Boston University Press, 1963, pp. 209 ff..

young boy ("ol-ayioni", pl. "ilayiok"), warrior ("ol-murran", pl. "il-murran") and elder ("ol-moruo", pl. "il-moruo"), a final grade being that of the "ancient elders" ("il dasati") who have retired from any form of active social and political life.

The main points of transition from one stage to the next are marked by elaborate ceremonies which are held in a similar fashion, but not necessarily at the same time, throughout Maasai land. The first significant ceremony is that of tribal initiation ("emurata"), the main part of which consists of the circumcision of boys and a sub-incision of the clitoris of girls. Whereas the operation of girls is performed on an individual basis when they reach puberty, the emurata of boys takes place during strictly regulated periods "open" for circumcision for about seven to eight years. Circumcision then is "closed" for another two to six years, depending on the demand and the pressure generated by the still uninitiated youths, so that each group of those who have been circumcised during the same period and who then form a corporate "age-set" ("olaji", pl. "ilajijik")⁴⁰⁾ is clearly set apart by this interval from the ones succeeding it. Since boys should be initiated after they have reached puberty, but only during "open" periods, their age at the time of circumcision may vary between about 14 and 20 years. The second ceremony, which promotes "junior" warriors to "senior" warriors, is that of "eunoto", which takes place at about

40) The term "ol porror" (p. "il porrori") is, according to Jacobs (cf. *idem*, *op. cit.*, p. 24), only a local variation for the name of this institution and does not constitute, as e. g. Fosbrooke has suggested (cf. Fosbrooke, H.A., "The Masai Age-Group System as a Guide to Tribal Chronology", *African Studies*, No. 15, Dt. 4, p. 3), a special notion for "age-sets" in a narrower sense of the word, which then form a "generation-set" ("olaji" in Fosbrooke's terminology).

the time when a new set is to be initiated. The final conversion from "senior warriorhood" to "junior elders" is then marked by the "olngesher" ceremony which also takes place about every twelve to fifteen years. At the time of olngesher an age-set is also given its final name by which it will be remembered in history. These age-set designations do not form, however, a recurrent cycle as is the case, for example, with the Kalenjin, although some names of former sets have been repeated in later times. ⁴¹⁾

The transformation from "junior" to "senior" elders, which then follows after a similar interval, is not marked by the performance of any additional rituals, but coincides with the passage of "senior warriors" to "junior elders" at the time of "olngesher". In the same way the time of retirement of senior elders is not accompanied by any separate ceremonies, but occurs automatically when the alternate age-set below them is initiated from senior warriors to junior elderhood. Since the date set for each "emurata", "eunoto" and "olngesher" ceremony depends on the internal pressure generated by each group to be promoted to the next stage as well as on the respective consent of the tribal ritual expert ("oloiboni loolosh") a certain overlapping between the groups promoted at each of the ceremonies may occur. A new set of junior warriors, for example, may be formed at an emurata ceremony when their predecessors have not yet been promoted by eunoto to senior warriorhood. A time lag in the performance of the same ceremony may also be found between each of the different sections ("subtribes") of the Maasai people, because each "olosh" independently sets the time for these ceremonies. This system is somewhat brought in line, however, by the fact that the people of the "Keekonyo-

41) Cf., e. g., Jacobs' chronological listing of age-sets, op. cit., p. 49.

kie" section traditionally are the first to open a new circumcision period, and the olngesher ceremony is always started by the Kisongo section. In both cases the others then follow the lead of these groups, so that the total lag between the different ceremonies and the different sections of the Maasai rarely seems to have exceeded a period of about two years. ⁴²⁾

A further complication arises when a group of junior warriors, which was initiated at a rather early stage, is promoted to the rank of senior warriors at an eunoto ceremony before the rest of all of those who were to be circumcised during the same period. In this way "right hand" ("tatene") and "left hand" ("kedianye") segments (again reflecting the "gate-post" analogy) of the same age-set may emerge, which, however, does not give rise to the same frictions between them as exist between different sets. In any case both segments will be graduated to elderhood at the same time.

The members of each age-set fulfill clearly defined social, economic and political roles, which contribute to the functioning of Maasai society as a whole. After emurata the junior warriors of a locality usually band together and form a local "company" ("esirit"). They then live, at least for a period of time, in a separate warriors' village ("manyata"), where they receive instructions by elders of their sponsoring age-set about all aspects of Maasai society. At the same time they undergo some "military" training. (Maasai "battles" often were conducted following certain tactical formations and coordinations of movement of all parts of the "army".) They may actually engage in cattle-raids on neighboring peoples, including members of other "il Maasai" subtribes. The life in the manyata also contributes greatly to a

42) Cf. ibid. the table of "age-set maturation cycles" for the last 80 years, p. 254.

sense of solidarity and mutual responsibility among all members of an age-set. Senior warriors are permitted to marry after the completion of the eunoto ceremony and they gradually tend to settle down and engage more and more in their own domestic affairs. But as long as they have not yet passed olnghesher they are still the most important executive force in the political system of the Maasai, carrying out decisions by the local ruling council of elders ("engigwana enkutoto") and generally assisting in the well-being of the tribe (e.g. by taking part in the arduous task of dry-season watering of livestock).

After olnghesher a senior warrior becomes a junior elder who now fully settles down and establishes his own family. He is now allowed to participate in the deliberations of the engigwana. The center of authority in the political system of the Maasai lies, however, in the position of the "senior elders" whose advice and wisdom are greatly appreciated. They are mostly concerned with judicial affairs (settling disputes or crimes which cannot be regulated at the level of a single enkang or which affect members of several camps) and administrative matters (concerning larger-scale cattle movements, the securing of water supplies, etc.). Decisions are usually arrived at by a general consensus which emerges after extensive discussions of a particular issue when no more opposition is voiced and, if necessary, the tenor of the agreement has been summarized by a senior elder. The scope of decision making of an engigwana is, however, confined to the locality ("enkutoto") beyond which no permanent "tribal" authority (except for certain ritual functions of an oloiboni) is exercised. Exceptions may occur, however, at times of war and other unusual circumstances when a tribal meeting of all ruling elders or at least their local spokesmen may be convened on an ad hoc basis. The "retired elders", finally, still may be consulted in an individual ca-

capacity from time to time and may act as "most respected" ("enganyit-oleng") elder of the camp. They must give up their official duties, however, when the next set below them is graduated to senior elderhood; they thus no longer fulfill any regular social or political functions.

A special relationship between alternate age-sets (i.e. for example between junior warriors and junior elders or senior warriors and senior elders) exists in the bond of "olpiron" (literally: "firestick"). This term refers to the kindling of fire by the group of junior elders for those who are initiated into junior warriorhood and who in this way enter into a kind of ritual "father-son" relationship.⁴³⁾ Whereas the relations between adjacent age-sets are characterized by friction and rivalry, those who are linked by olpiron mutually support each other. On the other hand, one of the strongest sanctions among the Maasai is the "olpiron curse" by an olpiron elder over his "son", which is expressed symbolically by the breaking of a firestick and which ritually extinguishes his social existence and makes him an outcast among his people. The olpiron bond is also one of the most significant aspects of the political structure of Maasai society. Thus it helps, for example, to safeguard the powers of the senior elders, who can enforce their decisions with the help of their "olpiron sons" (who by then have become the senior warriors) during their period of office. But it also gives, working in the other direction, all male adult members of society access to the local council of ruling elders, one group of which always stands in an olpiron relationship to the alternating age-set of a prospective younger plaintiff. In this olpiron bond again the more general "dua-

43) Senior elders may actually be the physical fathers of junior warriors as well, but in most cases their sons belong to later age-sets, cf., e. g., Jacobs, op. cit., p. 293.

lism" of the structure of Maasai society with its dialectical functions is clearly expressed: the dynamic forces of conflict and friction between adjacent age-sets are checked and kept in balance by the integrative effects between alternating ones. The fact that this system is still largely in effect is also witnessed by the result of our survey where almost all of our Maasai respondents (in contrast to the majority of the Kikuyu or Kamba) were able to identify their age-set membership.

In this generally "egalitarian-segmentarian" system of social and political organization a few more specialized roles stand out, giving the system a somewhat more centralized character than that of most of the other Kenyan peoples. The most important of these are that of the age-set "spokesman" ("olaigwenani"), the age-set "ritual leader" ("olotuno") and the "tribal ritual expert" ("oloiboni"). The olaigwenani is chosen by his age-mates after emurata, usually with the consent of the olupiron-elders for this group, to chair their meetings and guide them in their activities. The qualities sought in an olaigwenani are maturity, impartiality, knowledge of traditional customs and laws, and prudent judgment. He must not be an outstanding and particularly fierce or brave warrior, however, because fierceness and wisdom of judgment are properties which do not necessarily coincide in the same person, and the "military leaders" ("iloingok", literally: "the bulls") are only chosen for their prowess and military skills, but usually do not play an important role in other social and political affairs of the group.

A spokesman may also be dismissed by his age-mates, if he does not live up to the expectations placed upon him, and not rarely does this office change hands a number of times before a final spokesman is elected at the time of olngesher. Although the position of an olaigwenani is a very

honorable one, this office is not particularly sought, because it is often felt that the duties it involves are a greater burden than the prestige and the chances it offers. Each age-set of a locality has its own spokesman ("olaigwenani enkutoto" or, referring to the "company", "olaigwenani lesirit"). Gradually one of them will emerge as the most respected and influential one and become the spokesman of the age-set of the entire "subtribe" ("olaigwenani loonki-shu"), whose role, however, is confined to convene and chair the occasional meetings at this level, to represent his age-set, and to lead a delegation when the need arises. The olaigwenani of an older age-set may also become the "most revered spokesman" ("olaigwenani kitok") of the whole section at a given time. Since a person usually attains this role, reserved for very few highly respected individuals, only after he has retired from the group of "ruling elders", his function is mainly a consultative and representative one. In none of these cases should the office of olaigwenani be confused with that of a traditional "chief" as it existed in many other African societies.

Another official who is chosen to fulfill a particular function for his age-set at the level of the subtribe is that of the "ritual leader" ("olaunoni" or "olotuno"). He is appointed by the olpiron elders in consultation with the local spokesmen of the age-set at the time of eunoto. In general he is expected to possess the same qualities of maturity and knowledge in tribal affairs as the olaigwenani, but in addition an olotuno must never have killed a person, must not have any physical defects, and his parents must have been of "pure" Maasai stock. These last properties insure a certain ritual cleanness and a "sacred" quality ("sinyati") which are thought to be necessary for the proper conduct of this office, although an olotuno is not considered to possess any special ritual or magical powers himself. The main task of

the olotuno is to contact the oloiboni, the tribal ritual leader, on behalf of his age-set, to lead his age-mates in certain rituals, and to supervise their behavior in order to make sure that no important customs are violated. Although the office of olotuno entails certain privileges, such as the unrestricted choice, as the first of his age-set, of a girl for marriage and gifts of cattle by his age-mates at certain occasions, this office is even more unpopular than that of the olaigwenani and often people are afraid to be appointed to it, probably because it involves rather close contacts from time to time with the oloiboni.

The position of the oloiboni (pl. "il-oibonok") is the only one which is not related to the age-set system and which has a hereditary rather than an elective basis. It is also said that the first oloiboni was not of Maasai origin ⁴⁴⁾ and that he had been adopted as a boy into the Laiser clan. Within this clan the families of the il-oibonok form a distinct subclan, "Engidongi", which is also the only one in Maasai society with a strict lineage system remembered over many generations. Three kinds of oloiboni, who act at different levels of competence and authority can be distinguished ⁴⁵⁾; they have varying scopes for their operations. The first kind is that of a more general practitioner, who cures illnesses by divination on an individual basis, but who does not have the power of making prophecies. The second kind consists of those il-oibonok who have acquired a wider reputation and who are consulted for their advice by larger groups of people (e.g. a whole enkang, a group of age-mates, etc.), and who are also able to provide their customers with

44) Cf., e. g., the legend rendered in ole Sankan, op. cit., pp. 73 ff..

45) Cf., e. g., Fosbrooke, "An Administrative Survey...", loc. cit., pp. 13-15.

protective charms. The third type, finally, is that of the "oloiboni kitok" ("the most revered tribal expert"), who has emerged as the most respected ritual expert of the area. In general, there is only one oloiboni kitok in each subtribe, some (as e.g. the Kaputiei, Matapatu or Purko) do not even have one of their own, but consult the oloiboni of a neighboring group. The oloiboni kitok is always consulted in matters concerning important ritual affairs of the whole section, as, e.g., the timing of the different age-set graduation ceremonies, but also for rainmaking, or before a cattle raid is to be carried out. His powers of divination and prophecy are greatly respected and often feared, since he is believed to be in contact with "Enk-ai", the central deity of the Maasai. However in a narrower sense of the word the oloiboni kitok does not play a role, in strictly political matters, such as the deliberations of the council of elders and the administrative and judicial affairs of the subtribe. To compare the position of a tribal ritual leader with that of a traditional "chief" is, therefore, again misleading, although a few outstanding il-oibonok, as Subet or Mbatian during the last century, were apparently also influential, because of the weight of their personalities, in matters affecting the political future of the whole people. Disputes and competition between different il-oibonok, on the other hand, as e.g. between the sons of Mbatian, Sendeyo and Lenana, tended to weaken their influence, and when the behavior and competence of one oloiboni proved to be unsatisfactory to some groups they were able to turn to another one.

Today the traditional political structure of the Maasai and these more specialized roles exist side by side with the institutions of Kenya's central government. The main administrative tasks and modern law enforcement are today carried out by the appointed District Commissioners and their agents

in the two administrative divisions of Kajiado and Narok. Judicial matters involving modern law are in the hands of the respective courts. In the more immediate affairs of Maasai life, however, traditional structures and leaders (unlike the traditional political organization of the other groups presented here, which have practically all vanished today) still play an important role. If there is a conflict between these two levels of authority, the greater force today resides with the central government, although the scope for an evasion of decisions by the latter, particularly if these are felt to be unnecessary or unjust (as e.g. in the question whether the Maasai should give up their traditional dress), is still considerable.

One of the greatest clashes which has occurred between a traditional institution and the central government is that between the "il-murran" and the police. Because traditional warfare has lapsed since the imposition of the "Pax Britannica" and cattle raids have been outlawed and are regarded as simple theft today, the Maasai "warriors" have lost their traditional function. Their idleness, sometimes together with the consumption of considerable quantities of beer, which has become more readily accessible in recent years, often leads to reactions of violence, and the il murran today are not rarely a source of nuisance both to their own people and others. More useful occupations must be found for them, which would imply a considerable change of attitude on their part; otherwise it is difficult to see how this institution can survive in the long run. The disappearance of a "warrior" grade among the Maasai will then probably lead to a decline of the age-set system as a whole.⁴⁶⁾

46) The resistance, as shown in a number of minor rebellions, by the "il-murran" towards innovations initiated by the colonial government, is also considered by one author to be one of the main factors for Maasai "conservatism" on the whole. Cf., e.g., Tignor, Robert L., "The Maasai warriors: pattern maintenance and violence in colonial Kenya", Journal of African History, XIII, 2, 1972, pp. 271-290.

A similar weakening of traditional institutions and leadership roles has been observed in some of the group ranches which have been established in some parts of Maasai country. ⁴⁷⁾ There, neither the position of olaigwenani or of olotuno seem to play a role in the management of these enterprises. The chairmen and other officials of these ranches (positions which, in contrast to the traditional ones, are highly sought after since they may bring with them a number of economic privileges), are selected on the basis of their modern educational achievements and practical qualifications, whereas the traditional officeholders are regarded as a conservative force which is opposed to modern development. The role of oloiboni also has suffered from the competition of "Swahili-laibons", who have come as healers from the coast, and the practice of modern medicine, although their ritual powers still may be feared. However, none of them commands, a position comparable to that of Mbatian, for example, in the old days.

In the years before Kenya became independent, "national" politics became more relevant in Maasai country. In 1960 the "Maasai United Front" was founded to represent Maasai interests and, in particular, to safeguard Maasai territory from further infringements by other groups. This organization then became part of KADU, the main party of Kenya's "minority" tribes, which essentially stood for the preservation of traditional land rights and a federal ("majimbo") political structure in the independent state of Kenya. ⁴⁸⁾ After the merger with KANU in 1964 some Maasai representatives were

47) Cf. Hedlund, Hans G.B., "The Impact of Group Ranches on a Pastoral Society", University of Nairobi, Institute for Development Studies, Staff Paper No. 100, Nairobi, June 1971, pp. 27 ff..

48) See also Part I, chapter 2 d above.

adopted into Kenya's "grand coalition" at the center. A separate "tribal welfare association, as exists among some of all other groups, has not been formed so far. Modern Maasai politics are increasingly carried out at the level of elected M.P.s and other officials, and disputes between them tend to take on a new quality.⁴⁹⁾

d) Some Significant Cultural Aspects:

The dominant beliefs, attitudes and values which find their expression in some of the characteristic aspects of Maasai culture form an integral part of the total system of economic, social and political organization. They are mainly transmitted by the common socializing agents of family, peer-group and local personalities of ability and respect, which we have already discussed in the description of the other groups presented here. As was the case in the traditional life of the other groups, Maasai children take on duties of their own at quite an early age. Boys, for example, are largely responsible for the herding of livestock, while girls help their mothers in the care of younger children, the milking of cows and other household chores. There is a great deal of love and understanding and parents are also quite strict with their children, but the percentage of rather severe methods of punishment (beating, deprivation of food, etc.) is one of the highest in our sample. Particularly striking, in contrast to all the other groups discussed so far, is the fact that there is hardly any change of attitude in this respect between our respondents and their parents' generation. This again seems to be an indication of the still prevailing, largely traditional atti-

49) A recent example is the clash between two leading Maasai politicians, Stanley Oloitiptip and John Keen, the M.P.s for Kajiado South and Kajiado North, cf., e. g., The Weekly Review, Nov. 15, 1976, pp. 3-6.

tudes among the majority of the Maasai (approximately between 80 % and 90 %) today.

One particular aspect in the traditional pattern of Maasai education, which constitutes an integral part of their social and political institutions, must, however, be mentioned. Unlike the other groups, the Maasai possess a more "formalized" educational structure in the system of regional "warrior-villages" ("manyata"), in which every male person must spend an important part of his formative years and which is of great importance for determining his social role later in life. In the manyata the "junior warriors" are taught their duties by the "olpiron"-elders of their group and, in addition to matters of defense and warfare, they are informed about all aspects of social and political life of the Maasai, their traditions, customs and codes of behavior. Most of this teaching is done in a casual, informal manner, but the system as such and the strong pressure of the group of age-mates requiring certain forms of conduct is a strong and lasting influence in the life of every male Maasai. Thus it is a common wisdom, for example, that "he who has not been to a manyata knows nothing at all".⁵⁰⁾ The time spent in a manyata (which may vary from some months to several years) also serves as a basis for the selection of future military and political leaders for the age-set.

Largely because of this educational significance the manyata system has survived to the present day, in spite of the imposition of the "Pax Britannica" more than seven decades ago. It nevertheless has come into conflict in recent years with the requirements of modern school education and at this point again the problem for each Maasai to choose between the traditional and a more "modern" way of life becomes apparent. One "modern" Maasai writer, recounting his own

50) Cf., e. g., Jacobs, op. cit., p. 308.

experiences, expresses this predicament when he reports that his father was of the opinion "if the eight years a boy went to school were to train him to become a better moran, then the whole training was a failure since the ones who did not go to school make the best morans".⁵¹⁾ Altogether only about 10 % - 12 % of all adult Maasai can be said to possess "minimal literacy" today; only about 15 % of all children of the relevant age group attend primary and 0.5 % secondary school. All these figures are the lowest for all of the groups discussed here.⁵²⁾

Some of the most fundamental beliefs in Maasai culture are, of course, based on the traditional religious convictions.⁵³⁾ In this sphere the Maasai show some characteristic differences from the beliefs of most of the other peoples we have discussed so far, and their general reluctance to adopt outside ideas and customs is strongly apparent in this field as well. Maasai religion is strictly monotheistic and does not include widespread beliefs in the existence of ancestral spirits or other "supernatural" or mystical powers as can be found among most of their neighbors. It is also characterized by a general lack of belief in witchcraft and other forms of "superstition"; indeed, a kind of skeptical "agnosticism" seems to prevail among many of them.⁵⁴⁾ The single god in Maasai religion is called "Enk-ai" or "Ngai" (a word also used for "sky" and "rain"), who is believed to be the

51) Ole Kulet, Henry R., To Become a Man, Nairobi: Longman, 1972, p. 17.

52) See table "Comparative data...".

53) Brief, but still rather unsatisfactory accounts of Maasai religion can be found, for example, in Merker, op. cit., pp. 195 ff., and Huntingford, The Southern Nilohamites, loc. cit., pp. 125 ff..

54) Hence their notion "iltungani miiruk" ("persons who do not believe"), an attitude which would be almost unthinkable in the traditional belief systems of most of their neighbors.

creator of the universe and the particular benefactor of the Maasai people. Enk-ai is regularly prayed to, particularly by women. If the deity is displeased by a particular action his wrath may become apparent in thunderstorms or droughts. After a person has died his body is usually put out for the hyenas to eat and in general there is no belief in some form of life after death. This is also expressed, for example, in the statement: "Neji eidipi anaa 'ngishu: meitoki ol-tau apiu" ("All is over as with the cattle: the soul does not come to life again").⁵⁵

The only exception occurs at the death of an "oloiboni", the body of whom is buried in a shallow hole in the ground and whose soul is believed to turn into a snake. For this reason snakes are traditionally not killed by the Maasai. The oloiboni, and in particular the "oloiboni kitok" ("the most revered ritual expert"),⁵⁶ is also thought to be the mediator between ordinary people and Enk-ai whom he consults by different forms of divination when certain traditional customs (as e.g. initiation ceremonies) need to be performed, when a cattle raid or larger war is being planned, or when a major disaster (e.g. a prolonged period of drought) is to be averted. But even the powers of an oloiboni may meet with the skepticism of a good many Maasai, and if he does not prove to be correct in his predictions or successful with the medicine he applies, his reputation may suffer greatly and a more "efficient" oloiboni may be consulted instead.

The missions have made relatively little headway in Maasai country so far, and only about one-fifth of all Maasai have been converted to Christian beliefs (approximately 1 % are members of the Catholic and about 21 % are adherents of

55) Hollis, op. cit., p. 307.

56) See also section c of this chapter above.

different "Protestant" churches), compared with more than 90 %, for example, among the Luyia or Luo. ⁵⁷⁾ After a number of failures one missionary, for example, came to "...the reluctant opinion that most of the grapes in this 'vineyard of the Lord' are sour ones". ⁵⁸⁾ It seems significant that most of those who have been Christianized have also abandoned their traditional pastoral way of life and have become farmers or taken up non-agricultural occupations. This again underlines the general observation that Maasai culture can only be fully understood when it is seen in its totality and that it has proven very resistant to any "piecemeal" changes. Thus the institution of monogamy for example, which is propagated by the missions, is completely alien to Maasai culture. Only those who break with most of the rest of traditional Maasai life as well (e.g. by settling permanently, joining the monetary economy, sending their children to school, etc.) seem to be ready to accept monogamy.

The relatively lower emphasis on religion and other transcendental beliefs in Maasai culture (compared with most of the other peoples in Kenya) is counterbalanced by rather strong convictions concerning other spheres of life. Economically, of course, the role of cattle in their daily lives is clearly dominant. This is even more the case than for most of the other predominantly pastoral groups in Kenya who supplement their diet by some other forms of economic activity, such as some kind of subsistence farming, hunting or fishing. Nevertheless, the Maasai cannot be considered to be typical representatives of the "cattle-complex", found among other "Nilotic" peoples. ⁵⁹⁾ Their attitudes towards their

57) See table "Comparative data...".

58) Annual Report Narok District, 1925, 23, D.C./NRK 1/1/2, K.N.A., quoted in King, "The Kenya Maasai ...", loc. cit., p. 127.

59) See also chapter 6 d of this part above.

livestock are characterized by a much more "utilitarian" approach; the exchange (or today: sale) of cattle for economic purposes or consumption is not seen to violate any important ritual rules. It is a different matter that the economic value of livestock for a Maasai is not solely determined by considerations concerning the amount of milk or meat an animal may produce, but also by their sheer number, an important fact for transactions of bridewealth and other social exchanges or ritual sacrifices.

The conviction among many Maasai that they are Enk-ai's "chosen" people also entails a prevalent feeling of pride and superiority towards their neighbors whom they call "il-mEEK", literally: the "non-believers". This attitude was reinforced by their uncontested economic and political position and their military dominance in former years. Today, this belief has become somewhat shattered among some of them, seeing the economic and political advances of others, but even if this present predicament is admitted, many of them are convinced that the economic and political status of the Maasai will assume its former significance in the not-too-distant future. ⁶⁰⁾

Among some of the other values which are widely held in Maasai society and which can help to characterize their culture is a strong belief that all Maasai are born equal. Only by personal achievements, e.g. by being a brave warrior and later becoming a wise elder, can "enganyit" ("honor and respect"), the most sought after social value ⁶¹⁾ be gained. This attitude is conveyed, for example, in the proverbs: "A

60) Cf., e. g., also a prophecy to this extent allegedly made by Mbatian at the time of his death, which is, for example, reported in Fuchs, H., Sagen, Mythen und Sitten der Masai, Jena, 1910, p. 11.

61) Cf., e. g., also Jacobs, op. cit., p. 222.

man's deeds are of greater importance than the facts of his birth" ⁶²⁾ and "Nobody was born superior to all the others". ⁶³⁾ For warriors bravery, fierceness in battle, and the ability to endure pain are particularly valued. This attitude may also contribute to the relatively high degree of physical violence which is exercised towards their neighbors in the traditional cattle raids, ⁶⁴⁾ and which still finds its expression to a certain extent in the current statistics of crimes and delinquencies in Kenya. ⁶⁵⁾ On the other hand, even for a moran it is said that "Meitulalungayu eng-oingono", which means that "bravery is not everything, and however brave a man may be, two brave men are better". ⁶⁶⁾

The overriding importance of wisdom and respect of old age are emphasized, for example, by saying: "Kinder ol-le-'mo-dai, pe kindoki ol-le-ngeno", ("we begin by being foolish, but we become wise by experience"), ⁶⁷⁾ or "a boy is never really circumcised while his father is alive". ⁶⁸⁾ Wealth (as it is manifested in the size of one's herd) is also respected, but one should never be too sure or too proud of one's belongings, which, for example, finds its expression in the proverbs "a man might be wealthy today and poor

62) Ole Sankan, op. cit., p. 85. Unfortunately the proverbs recorded by Sankan are not given in the original, but only in their English translations. This makes difficult a critical evaluation by others.

63) Ibid., p. 86.

64) Interesting narrative accounts of such experiences can be found, for example, in ole Kulet's novels To Become a Man, loc. cit., and Is It Possible?, Nairobi: Longman, 1971.

65) See table "Comparative data...".

66) Hollis, op. cit., p. 244.

67) Ibid., p. 243.

68) Ole Sankan, op. cit., p. 87.

tomorrow", ⁶⁹⁾ or "O-sina liki-ya en-neado dorop ol-oikulu" ("it is better to be poor and live long than rich and die young"). ⁷⁰⁾ One of the main factors in acquiring riches is one's own work ("Etejo ol-rigojine: Mme ake amunyak, keju nemaagol", literally: "The hyena said: it is not only that I have luck, but my leg is strong", meaning, "I have had luck, it is true, but I have had to work, too"). ⁷¹⁾

Personal achievements, however, are measured by the contribution of an individual to the well-being of his group. The attachment to both one's family ("you cannot make an ostrich hate its feathers") ⁷²⁾ and age-set ("I cannot distinguish between loneliness and danger") ⁷³⁾ is very strong. The solidarity of the group will also protect an individual in the case of need, which is, for example, expressed in the saying "nelang in-gishu ol-ogol le-kishomi", which means that no matter how weak or young a child may be at his father's death, he is strong in his own camp, for his clan and his friends will see that he inherits the cattle (literally: that it does not pass the gate). ⁷⁴⁾ Antisocial behavior, on the other hand, is strongly criticized: "Erishunye anaa en-gaa" ("he separates himself from his friends like a sick donkey"). ⁷⁵⁾

Group decisions and important political questions are usually resolved by lengthy discussions. "One head cannot contain

69) Ibid., p. 97.

70) Hollis, op. cit., p. 250.

71) Ibid., p. 241.

72) Ole Sankan, op. cit., p. 86.

73) Ibid.

74) Hollis, op. cit., p. 245.

75) Ibid., p. 240.

all knowledge" ⁷⁶⁾ and "do not come to conclusions before discussion" ⁷⁷⁾ are common sayings expressing this attitude. In the deliberations of the ruling elders a consensus in the judgment of a particular issue should finally be reached, because it is felt that otherwise the social peace may be endangered.

Outsiders are often regarded with suspicion: "Meren eng-abo-boki o-'l-chani likae-shani" ("the bark of one tree will not adhere to another tree"), and discretion and sometimes even secrecy is thought to be advisable: "E'sudo'i 'nyalat" (literally: "hide the mouthfuls of food", which means that one should not disclose one's secret thoughts anymore than one shows the food one is eating). ⁷⁸⁾ The same idea is also contained in the saying "Sipat engari, mengari 'regiei" ("men may eat from the same dish, but they cannot tell what is passing through each other's minds"). ⁷⁹⁾ In matters seemingly beyond the control of an individual or group a fatalistic attitude can be found ("a spear does not miss a man fated to die"). ⁸⁰⁾ Death usually is regarded as something natural, nothing really to be afraid of ("save an old cow, but do not save an old man"). ⁸¹⁾

The stereotypes which exist about the Maasai reflect to a certain extent some of these more dominant traits of Maasai culture, but, as usual, they are also somewhat simplified

76) Ole Sankan, op. cit., p. 86.

77) Ibid., p. 98.

78) Hollis, op. cit., p. 240.

79) Ibid., p. 251.

80) Ole Sankan, op. cit., p. 90.

81) Ibid.

and exaggerated. One of the earliest images of the Maasai which was conveyed to the outside world was that of the romanticized "noble savage" who leads an independent and proud existence and who defies all attempts to corrupt him by outside influences. In this regard the Maasai were held to be much superior to the people surrounding them.⁸²⁾ Other Kenyan ethnic groups today attribute to the Maasai in particular their warlike attitudes, their fierceness and bravery, but also their occasional short temper, arrogance and sometimes violent behavior. Their attitudes towards others are considered to be characterized by suspicion and a love for secrecy. Many of them are thought to be ambitious and intelligent, but in modern economic affairs they are regarded as backwards and being too much tied to their traditional way of life. Their athletic qualities are also admired in more modern spheres; they are known, for example, to be able to walk very long distances and to be good jumpers and javelin throwers.

Another point which has often been raised in descriptions of the social life of the Maasai, and which has contributed considerably to their "image", is that of "free love" which is allegedly practiced among them. This is a particularly good example of how a partial truth can be distorted into a persistent stereotype, fed by curiosity and probably not rarely coupled with some own sexual misgivings of the authors or the colporteurs of such stories and their drive for sensationalism. The truth of the matter is that members of the same age-set (and only they!) may sleep with each other's wives without fear of social sanctions, but only (!) with the consent of the woman concerned, which, it seems, is also not infrequently denied. The Maasai do not make any

82) A strong exponent of this view is, for example, also Merker, cf., *idem, op. cit., passim.*

difference between children who are begotten as a result of this custom and those who are biologically the offspring of a certain male. What this custom highlights, therefore, is not so much the sexual "license" of the Maasai, which is often judged by rather doubtful moral premises, but the relative small emphasis placed on any biological factors in contrast to the social ones determining one's relationships with others. The institution of marriage as a permanent social bond between a husband and his wife is thus not at all threatened by this particular custom. In fact, it may be even more enhanced because childless marriages, at least as far as the husband is concerned, are very rare under these circumstances.

Any conclusion to this section must remain an open one, since the general situation of the Maasai and their future seem to be even more uncertain than that of the other groups. They belong to the few peoples in Kenya (and are the only one presented here), who still, to the largest extent, pursue their traditional way of life. Their commitment to a pastoralist mode of existence is even more extreme than that of some of the other groups (as, e.g., the Samburu, Turkana, or some of the other peoples in northern Kenya), who supplement their diet with some subsistence agriculture or fishing. A few Maasai individuals have managed to adapt themselves to a "modern" way of life, but only by breaking almost completely with their past. The very success of these few may, however, at least as far as they have become individual ranchers or farmers, endanger the future of the rest of the people even further, because the better parts of the land tend to be "grabbed" in this way, leaving only the low potential areas to the increasingly impoverished majority. Infringements on their land by other groups remain a latent danger as well. But at least many Maasai still live up to their reputation, that they are not afraid to speak their mind and to take action, if necessary.

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